

THE RED ROOF IN OYSTER BAY

It's March 2018. For the second year in a row a group of friends, all paddlers with the Gibsons Paddle Club, have gone "Glamping". That's right, we take our voyageur style canoe, Dolphin Spirit, and go for two glorious nights of relaxation at The Painted Boat Resort and Spa in the Pender Harbour area right here on the Sunshine Coast. No matter the weather, it's always a treat to return from a long paddle to the comforts of the resort and the energizing circle of good friends. It's certainly a step up from the tent we're used to, thus the term "Glamping" rather than "Camping".

One of our paddle excursions this year took us to the previously unexplored waters of Gunboat Bay. Our crew hadn't seen this area before from the seat of a canoe. We slowly paddled the shoreline of the long finger bay, one of the many extensions of Pender Harbour itself. At low tide, the extremes of this bay are merely mud flats. But at high tide it's a gorgeous, hidden treasure of tranquility, serenity and natural beauty. At one point we went off up another bay, Oyster Bay.

As we paddled and explored the entire bay areas we traced the shoreline as closely as the high tide would allow. That's when I spotted the red roof in the trees with the pilings out front framing the scene.

"Hold the canoe."

From my seat in the canoe I took several photographs knowing that I had to paint the scene. Hidden in a dark corner of Oyster Bay, the red roof and green mosses and grasses caught the light. It had to be a painting. Like some heavenly spotlight pointing out my image to me, the light is the story here.

This image will serve me for a long time as a reminder of good times with good friends in a canoe. For me, the canoe is a magical meeting place where we all feel the energy and power of physical exercise, fresh air, natural splendour and valuable friendship. This simple composition will, I'm sure, serve the same purpose for each person who was in the canoe that day. And, I can't wait until next year when we do it all again.

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