

PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release
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ICONIC VANCOUVER ISLAND FERRY SERVICE SAVED BY VANCOUVER ISLAND BUSINESSMEN

Port Alberni, B.C. – Devon Transport Ltd. announced today that Port Alberni based owner and operator Lady Rose Marine Services has accepted its Letter of Intent to purchase its operating business ensuring the continuity of ferry service to the Alberni Inlet and Barkley Sound on the MV Frances Barkley ferry. As a result of the difficulties presented by the COVID-19 pandemic Lady Rose Marine Services, which has been in business for 75 years, was due to close its' doors by the end of this month. With its last sailing scheduled for August 31st this deal arrives just in time to save this much relied upon transport lifeline for the area.

Lady Rose Marine Services currently ferries passengers, freight and supplies on the MV Frances Barkley ferry for day cruises along the inlet from Port Alberni to Bamfield and the Broken Group Islands year-round, and to Ucluelet June through August. It has been doing so since 1946. The only ferry linking remote communities in the Alberni Inlet and Barkley Sound, the vessel is a vital means of communication and transportation for isolated communities and lodges along the inlet, like the Huu-ay-aht First Nation village of Anacla. It delivers goods and freight to businesses, as well as passengers to homes, lodges, tourist and camping spots, the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre and kayaking destinations.

Devon Transport owners Greg Willmon and Barrie Rogers recognized that the ferry service was far too valuable to the region and one that was deeply relied on by the remote communities and businesses of the inlet and sound. Greg and Barrie are originally from Nanaimo and Victoria respectively and currently reside in Nanaimo. They have deep ties to Port Alberni and Bamfield, and are champions of the local Island communities they live and work in. They operate both a Budget Rent A Car & Truck and Budget Self-Storage location in Port Alberni and have many close local partnerships in town. Greg also lived in Port Alberni for a number of years and currently owns a property in Bamfield with close connections to many of its' residents.

The news of Lady Rose Marine's sudden business closure sent shock waves around the community last week and Greg, Barrie and their staff felt it as well. People who depend on the service to move people and goods have been scrambling to make other arrangements with limited options. Greg and Barrie didn't want to see Lady Rose Marine become another casualty of the pandemic, negatively impacting the local economy and social fabric of the area that they and their staff are a part of. Greg Willmon, Devon Transport owner, said "Destiny was set in motion during a conversation I had with current Lady Rose Marine Services owner Mike Surrell a few weeks ago. We were unloading our truck on his dock. It started with a question, 'How are things Mike?', he commented, 'They could be better Greg, there is a 50/50 chance the Frances Barkley won't be sailing next year, possibly sooner.'. I asked if he would consider selling rather than shutting down the service, his answer was 'Let's talk.'."

Those talks commenced ten days later after Greg returned from a vacation with family at his Bamfield residence. During those days in Bamfield he spent many hours considering the ramifications for the many residents and businesses of all the communities the MV Frances Barclay provides services to, not to mention the thousands of tourists that take the scenic cruise down the Alberni Inlet and beyond on her every year. He would be remiss if he didn't mention how it might affect, Mike, his wife Pauline, the

ship's crew and everyone else on his dedicated team and their families. It was evident the hard work and commitment that current owners Mike and Pauline Surrell and their team had put into the company over the years, dedicated to serving residents, businesses and visitors in this tight-knit community.

After a meeting late last week they reached an agreement in principle to purchase Mike and Pauline's business holdings, retain Mike and his entire team and to endeavour to continue uninterrupted service. Mike Surrell, current owner of Lady Rose Marine Services, said "My wife Pauline and myself could not be happier with the sale of the Lady Rose Marine. We fully understand the ramifications of this ship stopping service and the impact it would make in Port Alberni and the Barkley Sound. We are proud to be able to continue helping the new owners in making this company the success it was pre covid."

End.

About Devon Transport Ltd.

Devon Transport Ltd. ("Devon") is a Canadian consumer services corporation based in Nanaimo, B.C. Founded in 1967, its' main business is short-term vehicle rental, operating 28 Budget Rent A Car & Truck locations specializing in truck rentals with over 175 employees all over B.C. Budget has been B.C.'s number one car and truck rental company for over 50 years.

Devon also operates 8 self-storage facilities and retails moving supplies. Their mission is to consistently deliver a quality product, friendly service and great value to their customers.

BCBudget.com

About Lady Rose Marine Services

Lady Rose Marine Services is a marine company owner/operator based in Port Alberni that provides freight and passenger ferry services in the Alberni Inlet and Barkley Sound.

LadyRoseMarine.com

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