

# **This Emerald Isle, this Lasqueti!**

(by Robert Ball)

Friday July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006 started early for me, 5:00 am, as I had to catch the 9:45 am ferry to Lasqueti Island. The BCATA Directors were having a meeting there prior to the start of the Retreat. I had the pleasure of riding with Arnold and the two-hour trip to the ferry dock at French Creek whizzed by.

We arrived in plenty of time and even had time for a coffee at the restaurant close by

Our first big challenge was transporting our gear (I had a large watermelon for the Director's lunch) down this very steep ramp to the ferry dock. Seems there was a very low tide this weekend. It was very precarious not having one hand for the railing.

The Lasqueti Island ferry, the Centurion VII, is a foot passenger ferry only. It sails from French Creek and arrives at False Bay, at the north end of Lasqueti Island. Crossing time is approximately 1 hour.

The island is 5 km. wide and 21 km. long the same size and shape as Manhattan. It has a population of 350 that Statistics Canada says is the most highly educated community in British Columbia.

The island was named in 1791 after Juan Maria Lasqueti, a prominent Spanish naval officer. Some marine fossils found on Lasqueti have been traced to 100 million years ago. More recently, First Nations, Spanish explorers, and white settlers inhabited the island to explore, farm, ranch, and log. Lasqueti Island once had great stands of red cedar, however, much of these were logged prior to 1950. Tucker Bay was the location of the first post office, steamship service, school, and store – all developed after 1912. False Bay became the site for the first salmon cannery in 1916, and the population followed. False Bay would become Lasqueti's main centre, receiving the same services that Tucker Bay had earlier on.

It was a perfect day to be traveling by boat. It was clear and sunny and relatively calm waters.

The 17 km. trip in this compact ferry takes can be quite an adventure as sea conditions here can get quite rough when a strong wind and tide face off.

At the Lasqueti side, False Bay, we were picked up by reliable Noel. Once again we had to battle the low tide and steep ramps, uphill this time.

An interesting place to stop and visit on the way to the Teapot House is Crystals and Chamomile owned by Joy. It is a small gift shop located on the right hand side of the main road as you drive inland from the ferry dock. C&C offers a large selection of items from local and international artists and crafts people.

Lasqueti Island is noted for its peace and quiet. There is no hydroelectric power on the island and even the generators are turned off in the evening. One can enjoy a peaceful night by the light of a candle or kerosene lamp – now that's relaxing!

On Friday the Board had a very hearty lunch and productive meeting. We learned that the Conference was well in hand and the Brochure and Registration Form would be in the mail by the end of August. You should all have them by now. Unfortunately not all the Board could stay for the Retreat.

So the nucleus of the Retreat Group was Noel, Tolling, Kay, Robert, Marcus and Arnold, with at least another six to eight people expected. As Noel met each incoming ferry, the only three other brave souls were Bonnie, Cathy and special guest Shanti. We were it! You will have to go to the Retreat Web site to learn the identity of Shanti. [www.acupressurebc.org/Retreat.html](http://www.acupressurebc.org/Retreat.html)

The weather predictions were for a very hospitable weekend so tents were erected as accommodation in the meadows and we all slept outside.

So the intrepid and enthusiastic eight of us set about the task of preparing the first of several heart healthy meals and chat about what we would do the rest of the weekend.

That night I was sleeping outside and was awakened by a shaking of my tent. I had visions of one of Lasqueti's ghosts but after I plucked up the courage to go outside to see I noticed a deer nearby and I realized I had planted my tent under an apple tree. I was totally taken aback by the blaze of light in the sky with all the constellations showing their configurations. It was truly magical. Nothing like what we see in Victoria with all the ambient city light. The trip to Lasqueti was worth just this view. I could actually see the Milky Way.

Breakfast Saturday morning was a leisurely self-serve meal with good company and getting used to the slowed down pace and anticipating the day of glorious sessions.

Tolling and Kay showed up, Tolling with his trusty Danu Deck. Marcus was offered a reading and we all hovered around to share in the magic. One by one Tolling offered all of us a chance to learn where we were at in mind and body, which was a good starting point that we could work from in our sessions.

Speaking of which it was that time. The first ones up the stairs and onto the table were able to do their work first. I was one of those lucky people and had a most healing release that left me extremely energized. I came to realize how much I had been keeping my light under a bush these past months. It is very powerful to have two or three practitioners working on you at the same time. A sort of Midas Muffler for the Soul.

By this time it was time for a break and a scrumptious lunch was enjoyed by all.

After a rest and time for the digestive juices to do their thing, the afternoon was filled with sessions for those who missed out in the morning.

It was now mid afternoon and it was unanimously agreed that the weather was ideal for a cool refreshing dip in the ocean. We had to wait for the tide to come in over the hot ground in the bay before we all went down to a favorite secluded swimming hole with warm water, which was deep enough to swim off some large lounging rocks. It was the best! Real Cool!

Supper that night had a special treat cooked up by Arnold. It was a delicious apple and blackberry pie. Pictures of the chef and dessert can also be seen on the Retreat web page.

That night we all slept like babies after such wonderful sessions, cool swim and satisfying food.

After Sunday breakfast the group met to decide how our sessions this morning would be conducted. Michael Lines had shared with us at the Director's meeting "How to treat the Immune System". Noel had made notes at that meeting and shared them with us. So we decided to use these recipes in each of our sessions and with great success. To learn more about this efficient and powerful technique, come to the 2006 Conference in October 20/21 where Michael will be presenting this very topic on the "Practitioner's Panel".

Our final lunch was very nourishing and a little nostalgic, as we knew we would soon be parting from this idyllic place.

Clean up went quickly with many hands making light work. Noel and Kay had spent a much longer time sweeping away the cobwebs of the past months and lugging the chairs and carpets down from the top floor and making the house ready for our weekend. Our heartfelt thanks goes out to Noel and Kay for such a welcome and their efforts to make this space for us each year for this special time.

We all tumbled into Noel's car for the trip to the dock and caught the 4:00 pm ferry back to French Creek. Hugs all around and off we sailed looking forward to next year.