

My Forty Years with SSID  
by Dale Gregory

In 1973 I married Wendy, and that summer she said to me: “I want to take you to my favourite place.” We came to Savary Island! Her grandparents were originals on the front in 1912, and she first came to Savary as a baby. We camped in Second Bay a number of times before 1980, and then purchased in August what we later learned was known at that time as the Real Estate Office for the subdivision. It was a converted PanAbode garage on Patricia Crescent with a deck on the front and back and it had a view of the ocean and a water connection!

In the summer of 1981, Woody Treadwell arrived at our door to ask for a donation to pay for fuel to operate the well that provided that water. The following spring I attended my first AGM at Langara College, and volunteered to serve as trustee for a three-year term. I soon learned that the subdivision had been started by Sam Allman of Marine Investments in the late 60’s and had been strongly opposed by the lot owners on the front.

I have some sympathy for Mr. Allman as he had many obstacles to overcome. The subdivision had to be designed to city standards including 66-foot roadways (4 12-foot driving lanes, 2 boulevards, and 2 sidewalks). He also was required to repeat water tests to prove that there was enough water; the last one for 21 straight days, with the water pouring over the cliff and down into the ocean.

In any case, Sam finally wanted out and sold the water system to SSID for \$30,000. SSID had received its Letters Patent in May of 1982 after electing three trustees in 1980; Woody Treadwell for one year; Merv Isert for two years; and Sherrie Miles for three years. They were required to have a tax collector and an operator. I actually acted as the operator for a short time that summer while SSID looked for a new one. People living near the tanks would call me and say: “Dale, the water is running down the overflow ditch!” I would then jump on my old bike and ride down to the pumphouse and shut down the well.

Twenty-one years later, in 2006, I was now retired for ten years and I again volunteered to be a trustee. The two incumbent trustees, knowing that I had been a trustee and experienced as a chairperson, immediately elected me chair of the trustees.

Then came the disaster of 2009! We did not have a very good water sampling system to determine the location of problems and we started to get poor samples. We had to issue boil advisories, and carry out chlorination flushes to attempt to clear the system. Trustees had to post signs throughout the subdivision and deliver notices to every house on the system. This lasted most of the summer until we discovered that the main water tank had issues. That fall, the 40,000 gallon tank had to be disconnected and moved, and a new gravel base installed, and the tank repaired and replaced. The project cost the Improvement District \$120,000!

The summer was a wake-up call for trustees John Swanson, Bryan Miles, and

myself. A review of the system revealed that we were vulnerable on a number of levels and issues. It was decided that we needed to work toward a system that was fully backed up and had a proper sampling system.

We now have a second well. We also have a second generator, after having to rent one for a short time. Our new sampling system provides samples at both wells, both tanks, and at four stations in the subdivision; two in the upper system and two in the lower system, for a total of eight samples every month of the year.

Prior to 2016 our banking was done in the Lower Mainland, as was the yearly audit. In that year we decided to transfer our funds as well as our audit to Powell River. We also hired our first Administrator (Janine Reimer) to do the work of running the Improvement District. This move saved me the work of doing the minutes for trustee meetings and contacting the Government for information and instructions.

In 2018 we hired Courtney Robertson from Lund as our Operator with EOCP Certification so that we could continue to operate the system.

Over the last two years, in spite of COVID, the trustees have continued to work to improve the system and at the present time are close to achieving a fully automatic operation of the system for the pump, generators and wells.

I would like to conclude with some thank you's. To the lot owners for allowing me to represent you for the last 15 years. Thank you to Sandy Miles for acting as our tax collector for many years before retiring in 2016. Thank you to Eric Ferreira who acted as our Operator for many years and also as our contractor for hook-ups and system repairs. Thank you to Bill Taylor who served a term as trustee and was our trustee delegate with an EOCP Certificate that allowed us to operate. A belated and reluctant thank you to Dan Glover, the Drinking Water Officer, who forced us to hire a geological engineer to establish a Well Protection Zone for the Improvement District.

Some Special Thank you's for Special People: To Jorge Lutz for serving as trustee and working so hard to take care of the water system and improve it.

To Courtney Robertson for joining our staff and doing such a great job of automating the water system and keeping it in good repair.

To John Revitt for joining the trustees at a critical time and helping us to transfer from the Lower Mainland to Savary Island.

To John Swanson who was a trustee from 2007 until 2013 and produced the Policy and Procedures Handbook and guided us through the renewal of our easements.

And last, but most important, two very special thank you's! First to Bryan and Sherri Miles, two people that have been in my life for a very long time and have done so much to support the trustees with their work ethic, knowledge and advice.

And finally, thank you to my wife Wendy, who brought me here and allowed me to spend so much of my time serving the lot owners. She has taken care of me for 45 years and it is now my turn, as her health issues have reversed our roles and made me less satisfied with what I have done as trustee for the last two years.