

31 December 2021

Denman Island Memorial Society (DIMS) has entered a new era. Louise Bell, DIMS founding Board Director and tireless and passionate driver of the vision for a green cemetery on Denman from 2008 to the official opening in October 2015 died this past summer.

Following the opening of the cemetery, Louise continued to serve as the Chair of the Board of Directors (BoD) until December 2017. Afterwards Louise continued as DIMS 'Ambassador', answering many of the queries communities and individuals asked of DIMS. Louise hosted many DINBC tours over the years for interested folks. Louise had a hand in everything pertaining to the establishment of the Denman Island Natural Burial Cemetery. The present members of DIMS BoD do not hold this complete knowledge and experience of the project. The BoD is happy to continue hosting tours of DINBC for those interested in seeing the cemetery in operation and to answer any questions we can.

Fortunately Louise created the following comprehensive Log of Activities which dates and outlines the process from idea to reality of creating a green cemetery on Denman Island. Some of the requirements to establish a cemetery have changed over the years and some requirements are specific to Denman Island locally, provincially, and federally.

Many knowledgeable individuals with current information are available to help. The Green Burial Society of Canada's BoDs include many individuals who were very helpful to us including, Stephen Olsen, Lorraine Fracy and Erik Lees.

Our website, DINBC.ca, is also an excellent site for more information on our cemetery project.

We wish everyone success in their desire to establish a green cemetery for their community.

Prepared over time by Louise Bell

2008

- Early November, 2008 – Commitment by one of the two local government representatives (Louise Bell) to work towards establishing a second cemetery on the island, given that the existing cemetery no longer has available sites and that a number of islanders are eager to see a second cemetery established on the Island.
- Nov 27, 2008 -- Letters written by LB to the Denman Conservancy Association (DCA) asking the Board to consider donating the area in the southeast corner of Central Park (a CDA conservation area in the centre of Denman Island) for burying bodies; and to Middle Farm Collective (MFC) asking them to consider donating a very small area in the northeast corner of their land for use for burying ashes. The former site is kitty-corner to the existing cemetery; the latter is immediately west of it.
- Dec 17, 2008 -- Response letter received from DCA, indicating that the Board was willing to consider the request for a donation of land in the southeast corner of Central Park (NW Quarter of Section 17, excluding Lot A in Plan 17286) and suggesting that an investigation be conducted to assess the suitability of the land for burials.

2009

- Jan 5, 2009 -- Conversation with Tim Monaghan, Manager of Licensing, Business Practices and Consumer Protection Authority (BPCPA), who explained the steps necessary for a community like ours to start a new cemetery.
- Jan 12, 2009 – Internet Research begun by LB. Subjects studied were:
 - the Cremation, Interment and Funeral Services Act,
 - BPCPA procedures for creating a cemetery (requirements for obtaining a Certificate of Public Interest) and for operating a cemetery (requirements for a License to Operate a Cemetery), and
 - the Centre for Natural Burial and the Green Burial Council.
- Jan 16, 2009 -- Terms of reference prepared by LB for a preliminary geotechnical land assessment of land suitability for burial purposes for the southeast corner of Central Park.
- Jan 23, 2009 -- Meeting of LB the Co-Chairs of DCA, and a Denman islander who a Hydrogeologist, P. Eng., and then site visit at Central Park to assess suitable boundaries for the proposed cemetery and to plan for the preliminary assessment. An aerial photograph with superimposed mapping of the proposed site and surrounds was provided by a DCA director/Mineral Exploration Geophysicist, as a pro bono contribution.
- Feb 5, 2009 – Phone conversation of LB with a partner in the Middle Farm Cooperative, indicating that his group had agreed to consider a proposal for use of the northeast area of their lot (SE Quarter of Section 17, excluding 1) Lot A in Plan 14714, Lot 1 in Plan 15173 and Lot A in Plan 52326 VIP) for the burial of ashes.
- Feb 6, 2009 – Hydrogeologist and a Denman island heavy equipment operator visited the Central Park site and carried out a preliminary assessment of land suitability, providing their services pro bono.
- Feb 12, 2009 -- Meeting of LB and the Chair of the new Denman Community Land Trust Association to learn process for applying 1) to the government of BC to become a non-profit society, and 2) to the government of Canada for charitable status.
- Mar 9, 2009 -- Written report received from the Hydrogeologist for the preliminary site evaluation for the southeast corner of Central Park, indicating that soil depth and permeability are satisfactory.
- March 20, 2009 – Mineral Exploration Geophysicist updated his map to show the proposed 1.116 ha area in the SE corner of Central Park and 0.18 ha area in the NE corner of Middle Farm.
- Mar 30, 2009 – Formal proposal (Project design and timeline) completed and sent to DCA board members.

A Second Cemetery for Denman Island

Log of Activities

p. 3

- April 1, 2009 – During the first two weeks of April, LB spoke with a number of islanders seeking interest in forming a committee to spearhead the cemetery project.
- April 20, 2009 – LB met with DCA Board and received its endorsement of the project. Instructions were to proceed with the project as designed. The DCA Board created a Cemetery Liaison Committee, chaired by a DCA board member, to liaise with the newly formed cemetery committee.
- April 23, 2009 -- LB and a Cemetery Committee member met with Stephen Olson, manager of the Royal Oak Cemetery in Victoria BC to view the new area there designated for green burial and learn more about this process.
- April 27, 2009 -- Application for a grant-in-aid for \$900 submitted by the Denman Island Cemetery Committee to Teresa Warnes at the Comox Valley Regional District office and to Bruce Jolliffe, Director for Electoral Area A, Board of the Comox Valley Regional District. This application was successful, winning \$500 for early work by DIMS.
- April 28, 2009 – Contacts made with Patricia Gagnon, RD Economic Enhancement Coordinator for Denman and Hornby islands, and with Sonya Sundberg, Grants Administrator, Islands Trust, regarding possible funding sources.
- May 21, 2009 -- First meeting of the Denman Cemetery Committee. Seven members attended, plus representatives from DCA Board, the DCA Cemetery Liaison Committee and the Central Park Management Committee.
- June 4, 2009 -- Notification was received that the Province approved the name ‘Denman Island Memorial Society,’ now colloquially referred to as DIMS. With this approval, DIMS officially became a non-profit society.
- June 9, 2009 -- First meeting held of the fundraising subcommittee. Three members attended, two of whom are DIMS Board members.
- June 15, 2009 -- Sonya Sundberg, Grants administrator at the Islands Trust, contacted for assistance in preparing and filing an application to the Ministry of Community and Rural Development on behalf of the Denman Island Local Trust Committee for an Infrastructure Planning Grant to cover the geotechnical assessment and the community consultation. This application was submitted by the Trust in mid-July, but turned down for 2009 with the proviso that it would be considered again in 2010. Subsequent applications in the two ensuing years also failed.
- June 24, 2009 – First contact with the Agricultural Land Commission, when DIMS member /lawyer established contact with ALC Regional Planner Roger Cheetham to enquire whether DIMS should seek ALR exclusion or approval for “non-farm use” for the land intended for burials. Roger’s advice was to apply for exclusion, with the understanding that the request could be changed later to ‘non-farm use.’ Conversations continued over the next month on whether DCA should offer an exchange (land in for land out) or seek an outright exclusion. Roger’s advice was the latter, with the proviso that DCA would be wise to have property suitable for an exchange ready to suggest at a later date, if needed.
- June 21, 2009 -- Louise Bell contacted Richard Simpson, P. Eng, Simpson Geotechnical Ltd. Nanaimo, B.C. for an estimate for the geotechnical assessment required for the Certificate of Public Interest from BPCPA. This estimate, at \$5000, was finalized on July 24, 2009.
- June 26, 2009 -- First contact with Daniel Roehr, Assistant Professor, Landscape Architecture, School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (SALA), University of British Columbia, regarding design of the burial ground as a candidate for the ‘Community Studio,’ a non-profit community-based design project involving SALA students and recent SALA graduates.

A Second Cemetery for Denman Island

Log of Activities

p. 4

- July 4, 2009 -- Hoerburger Land Surveyors, Courtenay B.C. contacted by Louise Bell for an estimate for the survey required for future subdivision of the land to create a separate lot for the cemetery. This estimate, for \$3900, was received on July 6, 2009 and was not used.
- July 9, 2009 -- Second meeting of the Denman Island Memorial Society (formerly the Denman Cemetery Committee). Nine DIMS members attended, including two new members, plus members of the DCA Cemetery Liaison Committee and one member of the DCA Central Park Management Committee.
- July 29, 2009 -- On-site meeting with Kathy Dunster, geographer, registered professional biologist and registered landscape architect, who recently moved to Denman Island, to discuss design of a natural burial ground. This meeting was attended by six DIMS members and three DCA members.
- August 6, 2009 – A Certificate of Incorporation was issued by the Registrar of Companies in the Ministry of Finance, BC, establishing DIMS as a registered society (File# S-55505).
- August 13, 2009 -- Third DIMS meeting, also attended by two DCA liaison committee members. Thereafter, DIMS met monthly but these continuing meetings are not recorded in this Log.
- August 20, 2009 – A DIMS member met with Stephen Olson, Manager of the Royal Oak Cemetery in Victoria BC, to view the new green burial area there and learn about managing natural burials.
- August 27, 2009 -- DIMS sent a double-sided flyer to all households on Denman Island, sent as a flyer in the local weekly newspaper and entitled “A Second Cemetery for Denman Island.”
- Sept 10, 2009 -- DIMS hosted a community meeting for residents of Denman Island to learn about natural burials, meet the DIMS Board members and join the Society. Attendance was 32 people, including the DIMS Board
- September 18, 2009 – DIMS submitted an application to the Canada Revenue Agency for charitable status. Soon after that a letter was written to local MP John Duncan, seeking any assistance he could provide. DIMS was notified in late November that status had been granted and was retrospective to the date of submission of the application, namely, September 18, 2009
- Oct 1, 2009 -- Contact made with Sara Fryer, co-chair of the Community Studio (a group of recent UBC Landscape Architecture graduates) requesting their volunteer participation in a community workshop to develop conceptual design ideas for the cemetery. Planning for this event continued over the ensuing months, with the help of registered landscape architect Kathy Dunster (see above).
- Oct, 2009 – A DIMS member travelled in Great Britain, visiting the Carlisle Woodlands Cemetery in Cumbria and discussing natural burial with staff at the site.
- Nov 11, 2009 -- The DIMS and DCA boards held a special joint meeting to discuss terms for transfer of the cemetery land. Subsequent to the meeting, the DCA Board decided at its next meeting that, conditional on approval by the DCA general membership at its March Annual General Meeting and on a conservation covenant being registered on the land, DCA would transfer the land to DIMS for the sum of \$5.00.
- Nov 28, 2009 -- DIMS Chair and DCA Co-Chair sign a nine-page Letter of Agreement, detailing terms for the land transfer, joint communications, community consultation and similar aspects of the project.
- Dec 16, 2009 – An application was submitted to the Islands Trust to rezone the 1 ha of land designated for the cemetery from Agriculture (A) to Institutional (IN). The application was prepared by DIMS for DCA. The application was subsequently received by the Local Trust Committee at its business meeting on Jan 18, 2010, when the Committee decided that the application would be processed with the ongoing bylaw amendments regarding climate change, thus saving DIMS the \$4950 application fee.

- Dec 19, 2009 -- A heavy equipment operator, DIMS Chair and a board member walked the cemetery land and identified a suitable site for an access road running west from North Central Road to the logging road that runs diagonally through the cemetery land.
- Over 2009 -- DIMS publicized this project by means of four Grapevine articles, and one article in the monthly Denman newspaper the Flagstone. Publicity of this sort was continued in 2010.

2010

- Jan 7, 2010 -- An application was submitted to the Islands Trust requesting the Agriculture Land Commission remove the cemetery land from the Agricultural Land Reserve. This application was also prepared by DIMS for DCA. The application was received by the Denman Island Local Trust Committee at its business meeting on Jan 19, 2010, and it was decided to forward the application to the ALC.
- Jan 12, 2010 -- Following a positive response to a Letter of Inquiry submitted the previous fall, DIMS submitted an application for \$14,420 to the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia, which responded on Mar 18, 2010 that DIMS was successful for the amount of \$10,000.
- January 20, 2010 -- DIMS was notified by the DIRA Waste Management Committee that it had been chosen to become one of the community groups to raise funds through bottle donations to the Denman Island Bottle Depot. DIMS must raise \$100 or more annually to remain in the program. Proceeds of \$50 or more are released, with payments made on a quarterly basis.
- January 23-24, 2010 -- DIMS hosted the first Denman Island Table Tennis Tournament as a fundraising event for the new cemetery. Forty six individuals registered and played on both days. DIMS, provided snacks and meals to participants and the audience, sold memberships and facilitated a medals ceremony at the end of the event. Net proceeds were just over \$2600.
- February 16, 2010 -- the Denman Island Local Trust Committee gave first reading to Bylaws Nos. 196 and 197, which propose the amendments to the official Community Plan and the Land Use Bylaw that are necessary to rezone the cemetery land.
- February 16, 2010 -- At this same meeting, the Local Trust Committee agreed to forward to the Agricultural Land Reserve an amendment to the exclusion application that proposed the inclusion of 2.3 ha of land in the northeast part of the island into the ALR at the time that the 1.1 ha piece was excluded. This amendment was forwarded by Trust staff to the Commission one week later.
- February 23, 2010 -- the Local Trust Committee hosted a Community Information Meeting regarding the proposed rezoning.
- Feb 28, 2010 -- DIMS submitted an application for a grant-in-aid to the Comox Valley Regional District for \$700 to cover costs for the upcoming May 2010 Design Charrette with the Community Studio. This application was successful, winning \$500.
- Mar 1, 2010 -- The following resolution passed unanimously at the DCA Annual General Meeting:

Be it resolved to approve the transfer of approximately 1.1 ha of land at the southeast corner of Central Park to the Denman Island Memorial Society (DIMS) for consideration of \$5.00, subject to the registration on title of a conservation covenant that allows use of the land as a cemetery for natural burials but requires re-vegetation with indigenous plants in accordance with a management plan to be agreed upon by DCA and DIMS.
- March, 2010 -- DIMS Board Member/lawyer, began informal discussion with DCA Co-Chair regarding potential terms for the conservation covenant required by DCA for transfer of the land. This work was continued over the next nine months, beginning with an "Intent of Agreement" which was drafted May 18th and later amended and moving to successive drafts of the substantive parts of the covenant.

A Second Cemetery for Denman Island

Log of Activities

p. 6

- April 30, May 1 and May 2, 2010 – DIMS hosted a “design charrette” in the Denman Island Community Hall, facilitated by members of the Community Studio, a non-profit society comprising recently graduated landscape architects from UBC’s School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture who provide volunteer services to BC communities to assist in the planning of outdoor community spaces. On April 30, the time was spent on the land. The charrette was on May 1, attended by 30 individuals in total. On May 2 about the same number of charrette attendees and members of the public gathered to hear a presentation by the Community Studio summarizing the charrette ideas and presenting two designs incorporating these ideas.
- May 1, 2010 – The April/May issue of In Focus, a 20-page Comox Valley publication, contained a 2-page article on the Denman Island Green Cemetery project.
- May 22, 2010 – DIMS board members sold memberships at a table at the Recycling Centre and passed out information about DIMS.
- June 15, 2010 – An application was submitted to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure for subdivision of Central Park to remove the cemetery land from the Park and create a separate lot. Application processing will be preliminary until the rezoning is completed.
- June 29, 2010 – DIMS received a written report from Sara Barron (formerly Sara Fryer) of the Community Studio summarizing the findings and two designs resulting from the May 2010 Design Charrette and requesting feedback from DIMS. Later this summer, CS will present a third design, incorporating ideas from CS members.
- July 4, 2010 – DIMS contributed cakes and hosted a “cake walk” at the annual Pancake Breakfast put on by the Denman Island Voluntary Firefighters, raising \$301 for DIMS.
- Aug 20, 2010 – DCA received notice that the Agricultural Land Commission had approved the application for exclusion of the cemetery land from the Agricultural Land Reserve.
- Sept 5, 2010 – DIMS sold the corn-on-the-cob at the annual Fall Fair on Denman Island and raffle tickets for a basket of treats. As well, the table provided brochures explaining natural burial and sold DIMS memberships. Including \$70 for new memberships and donations, \$525 was raised over the day.
- Sept 7, 2010 – The Denman Island Local Trust Committee adopted Proposed Bylaws 196 and 197, which completed the rezoning of the cemetery land in the SE corner of Central Park as to allow its use for a cemetery.
- Oct 14, 2010 – DIMS held its first Annual General meeting, reports presented by the president, the Secretary and the Treasurer. Reports were also presented for a number of Project Committee members covering specific areas of the work to date to create a natural burial ground.
- Oct 23-24, 2010 – Seven members of the Community Studio returned to Denman Island for a second design charrette, this time presenting ideas developed by Community Studio members that reflected the majority views gathered at the first charrette while incorporating design features that honoured the sanctity of a graveyard and acknowledged the Island’s strong history of agricultural land use.
- Nov 6, 2010 – Two Committee members drove to Shawnigan Lake (near Victoria, BC) to meet with Joe Sehee, Chair of the Green Burial Council (GBC), and Don Morris, Canadian Representative for the GBC. Ten or twelve others from Vancouver Island interested in the idea also attended, and stayed on after Joe and Don left to learn more about the DIMS process to date.
- Nov 19, 2010 – A DIMS Committee member/Islands Trustee+Electoral Area Director met with Pam Munro of Courtenay, BC, who is a former candidate for the Green Party, both federally and provincially, for the Comox Valley, to share our knowledge and progress to date on establishing a green burial ground.

- Nov 21, 2010 -- Community Studio member Kathy Dunster repeated her PowerPoint from the Oct 23rd charrette on cemetery history and green burial in a Saturday morning program and site visit arranged specifically for members of the DCA Board and its Covenant Committee.
- Nov 22, 2010 – DCA applied to the Islands Trust for a Development Variance Permit (DE-DVP-2010.3) to waive the land use bylaw requirement for proof of septic capability and potable water prior to subdivision of the cemetery land. Subsequent correspondence from the Islands Trust office dated Dec 16, 2010 informed DCA that the Denman Island Local Trust Committee would cover the cost of permit, and it was issued early in 2011.

2011

- January 25, 2011 – DIMS and DCA signed an amendment to the Nov 2009 Letter of Agreement that enables DIMS to use certain land treatment and design features intended to identify the land as a place that respects the islanders who are buried there while continuing to meet the desired conservation standards.
- February 15, 2011 -- DIMS again submitted a grant-in-aid application to the Comox Valley Regional District, this time seeking \$800 towards the fee for the Cemetery Plan necessary for the license from the Consumer Protection Authority of BC to operate a cemetery. The application was successful and provided \$500 for this work.
- Mar 5-6, 2011 -- DIMS hosted the second Denman Island Table Tennis Tournament as a fundraising event. Forty-two individuals registered and played on both days. DIMS, sold snacks and meals to participants and the audience, sold memberships and facilitated a medals ceremony at the end of the event. Net proceeds were just over \$2750, approximately \$150 over the 2010 proceeds.
- May 30, 2011 – Terms of the conservation covenant to be held by DCA were finalized by DIMS and DCA and the final draft of the covenant was sent to both parties' lawyers for a legal review.
- June 20, 2011 – DIMS began work on the Rules and Regulations for the new cemetery, focussing its attention initially on the term "family" as used to define who would qualify for burial in the new cemetery. Work to date with the BC Assessment Authority towards establishing a property tax exemption required clarity on any restrictions DIMS was intending to impose on cemetery users.
- July 1, 2011 – The July/August, 2011 issue of Canadian Geographic magazine contained a one-page article on the Denman Island green cemetery project.
- July 1, 2011 – Surveyor Peter Mason completed the formal survey of the land, including the work necessary for subdivision of the land by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and the points requested by the Community Studio for completion of its design proposal for the cemetery.
- Sept 19, 2011 – Subdivision of Central Park to set aside 1 ha for the cemetery was approved by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.
- Sept 19, 2011 – The DCA Board approved appraisal values for the cemetery land, zoned as "Institutional," of \$140,000 for the land without the covenant and \$70,000 for the land with the covenant.
- Oct, 16, 2011 – A DIMS Board Member /lawyer, wrote to Compliance Energy Corporation requesting that it release the undersurface rights shown on title of the 1 ha of land intended for the new cemetery. Receiving no response, the DIMS board member followed up with a phone call to President John Tapics on Nov 24, at which time Tapics indicated that it was unlikely they'd give up the rights and that any use they might make would be for natural gas by entering the surface a long way from our land. He also indicated that there was a chance that Compliance might grant us a lease for a certain depth of the ground. Research was then undertaken to determine how other cemeteries and land conservancies have dealt with this potential problem. Conversation with Compliance's legal representative continued into spring and summer 2012, during which time Compliance informed us that a restrictive Covenant would be a better approach than a lease and undertook to prepare same.

- Oct 28, 2011 – A DIMS board member/lawyer) wrote again to John Tapics at Compliance Coal reporting that the Land Title Office saw no difficulty relinquishing undersurface rights, but that, should the company choose not to take that step, the option of lease remains a viable alternative. In ensuing communications, Tapics indicated that Compliance would have an answer for DIMS before the end of the year.
- Nov 11, 2011 – DIMS was the recipient of the \$2030.85, \$1702.00 from admissions and \$328.85 from refreshments, from the “Dawning of the Age of Aquarius”, a musical event based on the movie “Hair” and hosted by Denman islanders in the Denman Community Hall.

2012

- January 25, 2012 -- DIMS held its second AGM. Following minutes and reports, those present supported a motion to increase the number of directors from five to eight, and the slate of nominees presented by the nominating coordinator was elected by acclamation, thus allowing all of the project members to be members of the Board.
- February 25–26, 2012 – DIMS hosted the third Denman Island Table Tennis Tournament, a great success with 43 registrants and netting \$2523.87.
- February 29, 2012 -- DIMS again submitted a grant-in-aid application to the Comox Valley Regional District, this time seeking \$1000 for the Certificate of Public Interest from the Consumer Protection Authority of BC. DIMS was awarded \$500 later that year.
- March 2012 -- DIMS began work drafting the initial Management Plan for the new cemetery, a requirement of the conservation covenant and a usual practice in land conservation. Work on the Plan continued until early July, when it was halted temporarily due to several project delays. Work began again in November 2012 and continued into 2013.
- April 23, 2012 – DIMS joined the Denman Island Community Education Society (DICES) to manage the kitchen and the flea market at the Denman Volunteer Fire Department’s Annual Auction, netting \$1700.00.
- April 30, 2012 – DIMS was a recipient of a portion of the proceeds from the 2012 Martini Lounge entitled “Heroes, Villains and Victims,” bringing \$75.00 to DIMS.
- May 5, 2012 – DIMS did a morning walkabout on the cemetery land with Denman Islander Roy Vidler, of Wildside Nursery, to discuss how best to prepare the land for a cemetery and the best approach to plantings for the allee, for preparing the land and for the maintaining burial areas once they are filled.
- May 8, 2012 – DIMS held an evening meeting with Denman Islanders Hamish Kimmins, Professional Forester, and Kathy Dunster, Plant Ecologist and Landscape Architect, to solicit advice on the best way to maintain the cemetery land after rough clearing. Both of these advisors strongly encouraged DIMS to plant Garry oaks along the allee and to develop a Garry oak meadow in the cleared areas.
- July 30, 2012 – Two board members met with an islander who has dug graves on Denman for the past 40 years or so and has cleared land here for development purposes, to ask technical questions about land preparation and seek advice on the kind of clearing that would best suit our purpose.
- August 2, 2012 – Following a working DIMS Board working session on cemetery design, a Board member asked Denman Island designer Etienne de Villiers to donate designs for three cemetery structures: the gathering space, the main entranceway and the north entranceway. Following a meeting with Etienne on the land in August 2012, work with him, including review of his drawings, continued through 2012 and into 2013.

- August 10, 2012 – Two board members met with the DCA co-chairs to update them on the progress of the cemetery project, to explain DIMS’s latest view of the best way to prepare the cemetery land and to ask that a meeting be set up for the two boards to review the covenant provisions in light of the need for land preparation. Subsequent to this meeting, DIMS provided the DCA Chair with a 6-page document listing the eight draft covenant changes being requested and providing background explanations and a site map taken from the Community Studio design for the cemetery.
- August 17, 2012 – The Comox Valley Record ran a story about Denman’s new green cemetery, citing an interview with Board member Louise Bell and running a photo of her on the cemetery land.
- August 23, 2012 – Three board members met with islander /botanist to ask questions about suitable plantings for after the land preparation and seek advice on the kind of continuing maintenance that will be required.
- September 4, 2012 – Following ongoing communication in 2012 between Board member/lawyer and Don Haslam, lawyer for Compliance Energy Corporation, the DIMS board member met on Sept 4 with surveyor Peter Mason to provide direction identifying the geodetic datum point needed for finalization of the proposed restrictive covenant between Compliance Energy Corporation and DIMS regarding any future use of the land beneath the cemetery to exercise mineral rights held by Compliance, specifically for natural gas and methane.
- September 4, 2012 – Five Board members met with four of DCA’s six Land Committee members/advisors to discuss the requested draft covenant changes, mainly regarding land preparation. Discussions between DIMS and the LC continued over the next month.
- October 22, 2012 – Five DIMS Board members and eleven DCA Board members, plus the Land Manager, attended a special joint meeting of the two boards, where DCA agreed to the covenant changes as finally requested by DIMS, which included “rough clearing” of the burial areas to be used for the coming 35 years (considered 35% of the total burial area) and tree removal only for the remaining burial areas area (65% of the total burial area).
- October 23, 2012 – As a result of the aforementioned joint board meeting, DIMS began work drafting an agreement between the DIMS and DCA boards to allow the removal of slash from the cemetery land to a shallow trench immediately northwest of the most northern point of the cemetery land. Called the “Trench Agreement,” the DCA LC and DIMS agreed on a final draft of this agreement on Dec 23, 2012.
- November, 2012 – DIMS began investigating the cost of property insurance, anticipating ownership of the cemetery land in the coming month or so.
- December 1 and 2, 2012 – As a fundraising event, DIMS rented a table at the Denman Island Christmas Fair and sold society memberships for 2013, about 15 calendars donated by a resident, and raffle tickets for a gift basket of books and related presents, making a net profit, excluding memberships and the calendar sales (which were considered “donations to the society”) of \$315.
- December 3, 2012 – DIMS received the news that, unbeknownst to the land owner or the previous rights holder, the undersurface mineral rights on Central Park had reverted to the Crown in 2008. Thus, DIMS had no further reason to continue negotiations with Compliance Energy Corporation regarding this issue.

2013

- January 17, 2013 – The weekly Denman newspaper, the Grapevine, carried a two-sided, full-page insert outlining DIMS’s progress to date, describing the cemetery land and the proposed physical features, and inviting islanders to attend the upcoming AGM.
- January 23, 2013 – DIMS Board member/lawyer took the signed conservation covenant, the subdivision approval documents, official survey and other related documents to the Provincial Land Title Office for transfer of the cemetery land from the DCA Board to the DIMS Board. The official date of the transfer is January 23, 2013.

A Second Cemetery for Denman Island

Log of Activities

p. 10

- January 24, 2013 – DIMS held its third AGM. Following minutes and reports, those present supported a motion to elect the seven directors who chose to allow their names to stand for re-election.
- January 30, 2013 -- Richard Simpson, Professional Engineer, visited Denman Island to do the land work necessary for the formal geotechnical assessment required for application to CPA for a Certificate of Public Interest for creating a cemetery. Islander (grave digger) assisted him.
- February 3, 2013 – Two DIMS Board members met on the cemetery land with a group of Thetis Island residents who wanted to hear about our project.
- February 18, 2013 – A DIMS Board member made a presentation at the monthly meeting of the Denman Island Residents' Association (DIRA). DIMS also provided a display of drawings of the proposed cemetery design and structures as a means of eliciting feedback from Denman islanders. The display was then moved to the Denman Island Seniors' Hall, where it was on view for three weeks.
- February 15, 2011 -- DIMS again submitted a grant-in-aid application to the Comox Valley Regional District, this time seeking \$1000 towards preparation of the cemetery land. The application was successful and provided \$500 for this work.
- March 2–3, 2013 – DIMS hosted the fourth Denman Island Table Tennis Tournament, another great success with 42 registrants and netting \$2046. Two members of the Community Studio attended and, during the second day, spent an hour on the cemetery land with two DIMS board members reviewing details of the design.
- March 8, 2013 -- DIMS submitted the first draft of the Management Plan to DCA's Land Committee. Comments from the LC were received on April 5, and DIMS subsequently returned three further drafts to the LC, until the LC considered the plan acceptable and forwarded it to the DCA board. The DIMS Board adopted the plan by resolution on May 15, 2013 and the DCA Board approved it on May 27, 2013.
- May 1, 2013 -- DIMS submitted an application to Denman Works! for \$20,000 to fund construction of the Gathering Space trellises and the main entry structure. An award of \$5500 was made over the ensuing year.
- May 3, 2013 -- A completed application and the fee of \$1092.00 was submitted to the Business Practices and Consumer Protection Authority of BC (CPA) for a Certificate of Public Interest, which is a requirement for the 1-ha lot to be used as a cemetery. DIMS received notice in October 2013 that CPA had sent notification to the BC Land Title Office to register the Certificate on the title of the cemetery property.
- May 6, 2013 -- The DCA and DIMS boards held a joint board meeting for the purpose of carrying out the stipulations regarding Communications set out in the Letter of Agreement signed on 2009 and amended in 2011. The agenda consisted primarily of a presentation by DIMS Board members covering the structure and operation of the DIMS Board, the project achievements to date and the plans for the coming year for land preparation and construction. Plans were made for one or two DIMS board members to attend the first 10 minutes or so of DCA board meetings in July, Oct, and January to liaise with the DCA board for the purpose of providing updates on matters of common interest.
- May 9, 2013 – A completed application for a permit for a road access for the cemetery was submitted to the District Development Technician in the Courtenay office of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure; the permit was issued on May 21 and emailed to the DIMS Chair.
- May 15, 2013 – DIMS made final amendments to the Rules and Regulations for the Natural Burial Cemetery (a document that CPA requires a cemetery to finalize prior to applying for an Operator's License) and adopted them as DIMS Operational Bylaw No.1.
- June 18, 2013 – Work began on the land with a Board member removing small alders in a path intended for the vehicle access road. Road construction occurred subsequently, with a resident to do the work.

A Second Cemetery for Denman Island

Log of Activities

p. 11

- June 21, 22 and 23, 2013 – A group of islanders presented “Light Passage,” a summer solstice celebration held at Orkney Farm on Denman Island, and donated proceeds amounting to \$1845 to DIMS. Board members were present at all three presentations to answer questions and explain the development process, using a display of drawings of the cemetery design and structures.
- August 6, 2013 – Tree and stump removal began, starting with the Gathering Space and then preparing the 35 Year and the 65 Year Sections. Land preparation included moving some of the roots and slash to a nearby trench on Central Park, limbing downed trees, stacking limbs and small trees for chipping, stacking the tree trunks of >20 cm DBH, and machine raking the cleared land. Working for 3-4 hours during any given day, the contractor and several volunteers continued this work on a periodic basis for six weeks.
- August 17, 2013 -- Two board members met for an hour with Denman Botanist on the land, to discuss planting/seeding on the prepared land in the 35 Year Section.
- August 24, 2013 -- Alex Scott from Vancouver Island sent over a crew of three and a chipper. Work was halted after only one hour, however, as the chipper was not sufficient for the task. The crew returned with a different chipper on September 17th and completed the job.
- September 23 to 27, 2013 – After the commercial chipping was finally accomplished, DIMS board members and others spent several days completing the rough clearing scheduled for this time. A large part of the chips was moved to create a pile to be used on paths in the Scattering Area and the remainder was used to fill in low areas in the 65-Year Section. As well, loose sticks and small branches were gathered from the 35-Year Section and the Gathering Space and relocated, some to low areas the 35-Year Section and the remainder to the 65-Year Section. Rocks were picked up in the 35-Year Section and Gathering Space relocated in the 65-Year Section. After that, the 35-Year Section and Gathering Space were machine raked and then seeded with approx 12 kg of a seed mixture specially prepared by Premier Pacific Seed in Vancouver, containing grasses found in the Central Park area (45% California Brome, 40% Blue Wild rye, 14% Native Red fescue and 1% creeping bentgrass). In addition, about 2 kg of grass seed already collected during the past 2-3 weeks nearby in Central Park was hand broadcast in this same area.
- October 11 and 12, 2013 – Following a short planning meeting with two DIMS board members, on Oct 9th, an islander created paths in the Scattering Area and spread chips on the new paths, volunteering his time and small backhoe.
- October 31, 2013 -- Work continued gathering materials for the CPA application for an Operator’s License.
- October 12, 2013 – With assistance from DIMS board member/lawyer , surveyor Peter Mason from Denman Island volunteered his time to create survey points for the Allee and for the corners of blocks in the 35-Year Burial Section. This work required several part-days on the land, surveying and implanting markers. As well, Peter will prepare a plan showing and explaining all of the points that were marked.
- December 6, 2013 – With assistance from a DIMS board member the island grave digger laid gravel along the length of the Allee, smoothing it between the recently inserted markers delineating the width of the Allee.

2014

- January 16, 2014 – DIMS held its fourth AGM. Following minutes and reports, those present supported a motion to amend the constitution to expand the means by which Directors and members can be notified of meetings. Eight islanders put their names forward for positions on the Board and were elected by acclamation.
- February 3, 2014 – A Denman islander/retired engineer presented the DIMS board with a detailed estimate of the projected costs for constructing the two memorial trellises. Details of the estimate were discussed at the Feb 13th Board meeting, at which time, the retired engineer offered to manage the construction project and the Board asked him to proceed with the engineering, scheduling, and other steps required to put the trellises in place.

- February 7, 2014 -- DIMS again submitted a grant-in-aid application to the Comox Valley Regional District, this time seeking \$4000 towards construction of the trellises for the memorial plaques. The application was unsuccessful, due to the fact that we had applied successfully in 2014 to Denman Works for a community grant, which is funded by economic enhancement funds from the CVRD.
- February 10, 2014 – DIMS wrote to the Executive Director of the Union Bay Credit Union requesting a grant of \$5000 to help pay for construction of the memorial trellises. Following a meeting on the land of two DIMS directors and two senior staff of the Union Bay Credit Union on April 21, DIMS submitted a new request to the Board of the UBCU for an interest-free loan of \$5000, annual repayment of which would be balanced off by five annual ‘community donations,’ each of \$1000. The requested funds would be put towards construction of the memorial trellises. The request was successful and arrangements for the loan were finalized on June 2014.
- February 21, 2014 – A board member met with Heather McCurdy, Manager of Business Services, CPA, Morris Redecopp who is responsible for financial audits, and Sarah Clutchey, Licensing Officer; to discuss CPA’s requirements for an operator’s license and review the application materials we have prepared to date. Preparation of the application for an Operator’s Licence continued through the spring of 2014.
- March 1-2, 2014 -- DIMS hosted the fifth Denman Island Table Tennis Tournament, another success, this time netting \$2398.
- March 11, 2014 – Two Board members along with an islander/landscaper planted 25 young, nursery-sourced trees along both sides of the Allée, leaving open the areas that lead into the aisles between burial blocks. Wire netting was then put around the new trees for deer protection.
- April 13, 2014 – DIMS managed the kitchen and the flea market at the Denman Volunteer Fire Department’s Annual Auction, receiving 40% of the net profit for the event, or \$3858.
- April 15, 2014 -- The remaining seed mixture from Premier Pacific Seed in Vancouver (containing grasses found in the Central Park area -- Blue Wild rye, California Brome, Creeping Bentgrass, and Red fescue) was spread in the 35-year section and the Gathering Space.
- April 17, 2014 -- DIMS again submitted an application to Denman Works!, for \$20,000 to fund construction of the Gathering Space trellises and the main entry structure. An award of \$4000 was made over the ensuing year.
- April 17, 2014 – The DIMS Board considered a number of ideas regarding signage for the new cemetery, eventually adopting a provisional signage plan on June 19, which outlined the text and style for 1) a large, covered-kiosk information sign at the south entrance, 2) a large bronze plaque for the large rock at the south entrance to the cemetery, 3) two low, wood Scattering Area directional signs, and 4) a tall wood sign at the north entrance announcing the cemetery.
- April 24, 2014 – Following discussion at the April 17 DIMS board meeting, DIMS submitted a request to the DCA Land Committee for amendments to the Management Plan that would accommodate changes to the construction, content and location of signs and would revise the definition of the Gathering Space to a roughly rectangular space of approx. 22 x 27 m. These amendments were adopted on June 27, 2014.
- May 27, 2014 – the DIMS Board again received advice from Denman Islander/retired engineer living on Denman Island, regarding the original design of the memorial trellises for the Gathering Space. The Board decided to abandon the design in favour of a new approach that uses concrete piers instead of metal posts and uses lattices made of metal instead of concrete. This design was later changed again (see August 10, 2014).
- June 3, 2014 – DIMS submitted an application to Farm Credit Canada for an AgriSpirit grant of \$14,000 towards the lych gate at the south entranceway to the cemetery. The application was later denied.

- June 18, 2014 – Following a spell of dry weather, DIMS began hand watering the newly planted trees along the Allée. Thereafter, watering was done by two board members once or twice weekly until the first substantial fall rain in late September.
- June 19, 2014 --- Following a review of proposed changes in May, the DIMS Board made several amendments to the Rules and Regulations (DIMS Operational Bylaw No. 1), reflecting minor changes that the board had decided on since adoption of the original bylaw. The amended bylaw was adopted on Oct 28, 2014.
- July 10, 2014 – DIMS submitted a grant application to the Toronto Dominion Friends of the Environment Foundation for \$3761 to create a Garry Oak meadow in the Gathering Space. The grant was successful. DIMS deferred the work for 11 months to Sept 2015 to allow construction of the memorial structures prior to doing the plantings for the meadow.
- July 11, 2014 – An islander of Denman Island volunteered his services to film DIMS board member Louise Bell for a video to be used on the Denman Island website. Later that month, he filmed the past chair of the Denman Conservancy Association, and then, on a later date, Sara Barron and Heidi Redman of the Community Studio.
- July 26, 2014 – An islander of Denman Island volunteered his services to develop a DIMS website. DIMS board member Louise Bell had started writing text for the website in February, 2014. The islander and Louise met on July 26 to discuss the design and development of the site. Work continued periodically for the following three months, adding material and making improvements.
- August 10, 2014 -- The DIMS Board made a decision to forego the current design for the memorial structures, which consisted of two semicircular trellises, and replace the trellis concept with two low walls, which would fill much the same space and accommodate the same number of plaques.
- August 31, 2014 – As a fundraiser, DIMS board members sold corn-on-the-cob at the annual Denman Island Blackberry Fair, netting \$160. DIMS is grateful to an island farmer who gave us the corn at a reduced rate.
- September 8, 2014 – DIMS held a work bee on the land to remove invasive plants, weed the paths in the Scattering Area, and clear large pieces of dead wood off the forest floor in the Scattering Area. Five board members attended, plus 10 members of the community.
- September 26, 2014 – Following several occasions over the summer when a DIMS board member met with staff of the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD), clearing for the Denman's cross-island trail was done on the road right-of-way immediately adjacent to the southern cemetery boundary. Soon after this, CVRD staff planted 32 Douglas firs (2 gallon pot size) at spots along the southerly boundary where trail users will be visible from the interior of the cemetery, and DIMS board members then put protective caging around them.
- September 29, 2014 -- DIMS submitted an application to the BC Hydro Community Champions grant program for \$10,000 towards the lych gate at the south entranceway to the cemetery. The application was in the form of a three-minute video (which Michael Rapati made for DIMS) with accompanying online question responses. The application was turned down. The video, featuring board member Stephanie Slater, was later used on the website with the three pre-existing videos.
- October 6, 2014 -- Several DIMS board members met on the land with Michael Dennis, who had indicated that he wanted to donate three carved cedar figures to the Cemetery. A location was chosen immediately inside the south property boundary on the west side of the main entranceway. Board members visited Michael's studio to see the nearly finished figures on November 18 and revisited the cemetery land on November 20 to confirm the location for the figures. Following that, a proposed covenant amendment to allow placement of the figures within the non-disturbance area was sent to the DCA Land Committee.
- October 10, 2014 – A DIMS board member picked up a 20" x 30" bronze plaque from Achinback Foundry in Victoria to be affixed to the large boulder at the cemetery entrance and used as the entrance sign. Also prepared for us

was a sample 3" x 5" bronze plaque to be used to show people how the communal memorialization will be carried out.

- Nov 13 to 16, 2014 -- DIMS hosted a silent auction at the Denman Island Arts Centre as a fundraiser for the cemetery gates. A three-member committee had been struck in late September and arranged the event. Auction items included art works, as well as Denman Island goods and services. Auction sales totaled \$8731, returns from memberships were \$240, donations were \$505, and expensed were \$339, bringing the overall net proceeds to \$9137.
- December 11, 2014 -- DIMS board member Louise Bell received a phone call from Galiano resident Rose Longini asking for information about starting a natural burial cemetery. Background documents were then sent electronically to Ken Millard of the Galiano Conservancy and to Galiano resident Dora Fitzgerald.

2015

- January 26, 2015 – DIMS held its fifth AGM. Following minutes and reports, the board presented a slate of six islanders for positions as directors of the Society. There were no further nominations from the floor and the six were elected by acclamation.
- February 7, 2015 – DIMS began work on drafting proposed covenant amendments intended to allow DIMS to place the three donated, hand-carved cedar figures at the south cemetery entranceway in the non-disturbance area. Former Board member/lawyer created the first draft, which was endorsed by the DIMS Board and then shown to the DCA Land Committee for preliminary comments. Work continued into the spring, with a change of wording being made, DIMS endorsing the final amendments in late March and DCA endorsing them in April. The required forms setting out the amendments were notarized by lawyer Chris Kelsey in Courtenay on May 20th and mailed to the Land Title Office shortly thereafter. Final documents were filed with DIMS and sent to DCA in late June 2015.
- February 19, 2015 – DIMS submitted an application to Comox Valley chapter of the First Credit Union for an unspecified amount to support construction of the entrance gates. The application was unsuccessful. However, DIMS proceeded to work with this company for an insurance quote and eventually purchased cemetery insurance from First Credit Union.
- February 26, 2015 -- DIMS again submitted a grant-in-aid application to the Comox Valley Regional District, this time seeking \$2000 towards construction of the entrance gates. The application was successful—we were granted \$1000, to be received on August 1, 2015.
- March 1, 2015 – DIMS sent 10 appeal letters to off islanders who were a) involved in conservation work, b) promoting natural burial, or c) providing funeral services. Responses were received gradually over the following three months, eventually leading to two cash donations (each of \$1000), the donation of five Robert Bateman prints to be used to attract future donors, and an offer from Margaret Atwood to assist us with crowd funding by tweeting our project.
- March 7-8, 2015 -- DIMS hosted the sixth Denman Island Table Tennis Tournament, another success, this time netting \$1930.
- May 23, 2015 – DIMS sent DCA draft Management Plan amendments to accommodate covenant changes (now endorsed by both parties and notarized) regarding the carved cedar figures plus a number of minor amendments that were necessary. The draft amendments were approved by both parties soon after this time.
- June 1, 2015 -- An area of approx 50 x 20 ft was cleared and covered in preparation for the establishment of a Garry oak meadow along the west side of the Gathering Space.

A Second Cemetery for Denman Island

Log of Activities

p. 15

- June 9, 2015 – Construction work for the two memorial walls in the Gathering Space began, with an excavator preparing a 2-ft deep trench for the foundations for the walls. Work continued with the forming being done between June 29 and July 10, the concrete being poured on July 13th and the benches completed by July 30th.
- June 20, 2015 -- DIMS initiated its Final Fundraising Campaign to raise the remaining money needed to complete the cemetery design and initiate operations. By Sept 1, funds raised from appeal letters and emails sent to Denman property owners totaled \$3595, and funds raised through Small Change (a crowd funding platform) were \$2015, totalling approximately \$5610. An additional \$230 was raised at the DIMS table at the Denman Island Sustainability Festival Fair on Saturday, June 20th bringing the total to \$5790.
- July 5, 2015 – Work on the site began for construction of the south gate to the Cemetery—a West coast version of the traditional English lych gate. Pieces for the structure had been prepared over the preceding three months by an islander in his workshop, and the gate was erected in about three weeks. All labour throughout was pro bono. After a lull in August with no work, the gate was completed in the first two weeks of September.
- July 10 2015 -- DIMS received review comments from Stephen Olson, Director, Royal Oak Burial Park (in response to a request in late June) on draft Operating Procedures and on the Cemetery Rules and Regulations (now called the DIMS Cemetery Operational Bylaws).
- July 20, 2015 – Three 8-foot-high, hand-carved cedar figures donated by local sculptor Michael Dennis were erected on concrete pads at the south entrance of the Cemetery.
- July 31, 2015 – DIMS submitted the application for an Operator’s License to Heather McCurdy, Manager of Licensing, Consumer Protection BC – Operations.
- Aug 3, 2015 – A paid contractor began work on constructing the north gate to the Cemetery, which is a small version of the main entrance structure, much like the information kiosk. The gate was completed by August 21, at which time the north sign was erected as well as the two low Scattering Area signs. All three of these signs were made and donated by an islander.
- Aug 6, 2015 – DIMS adopted a set of Operating Procedures, intended to serve as a check list for DIMS in the provision of cemetery services. Also endorsed at that time, as part of these procedures, was a schedule by which the DIMS board would review annually various pieces of documentation relating to cemetery services.
- Sept 2, 2015 – A team of five volunteers assisted two board members in laying landscape cloth and then shovelling gravel onto the paths on either side of the new memorial walls in the Gathering Space. About this time, the front sign for the information kiosk was ordered, prepared and affixed to the signboard; shortly after that, the back sign—a depiction of a Garry Oak garden done by an islander—was ordered, prepared and affixed to the other side of the signboard.
- Oct 1, 2015 – Sean Sissett, Senior Compliance Officer, Consumer Protection met with a board member and Louise Bell at the cemetery and then the Old School to view the project and discuss the related documentation. The operator’s license was awarded at the end of that day.
Oct 4, 2015 – Cemetery Acting Manager held the first client interview and sold one at-need burial right to a resident of the Island. Shortly after that, sales were completed for pre-need rights and for scattering rights.
- Oct 9, 2015 – The first burial at the cemetery took place, using grave A1 and burying human remains in a wood coffin made by an islander. A scattering of cremated remains took place several days later, and then, in mid December, burials of cremated remains and human remains.
- Oct 11, 2015 – The official opening of the Cemetery was held at 2:00 p.m. on Thanksgiving Sunday, October 11th. The occasion began with a song by the church choir, followed by a welcome by MC Lori McFarlane and short speeches by about six individuals. Also on the program was a song by a local singer and the cutting of a wide

green ribbon by a former board member. At the close, the Carmen Mirandas served Denman apple juice and sweet and savory treats. Just under 100 people attended.

- Oct 18–29, 2015 – Over this two week period, various volunteers from the community completed the following tasks to create a Gary Oak Garden in the Gathering Place:
 - placement of 32 fence posts;
 - spreading of mulch comprising minced dry maple leaves.

- Nov 7, 2015 – Board member Louise Bell participated in a panel on green burial at an all-day symposium hosted by the Green Burial Society of Canada and held at Mountain View Cemetery in Vancouver., The morning session—for service providers—was attended by about 30 people, presenters included, and the afternoon session—a repeat of the morning program and intended for the public—by about 40 persons.

This concludes the record of activities by members of the Denman Island Memorial Society and others relating to the development of the Denman Island Natural Burial Cemetery. The DIMS board will continue to meet monthly and host an AGM, and will now, as well, hear regular reports from and supervise the tasks undertaken by the Cemetery Manager and the Groundskeeper in administering operations of the cemetery. Further work such as construction of benches and of a shed may occur in time, but the development work is now essentially complete.

2021 UPDATE –

No groundskeeper was ever hired, as it was not in the budget in the first few years, and the current board has managed a minimal degree of maintenance with volunteer labour.

In the years following 2015 revisions were periodically made to the cemetery Operating Procedures to reflect new learnings of client needs and practical realities. Improvements were made to the website dinbc.ca. The original cemetery record was updated to allow the cemetery manager to be confident that all necessary steps have been completed for each client.