

Gambier Island Sea Ranch
c/o Scott M Kennedy
3283 Fleming Street
Vancouver BC. V5N 3V6

Carol Munro
CBC
Disc Drive

By Fax: (604) 662-6762

April 17, 1998

Dear Carol

Re: Gambier Island Sea Ranch - Chicken House

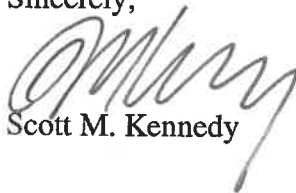
I enjoyed immensely yesterday's commentary on building chicken houses. I am an owner at the Gambier Island Sea Ranch and we are in the middle of that very process. We currently house about 75 chickens and find our existing facility inadequate. Last Sunday I found myself out on a boat scouting out an old cabin about to be demolished for chicken house supplies. It reminded me of my boyhood days in Saskatchewan.

The Gambier Island Sea Ranch is a 66 cabin strata titled recreation community on a 330 acre parcel of land. Gary and Patricia Hockett are full time resident managers of the property and they care for our collection of farm animals, buildings and services. Most of us owners are city types and journey to the Ranch for r&r and the small town social atmosphere. Our Annual General Meeting is coming up and we will be debating budgets for various projects including the chicken house.

The issue is do we build a cheap functional building or should the building go beyond that and be a quality addition to our collection of structures? Do chickens appreciate their quality of housing? Do people appreciate quality of design? Is the bottom line of egg revenue vs. costs the sole deciding factor? Does the quality of accommodation for our animals say something about the status in which we hold them? Do we use recycled materials at the expense of additional labour or is our recreational time worth preserving? Will the chickens lay more eggs in a new house? Can you help us?

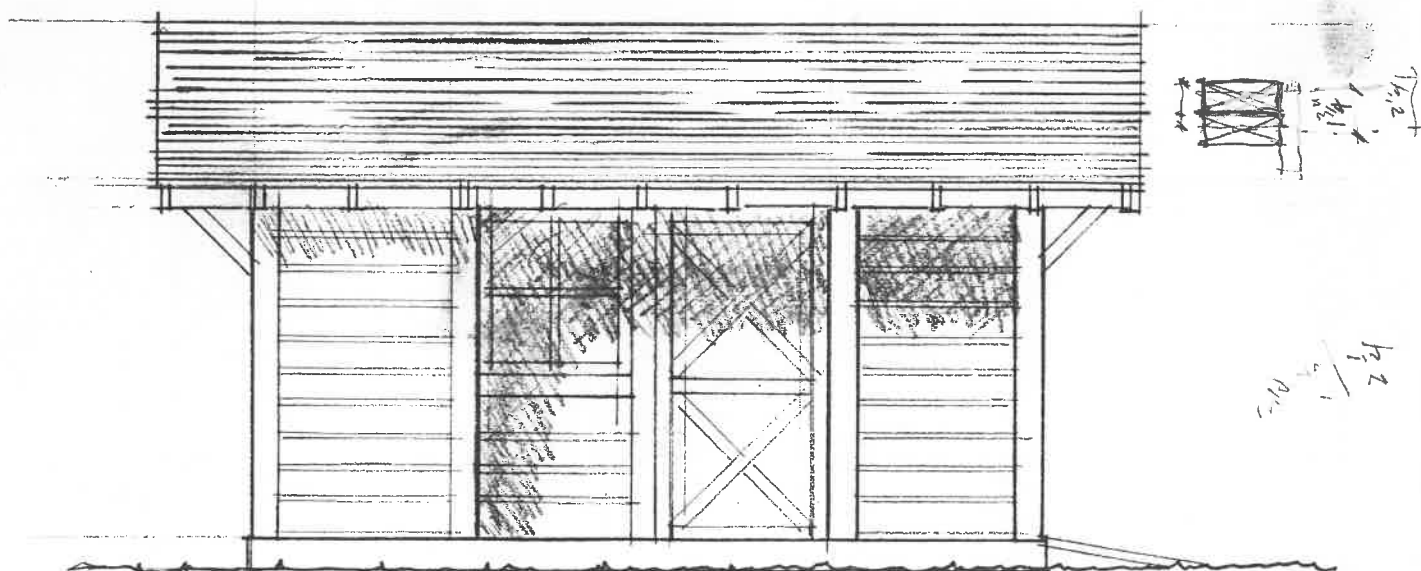
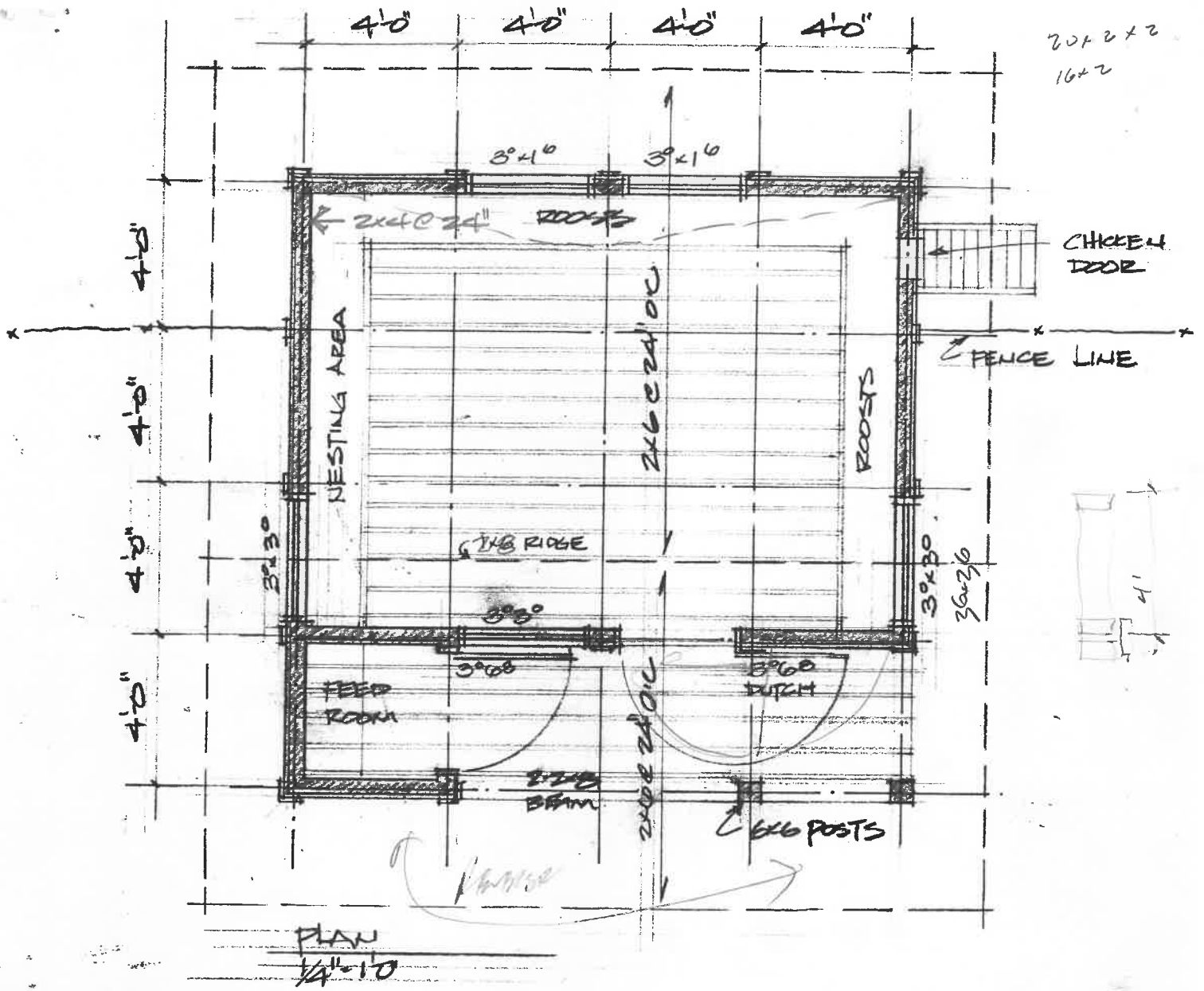
I have enclosed plans and our current budget.

Sincerely,

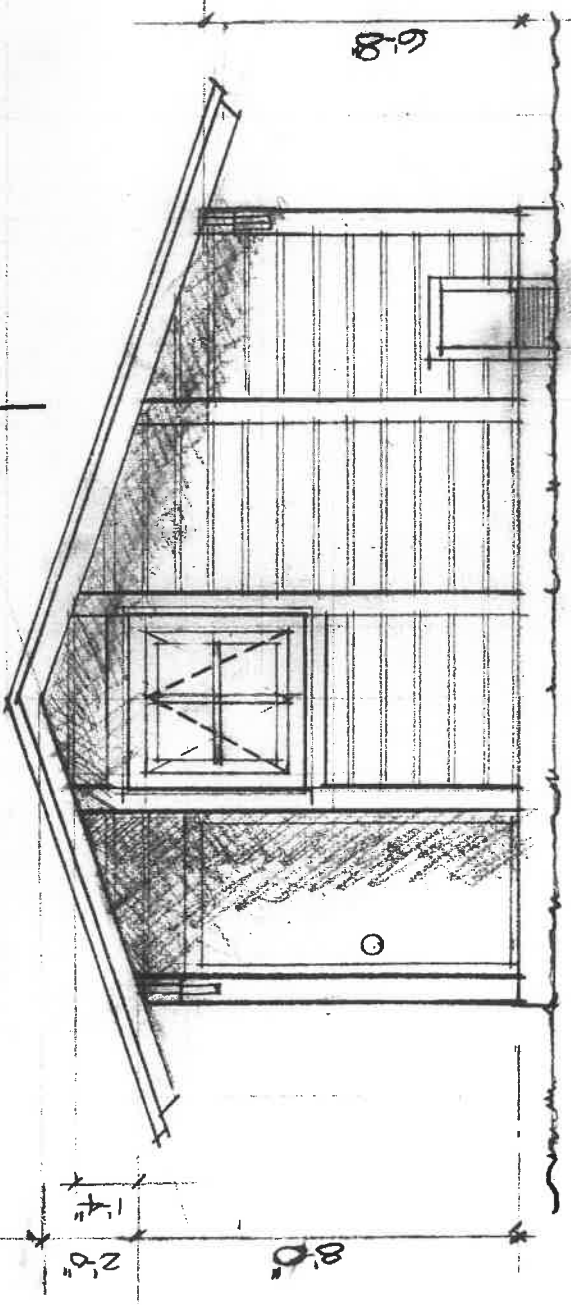


Scott M. Kennedy

wk: (604) 253-8800
fx: (604) 253-8133



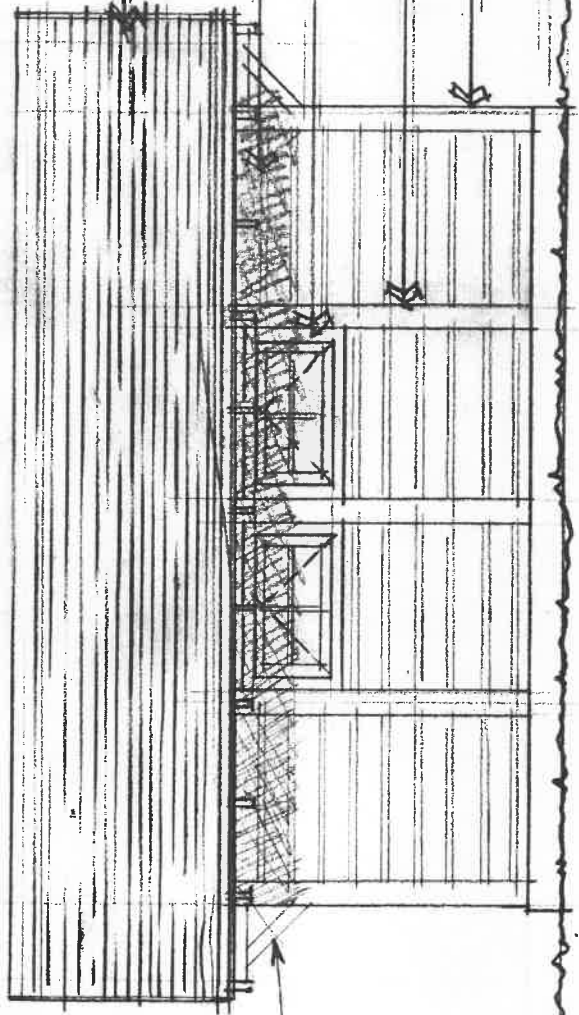
GISE.
CHICKEN COOP



SIDE ELEVATION

1/4" = 1'-0"

90
60
151



REAR ELEVATION

1/4" = 1'-0"

DUROID SHINGLES
LAMINATED STYLE
TRIPWOOD COLOUR
1x8 CHANNEL SIDING
TOP HUNG WINDOWS
WOOD OR ALUMINUM GRAB
1x4 TRIMS
1x6 CORNERS

AIR CHICKEN COOP

CHICKEN COOP

roof area	20.00 ft	24.00 ft	480 sqft
floor area	16.33 ft	16.33 ft	267 sqft
wall area	64.00 ft	8.00 ft	512 sqft

		length	quantity	unit cost	extension
FRAMING	2x6	14 ft	11 pcs	\$0.61	\$93.94
		10 ft	11 pcs	\$0.61	\$67.10
		16 ft	2 pcs	\$0.61	\$19.52
	2x8	20 ft	1 pcs	\$0.82	\$16.40
		16 ft	2 pcs	\$0.82	\$26.24
	2X4	16 ft	22 pcs	\$0.48	\$168.96
		12 ft	12 pcs	\$0.48	\$69.12
	6x6	8 ft	2 pcs	\$2.70	\$43.20
	1x4	16 ft	4 pcs	\$0.18	\$11.52
	ROOF SHEATHING	4x8x3/4" fir		15 pcs	\$22.00
SIDING	1X8 channel	4 ft	120 pcs	\$0.95	\$456.00
		16 ft	15 pcs	\$0.95	\$220.40
	1x6 trim	16 ft	6 pcs	\$0.80	\$76.80
	1x4 trim	16 ft	16 pcs	\$0.65	\$166.40
INSULATION?	R12 - 24" wide	992 sqft	7 bags	\$29.31	\$215.21
	6 mil poly				
ROOFING	shingles		480 sqft	\$0.43	\$206.40
	metal roofing (delete roof sheathing)				
FASTENNERS	3-1/2" galv framing nails		1 pcs	\$49.00	\$49.00
	2" galv siding nails		3 pcs	\$8.00	\$24.00
	7/8" roofing nails		2 pcs	\$8.00	\$16.00
	3-1/4" galv finishing nails		4 pcs	\$8.00	\$32.00
	flooring nails				
	bolts for timber base				
	6x6 galv post base		2 pcs	\$10.00	\$20.00
	18" long galv. straps		8 pcs	\$3.00	\$24.00

WINDOWS	3'6" x 3'6" awning	2 pcs	\$125.00	\$250.00
	3'6" x 3'6" fixed	1 pcs	\$125.00	\$125.00
	3'6" x 1'6" awning	2 pcs	\$100.00	\$200.00
DOORS	3'0" x 6'8" RH exterior paint grade	1 pcs	\$169.00	\$169.00
	lockset (common key)	1 pcs	\$20.00	\$20.00
	1-1/2 pr hinges	1 pcs		
	3'0" x 6'8" RH exterior paint grade du	1 pcs	\$244.00	\$244.00
	lockset (common key)	1 pcs	\$20.00	\$20.00
	flush bolt	1 pcs	\$15.00	\$15.00
	1-1/2 pr hinges	1 pcs		
PAINT & STAIN	solid colour stain	20 litres	\$7.00	\$143.36
	trim stain	8 litres	\$7.00	\$56.00
	accent stain	4 litres	\$7.00	\$28.00

Cross bracing or inside sheathing?
feed room shelving

CONTINGENCY \$250.00

subtotal \$3,872.57

pst \$271.08

gst \$271.08

totals \$4,414.74

Plus Fournitures

1000

1/3

Scott M. Kennedy
3283 FLeming St.
Vancouver, BC V5N 3V6

April 27, 1998

By FAX: (604) 253-8133

Hello, Scott Kennedy:

Re: Gambier Island Sea Ranch and the House of the Chicken

Ahh, the magic of radio! A voice comes through the air, perambulating around a fond idea, and suddenly out of the blue—a letter, a letter of enquiry, soliciting opinion and information. Authority has been conferred. Whole philosophies have been founded on slimmer premises!

In short, thank you for the G.I.S.R. Chicken Plans and spread sheet. The Orchard Homestead in its earlier manifestation used spreadsheets for the sheep, and even a genealogy program from the Mormons in Salt Lake City because it accounted for multiple-partner lines of descent: useful for breeding records in livestock. The chickens, however, have never had the benefit of architectural consideration, computer book-keeping, or the pocketbooks of a collective of supporting and enthusiastic individuals.

In a spirit of amazement and no little delight at your request, and hoping this reply arrives not too late to be useful—or at least fun, I consulted the legendary Chicken Nell, the Fata Morgana of hens. Together we have cobbled together a reply to your questions. (At this point a pause, to apologize for the delay in responding. Your fax arrived promptly at the CBC, but took some days to winkle its way to me—by which time I had left Studio 20 for the O.H. once again. Your letter followed, like an amiable heat-seeking missile, and finally arrived on site...etc. So...on to business...)

Chicken Nell says that many of the finest chicken houses are buildings scarpered from their previous uses and adapted for chicken occupation. Working-with-what's-there, and added roosts, passageways, etc. Amusement, creative use of materials, the challenges of lateral thinking are all involved.

Chicken Nell also stoutly maintains that chickens prefer: a) buildings which are not new; and b) buildings which have "happy pasts". She observes that new buildings make chickens feel uneasy about possible hidden agendas: so much money spent, and what do THEY want? Will we be dinner if we fail? Chicken Nell could be mistaken about these issues of course, but I am acting simply as the messenger here.

To tangle with the questions you raised: you seem to be planning a building by committee, which is, as a process, certainly rich with its own topography! On the other hand, with 66 owners, the \$5500.00 (give or take a few \$\$) outlined on the spreadsheet represents something in the order of \$85/member for a lot of chicken pleasure. (Labour costs are a factor, of course.) 75 hens will lay many, many eggs!

2/3

It seems to the chickens that a functional building — ie. functional from a chicken's point of view — IS aesthetically pleasing. And yes, of course chickens appreciate quality of housing; they display this pleasure by dropping dead less often of unspecified causes. Happy chickens cause people to feel good. Many a crisis in the day-to-day hurly-burly of raising children, for example, has been allayed by spending a few solo minutes in the feed room adjacent to the hen house with forehead against the wall, listening to the singing of contented hens. Chickens are good for people in this way.

Chickens like to be spoken to, and people are more likely to converse with chickens in environs which are less utilitarian (or industrial) than they are comfortable.

Counting egg revenue as a factor in building design/costs is a sensible line of thought which was totally abandoned by those of us at the Orchard Homestead well over fifteen years ago, when the First Chicken House was put into use. The cost of the first egg was calculated at \$400; each one that followed helped (minutely) toward the amortization of the project. (And in *that* particular instance, the building was already in place, and had only to be adapted, and the chickens and their feed and necessities purchased). It became quite clear very early on that counting your chickens or your eggs was not the road to bliss.

Chickens lay as many eggs as they can. I haven't met many hold-outs. It isn't easy for chickens to refuse an egg. Some new hens need a practice egg to get the idea; they sit on it and then want to make more. Beginners produce funny eggs---some with no shell. Hold these very carefully! Some can't stop the machinery very effectively, and present you with two eggs in one shell double the usual size. These are called, at the O.H. (for obvious reasons, and with great sympathy), "struggle eggs" ... they have an odd "belt" of extra shell around their middles.

A terrific general book on chickens and who they are and how they like to live is the uninspiringly-titled "Raising Chickens the Modern Way". It's not new—maybe 15-20 yrs. old, and published as part of a series on various farm animals ("Raising Pigs/Sheep...", etc.) Another good one tells about Chicken Tractors((that's the title) as a gardening aid.

As for the labour + recycled materials versus expedience and new materials, the question which comes by way of reply raises itself like morning swamp fog: is making of the chicken house, for those involved, a recreative process? For some folks, it beats 2 hours of racquet ball all to plum pudding. So you have to pick your players...and together decide what it is you are saving if you opt to "preserve" recreational time.

Some costs can be down-sized on yr. list. Roof sheathing can be Oriented Strand board instead of fir ply. The poly vapour barrier for the insulation will be effective even if it is thinner than the 6 mil. What kind of heat/light will be used? (Chickens will lay all year round, although less abundantly in Jan-March, —IF they have 14 hrs. of light daily. This does NOT suggest adopting the factory-regime of 24 hrs. of electric light; instead,

3/3

mindful of the chickens' photo tropic nature, the "summer hours" bestir them to continue laying when the natural light shortens with the onset of winter).

What accounting is there for the run, and for fencing suited to local chicken predators? How far off the floor are the roosts and nest boxes? Chickens can ascend and like to do so. This allows good use of interior floor space below the roosts & nests for times when you want to keep them all indoors. Each chicken likes to have some floorspace to itself. If yours like to play hopscotch more room will be called for.

Can't tell from the plans how the eggs are retrieved. If nest boxes open directly to the outside, via a flap or little door opening into a porch or the supply room, eggs can be gathered without going into the hen house proper. This = less disturbance for the hens indoors, and provides easy egg-gathering if you are in your slippers instead of your gumboots.

Chicken manure is prime for gardens, of course...and if the hen house floor is covered in a deep layer of peat moss, the hens stay dry and clean, their droppings are absorbed into the dry moss, and the entire batch of stuff can go directly to garden use—unlike shavings, which don't mulch as well. And they love to dust-bathe in the moss.

The chickens eagerly clean up weeds and garden debris, in return for providing good fertilizer. If you want them to free range, but you don't want them roaming far and wide, arrange to let them out for an hour or two before sunset, and they won't stray far...they like to be in bed before dark (bedtime story not mandatory)!

Well, that's more — and less — than you asked for! I hope some of it is useful and that some of it is fun. Chickens are great treasures, and make good subjects for the raconteur, as you have observed.

Thanks for listening so closely to "Disc Drive". It's always fun to visit the show—especially when one of the results of a happy afternoon is the Most Unusual Letter you sent my way. I am so chuffed by the notion of being a Chicken Authority that I may hang out my shingle as a Chicken Consultant, and offer to attend AGM's to proffer sage advice and country tales. Who knows what tomorrow may bring?

At the very least, I hope it brings much pleasure to you and the G.I.S.R. colleagues. And similar goodness to your dutiful hens. I also hope that you'll choose to keep me posted—mail sent to me at "Disc Drive" is always faithfully forwarded.

With greatest good wishes,

Carol Munro

Gambier Island Sea Ranch
c/o Scott M Kennedy
3283 Fleming Street
Vancouver BC. V5N 3V6

Carol Munro
CBC
Disc Drive

By Fax: (604) 662-6762

June 21, 1998

Dear Carol and Chicken Nell

Re: Gambier Island Sea Ranch - Chicken House

Your letter was entertaining and yes even informative. It has proved most beneficial to our project and the quest for community spirit at the Ranch. The advice to use peat moss on the floor of the house has been followed up by Gary and Trish. Previously we have been using wood chips. The peat moss should prove to be beneficial to Dr. Orest when he hauls the spoils, one wheelbarrow at a time, to his garden next spring. (I wonder if we accounted for the value of the by-products in our chicken house economic study?)

Since our last communication a mink has killed 8 chickens. His hide is tanning nicely. This was not entirely a bad thing as this week Gary and Trish, with a lot of help from some of Chicken Nell's relatives, hatched a family of five and a second family of four chicks. This was quite exciting for all us and will become a normal event at the Ranch as the need arises.

The sheep and pigs arrived by Sea Truck about three weeks ago. Always an entertaining event, pigs squealing and lambs baaing as we unload them one animal at a time, boaters anchored in the inlet must assume there are bloodthirsty pirates on the island with all the racket.

The board went through the usual struggle of too many projects and not enough time or money prior to this years Annual General Meeting. Unfortunately the chicken house did not make this year's cut. We anticipate it will be a top priority next spring. The environmentally responsible project of building a containment facility around our diesel tanks will take up most of the available manpower this year.

Your letter proved to be the highlight of our communal boat ride to the Ranch a few weeks ago. We would like to extend an invitation to you to attend the official chicken house christening ceremony, which will now be sometime in late spring of 1999. We thought a bottle of Wild Turkey would be appropriate. The menu will consist of omelets and eggnogs. You and your family will be our guests for the weekend at our lodge. The lodge was built in 1912. It has seven bedrooms and fronts on the inlet. The main floor now serves as our community hall.

I was contacted last week by Iona Green of the CBC TV program "Cottage Country". They are considering featuring the Ranch and our cabin, (notice they are cottages back east but cabins out west - vacation homes if they are offshore), in next years lineup. You may be able to get a preview of the place through your venerable institution.

We will keep in touch as to an appropriate time and date. The ulterior motive of course is to ensure the project is complete before company arrives.

Sincerely,

Scott Kennedy wk: (604) 253-8800
 fx: (604) 253-8133