

HARBOUR CITY STAR

Say goodbye to Island Hall

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The dismantling of Parksville's most famous resort - the Island Hall - began this week as the old, venerable hall makes way for a new, modern condominium resort hotel.

Workers are currently 'deconstructing' areas of addition to the 88-year-old resort including the beer and wine store and pool area. The original lodge will remain as a construction office for the Beach Club Resort.

According to a press release by Peak Communicators, a public relations firm in Vancouver, Demxx Deconstruction Ltd. began taking apart portions of the structure this week and will salvage material for sale at the company's Alberni Highway yard. (Anyone wanting material from the resort can purchase it.)

The developers, Sandcastle Holdings Ltd. of Victoria, said they are committed to preserving as much of the property's legacy as possible.

"We will save some artifacts to showcase the long and colorful history of the property to be incorporated into the new resort in a meaningful way," said Brad McAdams. "The local museum will be given any remaining historical material and objects that they request."

While the Craig Heritage Park and Museum has yet to receive anything from the Island Hall from the current owners, Manager Hans Boerger did say the museum would love to get one of the blue, Island Hall road signs.

"We're in the process of contacting the owners, and hopefully, they can help us out by getting one of those signs to the museum," Boerger said.

The plan for the sign is to put it in concrete at the museum near where the two Craig on the beach autocamp cabins are located.

"It should fit in quite well," Boerger said of the Island Hall sign. "Along with the cabins, it will help showcase the importance of Parksville as a tourist destination."

The museum already has some pieces from the Island Hall, including artifacts, a two volume scrapbook, and a scale model built by Paul Rozek that shows what the hall looked like in 1917 when it was first built.

Construction of The Beach Club is expected to begin this fall with completion by the summer of 2007.

A building permit hasn't been issued for the developers yet, but a permit is in its final stages said Director of Community Planning Gayle Jackson. She said if a permit is not issued by the end of this week, then it will likely be ready at the beginning of next week.

The Beach Club resort has been designed by Moore Paterson Architects, of Victoria, and the development features a wood and stone west coast look with a multi-functional atrium, conference centre, concierge, spa, lounge, restaurant, indoor pool and hot tub, a private residents' club and a fitness centre.

On its opening sales day July 23, The Beach Club Resort sold more than \$35 million in quarter-ownership shares, as buyers bought out 75 percent of the available suites. Since then, sales totals have apparently risen to more than \$38 million. To date, 265 quarter-share residences have been sold out of the 356 available.

Once built, The Beach Club will be a fully-managed resort property with all the amenities of a hotel.

The sale of the development's fully-furnished luxury suites as quarter-ownership allows purchasers the use of the property for one week every 28 days. Purchasers can choose from a range of ownership in studios, or one and two-bedroom suites, at prices ranging between \$49,900 and \$209,900.

Since it opened on Easter weekend, 1917, the Island Hall Resort occupied the beachfront property on Parksville Bay attracting guests from around the world including the Queen and Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.