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Tom Dowding and Jenny Garden are planning their annual meet and greet for The Music Room on September 11 and 12. This year's event will be in a new location, 7020 Massett Street, at the intersection of Selkirk Avenue.

Both Tom and Jenny grew up in Powell River and wanted to return to the community to live, work and raise a family.

Two years ago, they began their music lesson business in a Cranberry rental house but it was not a long-term strategy. Searching around for the perfect property for both a studio and home took quite some time. They found what they were looking for and began renovations in June to turn an attached garage into a studio.

"We've taken the next step," Jenny explained earlier this week.

They have been juggling trades people to ensure progress toward their meet-and-greet goal. "Everything has been falling into place," says Jenny.

Tom adds that 13 different people have helped with their renovations. "It seemed like every time we needed someone we would be introduced to them the next day." He says it is "incredible to be in a small town where people are so willing to help."

Building upon his experience at Bakerstreet Studios in Vancouver, Tom understands how to construct the recording rooms and the equipment needed to run a proper studio. He was able to purchase state-of-the-art equipment at



Ready to roll

Space for a recording studio is an important component of The Music Room's new quarters which are still under construction. Life and business partners Tom Dowding and Jenny Garden are bursting with entrepreneurial ideas for their business and the community.

a low price from a studio that recently closed down. The system includes a PRO Tools HD system and a Toft Audio mixing console.

Tom and Jenny, parents to nine-month-old Abby, have friends who were looking to move to Powell River. "Like us they wanted to live here but needed to find work," says Jenny. "It turns out that he was able to help us construct most of the studio and has found other work for his company, Findlay Construction, because of it. His fiancé is a teacher. We are happy that other young people are moving back to Powell River."

Jenny and Tom have other ideas to attract people to this community. They are planning to market Powell River as a destination for musicians to come and focus on their music and make quality recordings.

"They can save money, have a good experience and spread the word about what we have to offer," says Tom.

With the new studio, the offerings have expanded to include a multitude of recording opportunities. Powell River singers, songwriters, bands and anyone interested in what the studio has to offer are invited

to come to the meet and greet next Saturday and Sunday.

As always, The Music Room provides individual and group music lessons that focus on modern music. "Most of our students enjoy learning popular songs," says Jenny. "Tom's a great teacher. He loves working with the kids and they love learning from him."

A talented musician, Tom plays piano, guitar, bass guitar and drums, and can provide backup for recordings if required. He will also act as the studio's sound engineer to

facilitate recordings.

The Music Room has provided lessons to people as young as three up to 75 years of age. Jenny is excited because some of their students "are getting really good and starting to write their own songs that they may want to record." With the recording studio, they will be able to move into creating their own CDs.

"What we didn't have in our previous location was vocal instruction," says Jenny. "Now we have Kyrie Kaban joining The Music Room. She's keen and has the right personality to teach youngsters. We think she's going to do really well."

In the works is a recital next spring for parents and the community at large.

Looking to the future, The Music Room will have sound system rentals for both indoor and outdoor events. "We want to focus on quality music, solid recordings, and affordable rentals," explains Tom. "That is what The Music Room is all about."

Jenny adds, "Some people think we're nuts to do this but we're feeling pretty good now that it's almost done. It's been Tom's dream since he was a little boy. Music has always been his passion."

More information can be found at www.music-room.ca, by emailing info@music-room.ca or calling 604.485.1220.

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