

Vagabond Lodge a Golden opportunity

By JIM BARR
Special to The Sun

There is a saying that the true definition of success is obtaining your dreams. The owners/operators of the Vagabond Lodge are now living the dream.

On May 1, 2004 Lori and Ken Chilibeck opened the doors to this escape, nestled within the Kicking Horse Mountain Resort. Just outside of Golden, B.C. their beautifully appointed lodge features 10 rooms and is finished as a modern-day log cabin.

"Any logs from the lot were worked back into the structure, including this one" says Ken, pointing to the bar counter. "It had a curve to it, so it couldn't be used as a beam or post, so the carpenter turned it into our bar."

Having met working with Brewster's Tours, back in Banff about 30 years ago, they've been working to this moment for some time.

Lori gave up two years of her life for this project. "I moved seven times from the start till when we opened May 1! Logs would come off the lot and three of us, myself, my son and his girlfriend were out there with draw knives to prep the logs to go back into the structure" she says with pride.

The work meant long days in the sun and cold. "It was November that I froze my feet so bad I had to get new boots; my feet wouldn't fit back into the old ones! But it was back to work the next morning, the crews are standing there waiting to place the next log, it had to be done" she explains.

Determination was a big part of finish-

ing this project, and the results shine.

In Edmonton, Ken had been TSN's man for over 20 years. Just before that time, Ken spent several seasons in Leysin, Switzerland, just up the road from a very special hang-out.

"Club Vagabond it was called, it was such an enthralling place. We were always thinking out loud about 'how great it would be to have a place like this of our own,' filled with interesting characters from around the world and it felt really comfortable," says Ken.

Club Vagabond closed its doors about two years ago and the Chilibecks were there to pick up that torch.

"We want people to stay here that used to or are trekking around and backpacking, and now get to sit down and meet like-minded people" says Lori.

"Just like what I would see at Club Vagabond, we want to encourage return visitors. People meet different characters at the lodge, drawing them to come back the same time next year with the same people," says Ken.

Check out www.vagabondlodge.ca for all the details including great package specials like "Romance in the Rockies." This package features two nights, breakfast each morning, dinner at one of the finest restaurants in Canada - The Cedar House.

There's also a slew of outdoor activities awaiting your participation, for only \$199 per person.

Golf and hiking packages also available. Look for ski packages this winter.



- Photos by JIM BARR, Special to the Sun

ABOVE: The Vagabond Lodge offers 10 rooms surrounded by gorgeous B.C. scenery. Finished as a log cabin, the Lodge should become a home away from home for skiers and golfers from across Canada. The Lodge is located just outside of Golden, B.C. BELOW: The main lobby offers a warm spot to meet and greet with other guests.

