

It took one couple's dream to make Lily Lake Village a reality

Often it takes new eyes to see what's missing.

About 10 years ago, relative newcomers Ryan and Sue Campbell realized Pender Harbour had everything going for it except a way to live without the restraints of maintaining a large property.

The Campbells had a dream to provide a property that would offer turnkey, freehold ownership — a house without the hassle.

They continued to refine their vision and today their dream has manifested in Lily Lake Village.

Before they cast off for Pender, Ryan was a professional engineer who owned an environmental business while Sue owned a natural foods store at Westminster Quay.

Before that they spent 22 years in the Canadian Forces moving eight times from Victoria to Halifax and back, each time renovating or building a new home.

This gave them a great background for ideas to incorporate into their Lily Lake Village.

Not long after arriving in Pender, Campbell started up a real estate business and the couple soon became active community members.

But Ryan soon realized he and Sue were the lucky ones — many who passed through his office couldn't find the type of property that fit their lifestyle.

Pender Harbour real estate is typically steep and rocky and maintaining it requires time and a strong back.

"A lot of people hoped to stay



Ryan and Sue Campbell and their 'dream' — the 27 unit Lily Lake Village. Behind them sits Bev Hannah's garden, an example of the pride residents have in their new homes.

in Pender and wanted to down-size but there wasn't much I could show them," says Campbell.

"There was a need for something to allow people to stay in the community when they get older and don't want a big property. So, that became our dream."

Campbell recalls Brian Kask, owner of Curtis Lumber, had a couple of lots totalling six acres for sale on Lagoon Road.

Thick bush hid not only Lily Lake from view but also abandoned cars and the archaeological remnants of long-forgotten bush parties.

The Campbells must have seen something because, in 2002, they purchased it from Kask.

After receiving support from both the community and the SCRD, the Campbells researched and refined their idea for the next two years to finalize their plans.

They put together a local team: contractor Don White, builder Joe Lanteigne and landscaper Eric Stephan who understood the Campbells commitment to quality and made it a reality.

The rest is details.

In six short years, the Campbells' vision blossomed into Lily Lake Village, a community of 27 bare land strata homes all between 1,000 and 2,000 sq. ft.

Billed on their website lilylakevillage.ca as an "Active 55+ community," Lily Lake Village is designed to suit the needs of anyone looking to spend time in or away from their home rather than on it.

Purchasers share amenities like a well-equipped activity centre and workshop studio.

The pride of ownership is exhibited by people like Dave Diggins and Bob Adkin who can be found tinkering with the community lawn mower — "just for fun."

Residents also dictate the finishing specifics of their new home before they move in.

That's what Jan Watson did. She moved to Lily Lake Village in 2007 and likes to golf — neighbours say she leaves in the morning with her clubs and doesn't return until dinner.

“My old house was too much work for me and needed maintenance,” says Watson.

“I could no longer physically do it all myself and so I wanted to downsize.

“I looked around and couldn’t see anything else that I wanted and Lily Lake Village came along at the right time.”

Watson feels lucky to be here.

“I think it’s come too late for a lot of people who’ve had to move away.”

Each home is built to be livable on one floor with a minimum of steps.

The Campbells consulted with a home care nurse for amenities like height-adjustable shower heads and reinforced wall panels near bathroom facilities to allow for future installation of safety handles.

As part of their rezoning application, the Campbell’s donated a fully serviced building lot bordering Lagoon Road to the Area A Seniors’ Housing Society for their 10-bedroom assisted-living complex.

It’s a separate entity but when built should complement the de-

velopment by offering a range of lifestyle choices for residents.

It’s all so owners can be secure in knowing they will be able to grow old in their home without worry of leaving, says Campbell.

It’s why most of the buyers have come from the area. So far only five units have been purchased by people from outside of Pender Harbour and Egmont.

Alex Thompson and Liz Wood moved to Lily Lake Village last year and from the privacy of their deck overlooking the lake they look like they just squeak into the 55+ demographic.

They first came up for a swim and dinner at Ruby Lake Resort in 2007 and fell in love with the area.

“We knew we didn’t need a city anymore,” says Liz.

When they stumbled upon lilylakevillage.ca, they knew they’d found the missing piece to their new dream.

Clearly people like what the Campbells have created — two thirds of Lily Lake Village has already sold with three finished show homes and the remaining units finished to lock up awaiting owner customization.

The Campbells own a piece



Alan Stewart photo

Rita and Bob Allan moved to Lily Lake Village from their family farm in Alberta so they could enjoy their boat and spend time on their business, Lasata Charters.

of waterfront where they built and live in a Lily Lake test home model.

They keep a boat to explore the area they fell in love with almost 20 years ago but voice a common complaint.

“I’ve spent the last two months in the garden fighting nature and I have a boat sitting in my boathouse that I haven’t even taken out this year,” says Ryan.

“If we were here (Lily Lake Village), we would have been out enjoying it beside Rita and Bob.”

It sounds like he might have just sold another one.




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