

## The HISTRA Report: September 2021

Wow, what a summer! We saw firsthand more sobering evidence and the increasing effects of climate crisis. From heat domes and forest fires to wells running dry, sometimes it feels we are living in some apocalyptic movie more than our Hornby paradise. What has provided a sense of balance is the gratitude I have for human kindness.

As a rental manager for 9 homes, I interact with a lot of guests. Time and again this summer, my guests have surprised and even overwhelmed me with their care and consideration. When the province wide fire ban began, one guest gifted me 4 new fire extinguishers. When I cautioned another guest about the need to watch their water usage in a house where we rain water collect, they blew me away by using less than half their allotted amount. This single mom and her four boys joked they went home covered with a solid layer of Hornby crust. When I jokingly challenged the next family how the gauntlet was thrown down, they stepped up and incredibly used even less water. The moment I was most touched though was when a guest surprised me by bringing her own tap water from home because I shared how precious our water is. She also took home all their recycling because I told her how our community carries the weight of removal in our taxes and beleaguered Depot crew.

These kindnesses and more buoyed my spirit and lifted me all summer. There are countless other stories which made all the hard work so incredibly worthwhile. Our visitors are every bit as cognizant of the reality of our climate crisis and the fragility of Hornby as we are. Guests wholeheartedly agree to bring their own sheets and towels now to homes where I once provided such items. I am seeing fewer and fewer single-use plastic water bottles because I ask people to bring reusable ones. All this makes it easy who to choose first when selecting guests for next year.

In a very tangible way, the community is the impetus behind what I do. A while back I surfed the HIRRA website and found the 2020 Visioning for Tourism, resonating strongly with the idea of growing and welcoming visitors who care about and participate in our community rather than tourists who only use Hornby as a playground. This hope serves as inspiration and guidance for new ideas and directions. Whenever I worry about whether my ideas are pedantic or patronizing, I refer back to the Vision for the courage to build something more fulfilling than tourism. Slowly but surely, I am seeing results and a growing momentum, one visitor at a time.

Ideas I plan to implement for next summer include putting a box in each home I manage for food donations to the Kitchen. I will definitely continue asking visitors to remove their recycling off island and stress the need for water conservation and how it directly impacts our community. And I will continue listening to the pulse of the community so I can share what is immediate and important with our visitors.

I cannot finish without expressing my incredible gratitude for my team who worked so well and kept me smiling all summer. To them and all the other hardworking summer service providers who make summer fun, Happy Labour Day!

Be well,  
Patrick Lui  
HISTRA member and rental manager