

Gillies Bay Internet Society – December Newsletter

2015 – A Year of Change for GBIS

1. End of Agreement with the Lasqueti Internet Access Society (LIAS)

Our agreement with LIAS ended on March 31st. GBIS then became an independent ISP and could decide on rate plans and new payment options. You can see an old newsletter recalling our early cooperation with LIAS here: www.gilliesbay.ca/wireless/LIASGBISHistory.pdf

2. Bookkeeper and PST, GST

In January we welcomed Bridget Andrews as our new bookkeeper. After our agreement with LIAS expired she took over all GBIS bookkeeping tasks. This put our books in a much more orderly and professional format. At the same time, we started collecting PST and GST on all transactions, something not done previously by LIAS. However, GBIS absorbed the fee increases, so that, in effect, rates were reduced by 12%.

3. New Data Plans

In April we introduced new data plans designed for clients with high usage. There are about 20 clients who have taken advantage of these plans. Amounts include GST and PST.

New Plans	limit	yearly	3 months
Standard	25 GiB	\$400	\$110
Medium	40 GiB	\$600	\$160
High	70 GB	\$1,000	\$270
Extreme	90 GB	\$1,200	\$320

4. More Bandwidth, more clients

We started our service from Mt. Pocahontas in 2011 with an E10 connection, then upgraded to an E30 in July 2013. These numbers refer to the total bandwidth available, shared at any instant between all clients using the system. In August our service was upgraded to an E100 connection. The service is provided by Telus under an agreement with Network BC to connect rural locations. During 2015 we added about 50 new clients and, with more each week, are approaching 200 total. We have also recently extended our range north to clients near the golf course, Crescent Bay Road.

5. Equipment Upgrade

In September Larry came over from Lasqueti to supervise the upgrade of several pieces of equipment at the Pocahontas Tower, including the main backhaul link to the Sunshine Coast Health Centre. The new backhaul is a full duplex system, so will allow more data traffic and provide more consistent service to clients. However, as we discovered during the recent outages, it does use more power, so instead of 48 hours backup, we now only have about 28 hours. We are in the process of ordering more battery backup at Pocahontas to get back to 48 hours.

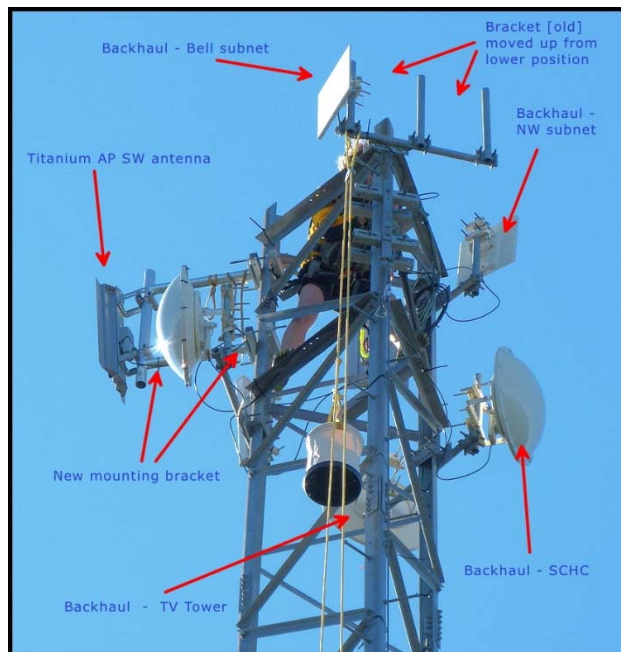
Below are some pictures of the Pocahontas Tower and the backhaul radios at the SCHC. The old backhaul link can now be kept in reserve as a backup in case of a failure.



Original (on right) and new backhaul dishes at Sunshine Coast Health Centre, south of Powell River.



Alan Davis installing the new backhaul dish on the Pocahontas Tower.



The array of equipment at the top of the Pocahontas Tower.



We have just connected the first clients to our new sub-net located near the golf course on Crescent Bay Road. This is successfully receiving a wireless internet feed from our tower on Pocahontas over 14 km away. The minidish is mounted on a temporary support post during the long distance link site-testing.

6. Reminder -- No Connection Procedure

Below are hints on what to do if you have no connection. If these procedures don't work, please do not wait – inform us immediately at 1-855-767-4247.

1. Check if a friend or neighbour's system is working. Make sure they are connected to the same tower or access point.
2. Turn off the power to the box with the white, blue or green light that attaches to your Internet antenna, [if you have a Wifi router also turn it off], wait 10 seconds, then turn the antenna back on.
3. Wait another minute before turning your Wifi router back on. Reboot your computer.
4. If this does not resolve the problem, bypass the router to check if the problem is with the router. Do this by connecting your computer directly to the Internet antenna. Reboot your computer.

If you still have a problem, for assistance please call

1-855.767.4247 (1-855.SOS.GBIS)

This number will give three options:

- (a) Press 1 to report a connection problem and to check for outages.
- (b) Press 2 for account or billing questions.
- (c) Press 3 to request a new connection.

7. Gmail billing issues and new email address

We have had problems with invoices going into 'junk' mailboxes for several months. Eventually we have traced the problem to a combination of factors that included the billing email address, the accounting software and the Telus SMTP server. As part of the 'fix' Bridget's bookkeeping email address has changed to billing@gilliesbay.ca. You will get invoices from this address in future.

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please send an email to GBISoc@Shaw.ca

The GBIS Board

Jim Cairns, Alan Davis, John Dove, Keith Franklin, Tom Scott and Brian Seymour