



G & S GAZETTE

December 2005



We've Moved

Seasons Greetings everyone!

We hope everyone is having a happy holiday season. Our big news for 2005 is that we bought a house in North Burnaby and moved on December 10th. Our new address is at the end of the newsletter and our home phone number remains the same. We'll share with you our home buying experience a little bit later.

Our first getaway for 2005 was a weekend trip to BJ's Garden Gate bed and breakfast (B&B) in Port Angeles, Washington. The rooms were a Victorian style with a beautiful view of the ocean, on deck hot-tub, and gourmet breakfasts. Our drive took us through Whidby Island, Hurricane Ridge at Olympic National Park where there was fresh snow, Rialto Beach with the pretty rocks and trees, and the Dungeness Wildlife Refuge.

In March, we took a weekend ski trip to Sun Peaks with Zachary and Rebecca (nephew and niece) and Glen's parents. This was Zachary's first time and Rebecca's second time skiing, and they both did absolutely great. The snow was fantastic and it wasn't busy at all (compared to Whistler and the local mountains). For Easter long weekend, we went to Glen's parents at the Shuswap for one night and then went to Kamloops on the Saturday to meet up with Glen's brother's family and go skiing at Sun Peaks.

In April and May, Glen's parents sold their truck, trailer and condo in Kamloops. They bought a new truck, a fifth-wheel and a moved permanently to their house at the Shuswap. Susan's parents came to Vancouver during their stopover flight to China. When they arrived in China, they toured around with Susan's sister and brother's family. Susan's sister moved back to Burnaby after 10+ years in Taiwan and China.

We spent a number of weekends throughout the summer at our cabin. Our guests at the cabin for this year included Shirley, May, San and their daughter Sophia, Nikita, Eddy, Rob and Diana, Dave and William. Some different places we visited by boat was Little Shuswap Lake/Chase and Margaret Falls near the Salmon Arm end of Shuswap Lake.

In July, Susan's Aunt Minnie and cousins from Calgary came for a quick visit as they were stopping over for their trip to Japan and China. We spent a week at our cabin at the end of July. As August rolled around, we decided that we would like to buy a house for the extra space, since we figured we would be in the Lower Mainland for a number of years. Our search began. Glen's parents were in town to help us look at houses with a realtor. We looked at a number of houses during this month in the North Burnaby (Vancouver Heights, Capitol Hill and Brentwood) area, and placed an offer on one house. The house didn't



Christmas greetings from Glen and Susan.

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look too bad but needed some fixing up. Unfortunately, our first experience of placing an offer on a house was not going smoothly. Our offer was on the table for about 3-4 weeks as the renters, seller and seller's realtor were not cooperating very well, and a number of red flags were going up during this time period. In the end, we gave our final offer and the seller turned it down. Also during the month of August, Kim and Rob came for a visit and we attended David and Kinam's wedding, where Susan was one of the bridesmaids and Glen was the videographer.

As September came, we prepared for our big cruise to Western Europe/Mediterranean. This was our biggest and best trip yet with over 1,500 digital photos taken. We

condensed the photos to 400 printed copies, so when you visit we'll give you a condensed version of our trip. We went on a 14 night cruise on Holland America's Westerdam and we visited 12 major European cities. The ports and cities we visited included Copenhagen (Denmark), Oslo (Norway), Rotterdam (Netherlands), Harwich (near London, England), Le Havre and Paris France, Vigo (Spain), Lisbon (Portugal), Gibraltar including the famous Rock of Gibraltar (Great Britain), Barcelona (Spain), Monte Carlo (Monaco), Livorno and Pisa and Florence—including the Leaning Tower, and finally Livorno and Rome where we stayed a few days on our own. The cruise line had absolutely great service and lots of food. Amazingly, we only gained about 2-3 pounds. We were busy every single day since we were in a new port city each day, we enjoyed the onboard activities (ping pong tournaments, basketball, gym, swimming, movie theatre, organized game activities and shows) and our dinner table mates who were all from the States. We enjoyed all the cities, but the ones we enjoyed the most included Rotterdam- where we took the local transit to a town called Kinderdijke and toured around the windmills; Gibraltar- it had a beautiful view of the Mediterranean



Windmills at Kinderdijke, Netherlands

and the Barbary apes were quite amusing as they jumped on people when they wanted to go to higher ground or wrestled with people for their food or shiny objects; and Paris – we only had about 3.5 hours in Paris so we walked along the Champs Elysees to the Arc de Triomphe and then ate lunch at the Jules

Verne Restaurant at the top of the Eiffel Tower. After the cruise we spent 3 days in Rome where we visited the Colosseum, Trevi Fountain and the Vatican. It was a wonderful trip, fun and relaxing... highly recommended. More photos and a journal of our trip can be seen on our website.

When we returned from our trip in early October, we saw another house that we liked in the Brentwood area and placed an offer on it.

Unfortunately, there were 11 other offers for this house. We figured the asking price for the house was probably \$30k less than it's market value. We placed our offer which was about \$15k above the asking price, and thought we had a good chance in getting the house. To our surprise, the people whose offer was accepted was \$80k above the asking price and no subjects. We were so amazed at how much that home went for as the home still needed renovations. At that point, we decided to expand our home search further east since the Vancouver Heights, Capitol Hill and Brentwood area wasn't fitting into our budget.

We spent the Thanksgiving long weekend at Glen's parents' home with his brother's family. We had a delicious Thanksgiving dinner and early Christmas dinner (since Glen's parents were heading south for the winter). During Thanksgiving, we





searched the Internet for houses in the Parkcrest, Sperling/Duthie and Montecito areas (near the base of Burnaby Mountain). We made a list of six houses that we wanted to see the following weekend in these three areas. The houses in these areas had much larger lots and better house condition all for the same price as the previous areas we had looked . When we first saw the house that we ended up buying on Broadway, we didn't pay much attention to it. We thought it was nice with a big yard, but we didn't look in detail as we wanted to go to the next house which we thought would be better. After looking at the remaining houses, we realized the Broadway house was the one. So we purchased the house and moved in on December 10th. The house is in really good condition with the renovations basically all done. The house is a bungalow style with 5 bedrooms and south facing. We have huge back and front yard, and we just love our new home. Everyday, it is so nice to see the sunshine streaming through the windows making it nice and



Our new house

cozy. As for our old condo, it has not yet sold. We hope it will sell in January. In the meantime, Glen and I have been staying close to home.

We'll be spending Christmas in Burnaby with Glen's brothers family and Susan's relatives. Glen's parents have gone to Gold Rock, California for three months to enjoy the warm and sunny weather. We will continue to unpack and possibly do some painting during the holiday season. If any of you are in the neighbourhood, we would love for you to drop by to our new home.

We hope this newsletter makes it to you during the holiday season. We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy 2006! *



In front of the Holland America Westerdam

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