

**Ground broken on \$50-M Beach Club**

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The ceremonial shovels were brought out and there were congratulations all around as The Beach Club resort officially broke ground Monday morning.

Victoria developers Darren and Brad McAdams finally marked the beginning of a new \$50-million condominium resort hotel on Parksville's waterfront after more than two years of planning.

"It's been a long time coming," said Brad McAdams, of Sandcastle Holdings Inc., "but it has been worth the wait."

The Beach Club resort is being built on the site of the 88-year-old Island Hall Hotel on Parksville Bay. Developers have promised that it will be a first class destination resort, with a private owners club, restaurant, patio bar, spa, fitness centre, business centre and about 75 fully furnished suites, which are being sold under a quarter-ownership plan.

Darren McAdams said about 90 per cent of the 356 quarter shares available have been sold, for a total worth of about \$45 million. He said buyers have bought from across Canada and from as far away as Texas, although Vancouver, Victoria and Calgary - in that order - continue to be the major markets of concern for the development.

"It should be remembered, these are people who have invested in Parksville. That's the key here," said McAdams.

Parksville Mayor Randy Longmuir said the development is a key to the revitalization of the city's downtown as well as the waterfront. He noted that the city is on the verge of building a waterfront boardwalk, and recently won the provincial Communities in Bloom competition.

"The city is striving to reach our incredible potential," said Longmuir. "This will help revitalize the downtown and revitalize the waterfront. May The Beach Club provide in the future what the Island Hall has provided in the past."

The venerable old Island Hall was once the heart of Vancouver Island's premier vacation destinations. It opened on Easter Weekend in 1917 and was designed to appeal to upper class world travellers. For old Parksville, it was the place to go to see and be seen. Visitors to the Island Hall have included Princess Elizabeth and Prince Phillip, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, founder of the International Meditation Society, and countless politicians and other dignitaries.