

**Thoughts of past trigger purchase at Island Hall site
Residences project in Parksville is about 95 per cent sold out**

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Vancouver's Dr. Graham Bryce has a special sunset picture that looks out over the wide, sandy beach in Parksville.

The view he snapped shows what Bryce will see from the condominium that he and wife, Cicely, bought this month. The scene hasn't changed since the summers he played on the beach as a child while visiting his grandparents.

"I am going to frame [the picture]. Put it on the wall until I get to furnish the condo in 21/2 years."

Bryce, 50, is the happiest buyer around. Tears filled his eyes earlier this month when he was signing purchase papers for a suite in the Residences at the Beach Club, which will go up on the former Island Hall hotel site.

A hotel-condominium and the Residences condominium project are in the works by developer Sandcastle Holdings on the 4.2-hectare site. The hotel-condo is being built now, and if all goes according to plan, construction will begin on the Residences late this year.

"I was pretty choked up," Bryce said Monday. "That was going back to my childhood stuff. I really love that area ... Any kid who has spent any time on that beach knows it is paradise."

At 1,350 square feet, with a 250-square foot deck, the two-bedroom condo will have a family room that could be converted to a guest room. "We have got a lot of space."

Bryce has strong family ties in the area. His grandfather, James Kingsley, moved there in the early 1900s and ran a shoe-repair service. Kingsley was among a group of residents who played a key role in obtaining the spectacular waterfront park enjoyed by thousands of locals and visitors today.

Relatives of Bryce, including his mother and aunt and uncle, live nearby. He has a brother in Comox and another at Nanoose.

He plans to share ownership of the \$529,900 condo with family and friends. The Bryces have three children, aged 12 to 16, who "have informed us they intend to be there frequently," he said with a laugh.

The Residences project is part of the Beach Club development. Framing is underway for the first phase, the hotel-condominium building with quarter ownership, said Victoria's Darren McAdam, a director of developer Sandcastle Holdings. "We are approximately 95 per cent sold for the resort."

This first phase consists of a four-storey beachfront building, with a one-storey link to a nine-storey tower. The 120,000-square-foot project, with 75 suites, will include a restaurant, and fitness club with an indoor swimming pool, he said.

Demolition of the remaining buildings at the old Island Hall to prepare for the Residences in Phase 2 is expected to start in October, with construction likely beginning in November or December, McAdam said.

About 70 per cent of the 56 suites in the planned 70,000-square-foot, eight-storey tower have been sold, he said. Prices started in the \$200,000 range but the remaining suites run from about \$300,000 to penthouses at \$1.2 million that will have close to 1,900 square feet.

Phase 2 includes 10,000 square feet of commercial-retail space with a new restaurant-pub. If all goes smoothly, the project should be finished in late 2008.

About half the buyers are from Vancouver, McAdam said. Also well represented are Victoria and Alberta residents. "It has gone as well as we had hoped."

Meanwhile, in Ucluelet, a planned \$600-million resort by Marine Drive Properties, including a golf course designed by Jack Nicklaus, hotels, homes, a marine and commercial space won approval last week from council. Nicklaus was in Ucluelet, on the Island's west coast, last weekend to look over the site and plans, said Geoff Lyons, the district's economic development officer.

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**Graham Bryce:
happy buyer**