

**New opportunities as Beach Club opens
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By Steven Heywood**



Rob McAdams, owner of The Beach Club Resort in Parksville, addresses the crowd during the grand opening of the resort Saturday night.

The biggest construction problem faced by the McAdmas family — owners of the The Beach Club Resort on Parksville's waterfront — was being able to build there in the first place.

It was six years ago, said Rob McAdams during the resort's grand opening bash Saturday night, that a group of city leaders came to them, asking that they revive development plans for the former Island Hall site.

"Six years ago, there was a change in heart," he said. "Sixteen years ago (the owners) approached the city with plans to develop the area and shocked city hall at that time. I think the last words we heard was 'in your dreams.'"

McAdams, owner of Sandcastle Holdings, said a group from the city — then mayor Randy Longmuir and chamber of commerce president Sandy Herle (the current mayor) came to them in 2002 to help Parksville revitalize itself. After owning the property for 20 years, the family now saw an opportunity.

Quoting from a recent News story on Parksville's beach being named one of the best, McAdams said its the waterfront that makes the new resort possible.

"It's all about the beach."

Of course, its location presented construction crews their share of challenges — from having to anchor cables and bolts into bedrock for stability, to using thick liner to help prevent water seepage into the underground parking. Construction continues at The Beach Club — on a second, multi-story building. Of the existing facilities, McAdams said only 10 positions (the units were sold in quarter-shares) remain.

"Three hundred and forty-three people bought into this resort," he said. "And without them, none of this would have been possible."

McAdams and his sons, Brad and Darren, joined John Quested of Pacific Harbour Holdings (operators of the hotel portion of the resort), Parksville and District Chamber of Commerce spokesperson Cheryl Dill and Herle for the ribbon cutting ceremony.

The evening was a who's-who of local celebrities, invited to the opening of the biggest thing on the city's waterfront. With more than one tip of the hat to the past and the the Island Hall which once sat on the site, the owners and guests officially launched a new era.

"This evening, we write a new chapter in history," said Dill. "This will be a boon to the Parksville economy. We anticipate a retail diversification in our downtown."

Dill said existing hotels in the city are normally at 100 per cent occupancy in the summer and The Beach Club will provide some 140 new rooms — and jobs that come with both the hotel and construction operations.

"A development like this provides so many opportunities," Dill said.

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