

Minutes for Denman Island Memorial Society (DIMS) Twelfth Annual General Meeting
Monday, Jan. 17, 2022
via ZOOM due to COVID-19 protocols

Present

Directors: Wendy Boothroyd, Jane Lighthall, Lori McFarlane, Angela Robinson, Isabelle Fusey, Frank Frketich

Cemetery Manager: Charlie Johnston

Community Members and invitees: 13, which included 2 of Louise Bell's family from California and New York, Mary and Gary Holdgrafer Chairs of our Exploratory Committee Gabriola Island, and 1 from New Denver

Call to Order at 7:02pm, Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review

BOARD REPORTS FOR 2021

Abbreviated Minutes of the Eleventh AGM, Jan. 11, 2021

The usual protocol for in-person AGMs is to read aloud an abbreviated version of the previous year's AGM minutes. As this was a ZOOM meeting copies of the 2022 Agenda and Minutes from the 2021 meeting were emailed to all members and anyone requesting an invitation to join the ZOOM meeting, giving everyone a chance to read the minutes prior to this meeting. No corrections were suggested. The 2021 AGM Minutes were adopted as presented. **M/S/C**
(moved/seconded/carried)

Chair's Report by Wendy Boothroyd

Jane Lighthall and I are co-chairs of DIMS. Angela Robinson is Secretary, Lori McFarlane treasurer. Isabelle Fusey is our director of communications. Frank Frketich is the director in charge of archives. Charlie Johnston is the cemetery manager. In 2021 all our monthly board meetings were virtual.

I will mention the things that stood out in 2021.

We lost our friend Louise Bell. Louise was a founding member of our society and spearheaded the creation of DINBC. She chaired the board from 2009-2017. She was DIMS knowledge keeper and early in 2021 she was still acting as our "ambassador", holding detailed discussions with a group from Gabriola Island. Louise enjoyed sharing her experience of starting the cemetery from scratch, but she also nudged the rest of us to take on this outreach.

Because of COVID, we only hosted one cemetery tour in 2021. We communicated with about ten other groups by telephone and zoom.

Because none of us have Louise's depth of knowledge about the founding of the cemetery, we added to the website Louise's log of activities. It is an 18 page document describing all the steps involved in creating the cemetery: an effective reality check for anyone who thinks it is easy.

COVID restrictions affected our burials. We followed the guidelines from the BC Centre for Disease Control. At the start, of the year, 10 people were allowed at a burial. This increased to 50. We kept lists of attendees in case contact tracing was needed. By the end of the year, there was no attendance limit.

We received 2 requests from Denman residents wanting a plaque commemorating their loved ones on our memorial wall, those loved ones not being in the cemetery. This was the topic we talked about most during the year. For various reasons we reconfirmed that the plaques on the memorial walls are for those whose remains are in Denman Island Natural Burial Cemetery (DINBC). We explored other possibilities for memorializing people who are not in the cemetery, but these are expensive. We would not pursue them without community support. We recognize that another community group might create a memorial wall for “Lives Lived” on Denman. If people are interested, we can discuss this later in the meeting, under New Business.

One burial in the lashing rain and another on a hot dry summer afternoon emphasized how little shelter there is at the cemetery. We wanted to warn clients. We created a list: Things to consider when planning a burial at DINBC. It covers parking, lack of washrooms, weather, uneven ground and limited seating. We also took this opportunity to request the wording for an epitaph within 6 months of the burial. The list is posted on the website and Charlie gives a paper copy to people when they are setting up a burial.

Since 2019 there have been 13 burials in which no funeral home was involved. Volunteers have helped the families handle the legal documentation and other practical details. The Cemetery Manager has more work to do, keeping in touch with the family and volunteers and ensuring they are completing all the tasks. There is also an element of uncertainty: whether the documentation will arrive in time. In only one case were the guests gathering before the permission to bury came in.

We were relieved that Charlie Johnston renewed his contract as Cemetery Manager this fall. Charlie continues to provide excellent service to clients and our cemetery. In the summer Charlie went on holiday and there was one burial while he was away. We were all anxious but I’m happy to report that all 6 members of the board, working together, managed to do Charlie’s job. Thank you Charlie.

On a personal note, visiting with the DIMS group on zoom - as well as in person during our work bees -has been a thing of joy during the pandemic.

Treasurer’s Report

Treasurer Lori McFarlane presented the Financial Statement for 2021. This report is appended to the minutes.

Motion to adopt DIMS 2021 Financial Statement

M/S/C

Membership Report

Director McFarlane reported that DIMS membership at the end of December 2021 stood at 14.

Report from Cemetery Manager Charlie Johnston

There were 9 burials in 2021. Seven of the burials were from the exercising of pre-need Rights of Interment. 18 pre-need Rights of Interment were purchased in 2021, 4 of which were exercised during the year. Two Authorizations to Scatter were purchased and like 3 others previously purchased did not result in scatterings as yet, due to the reluctance to travel and gather with Covid.

Since the opening in 2015 there have now been 38 burials and 26 scatterings at the Denman Island Natural Burial Cemetery. There are 58 pre-need Rights of Interment that have been purchased and not yet exercised.

Communications Report submitted by Isabelle Fusey

2021 was a quiet year on the communications front. No changes were made to the information booklets or leaflets and we did not do any printing. The booklets are distributed to clients by the cemetery manager and the leaflets can be picked up at the information kiosk at the cemetery. There were no major changes made to the website with one exception: in an effort to assist the many groups looking for advice on how to establish a green cemetery, we decided to post Louise Bell's "Log of Activities" on our website. This comprehensive document chronicles the process of creating a green cemetery from idea to reality on Denman Island.

Work on the Land 2021 submitted by Jane Lighthall

2021 was another year that saw the DIMS board members and Manager doing the maintenance at DI Natural Burial Cemetery. Our work bees gave us a chance to meet as a group in person and to solve problems on site, all the while enjoying each others company in a beautiful setting. In late winter and again in the late fall we transplanted small saplings into the completed rows of occupied graves. These young trees were all found within the Cemetery boundary as is the requirement of our Conservation Covenant. As graves sites are filled, we will continue to transplant young trees with the goal of helping a new forest to grow over the graves.

An important feature of the 35 year area are The Heritage Stumps which have become nurturing locations for new vegetation. From these sites we can dig and transplant small trees and shrubs. We limit some of this growth so as to keep vegetation clear of adjacent unfilled grave plots.

Early in the year I consulted a garden expert for advice on the Garry Oak Gardens. The GOG have not been maintained to the standard that was first envisioned when they were planted. Specifically, they have not been weeded. The advice given was that the amount of maintenance required was unrealistic and that gardens do require fresh approaches and practical solutions every few years. Our solution is to focus on keeping the trees and shrubs going and let nature take its course regarding the smaller plants. The wild strawberry is vigorous and successful, as are the grasses, and many of the species planted do bloom. Most of the shrubs planted in the big garden are thriving, and almost all of the Garry Oaks are growing well. The gardens are completely exposed to sun and received the full brunt of this summers high temperatures beginning with this year's infamous heat dome. Only the trees were watered.

Weekly watering duties of the Garry Oaks were done once again by board members starting at the end of June and continuing into Sept until the rains began. Thank you again to the DIVFD for filling our cistern. And thanks to the board members for doing the watering.

The grass within and around the Gathering Space, and along the Allee was trimmed and mowed as needed. Board members and Charlie kept the gravel path within the Gathering Space weed free.

We removed or reduced fencing around some Allee trees. Fencing around the Garry Oak gardens will remain for the foreseeable future.

The final DCA Talk and Lop work bee was held at DINBC where board members, and several volunteers helped to remove the remaining holly on the borders of DINBC and Central Park.

In the fall after a big wind storm some of us met to trim and clean the trails and the entrance of leaves. It looked very tidy until a few days later when another big wind undid our work.

We enjoy a good working relation with Denman Conservancy Association (DCA) who hold a Conservation Covenant on the Cemetery. This year's Covenant Monitoring was done by former long time DCA board member Jenny Balke. As well as a comprehensive report which included observations of plant species in the GOG, and wildlife found in the Cemetery, Jenny suggested other natural Garry Oak geomorphological additions, such as some large rocks amongst the Garry Oaks. We will certainly consider this.

Ongoing reminders from Covenant Monitoring are to keep well marked and refreshed the survey pins on the four corners, and to continue the ongoing work of invasive species removal.

For six years, and as long as the Cemetery has been open, we have been guided and hugely helped by DCA Land Manager Erika Bland. Erika has worked hard along side us during invasive species removal events. She directed independent contractors to help at DINBC in removal of thistles, holly, and Reed Canary Grass. Her annual Covenant Monitoring site visits were enjoyable and subsequent reports were invaluable. Some fine photos early on show the changes over the years in the filled graves area. We wish Erika all the best as she transitions to her next job, and also within DCA from Land Manager to a position on the Board of Directors.

Parking at the Cemetery is now actively managed during each burial ever since it was brought to our attention that at some burials large vehicles could not get through North Central Rd. The creation of a parking lot had been considered and planned by the founding board members but it is thought that in the drive to open by the fall of 2015, it was never realized. Our board has for now opted for the simplest, least disruptive solution. Traffic cones were purchased, and, on burial days are placed to prevent parking on the opposite side of North Central. Just one more task to be done each time there is a burial. We plan also through public education to encourage attendees to park near the Old School Parking and beside the Cross Island Trail. This was as well the intention of the founding board. And further, where a large number of cars are anticipated, a board member is usually on hand to help direct traffic.

2022

Election of the Board of Directors

Director Lori McFarlane explained the election process for 2022.

Wendy Boothroyd and Jane Lighthall are at the end of their two year terms and, as of this meeting Lori McFarlane, Angela Robinson, Isabelle Fusey, and Frank Frketich are halfway through their two year terms.

Director McFarlane presented the following list of islanders who, to date, had expressed their wish to stand for election as DIMS directors for a two year term:

Wendy Boothroyd and Jane Lighthall.

Lori then called three times for nominations from the floor. As there were none, the preceding two people were declared elected by acclamation.

New Business

Director McFarlane explained that DIMS board is required to appoint signing officers annually at this time.

MOTION to appoint Lori McFarlane, Charlie Johnston and Angela Robinson as signing officers for the Denman Island Memorial Society with the First Credit Union for the year leading up to the Society's 2023 13th Annual General Meeting in 2023.

M/S/C

Adjournment

Wendy Boothroyd adjourned the meeting at 7:28pm.

M/S/C

Tribute for Louise Bell (1935-June 17, 2021)

- Doreen Tetz' tribute to Louise Bell' originally presented on LB's retirement from DIMS – Jan. 15, 2018.

LOUISE DIMS

"With all due respect to past and present board members I think that all who have worked with her will agree that without Louise there would be no DINBC.

I think I can say this with some authority having been there from the beginning, This was my first Board, my first Committee...and on that first day, sitting around Louise' table I thought "How difficult can this be...really?"

We had this generous offer of land. I reckoned...you tidy the land, divide it into plots, install a tasteful sign out front,...John Isbister to open and close...Project Done!

I was assigned the secretary/fundraiser hat and introduced soon thereafter to the fine art of grant proposal writing, Some here will remember that I felt it necessary to openly whine at an Islands Trust meeting about the amount of 'red ink' my proposals received from President/Editor Bell ... but I digress. It soon became clear that this was only the beginning of my introduction to board meeting bewilderment,

We called ourselves DIMS, We met at the DHC

We applied to the CRA for CO status

We gave an LOA to the DCA but not before we applied to the LTC for a OCP/LUB tweak with subsequent inquiry to MOTI for a PLA

We applied to the ALC for ALR exclusion...and inclusion

We registered at the LTO

Funds arrived from the REF, the IT and the UBCU along with GIAs from the CVRD. We were SOL with CVCF, but aided greatly by the DIVFD

We reviewed the BPCPA which became BPCP and then CP ofBC and finally CPA...so we could get an OL ASAP

A CC was drafted with the obligatory R&Rs

We held AGMs

We held TTTs

The R&Rs for DIMS and the CC were re-drafted over and over and over. We held more AGMs

We held more TTTs

I was so glad when John Mather joined the Board. This being my first time out I was unaware that sleeping through the meetings was an option.

"...but at last we were on the land and it was here that I found my footing,

Not as you might expect through my Chilliwack farm girl experience or through my association with a handsome landscaper bearing big tools. No, I ended up back in my wheelhouse because of Louise.

Not enough that she shepherded us dullards (speaking only for myself here) through the aforementioned acronymic haze - She was outclassing us all on the land... Pulling thistles, tugging canary grass, planting trees, clearing paths, bringing snacks and collecting seeds.

But alas a mishap occurred - Louise sustained a serious FB in F (foreign body in finger) injury. By this time the board's camaraderie was akin to that of a family and the two doctors on the board treated her just like family with a "suck it up buttercup" kinda attitude.

I thought no more about Louise's finger until I saw her name on my office roster several days later.

The finger, assisted by our benign neglect, looked pretty grim and without disclosing all of Louise's personal medical information lets just say that soon after arrival a grass seed pod was successfully delivered on a rivulet of pus. Louise was unflinchingly stoic and missed nary a beat in the project agenda.

So, in summary, let me just say, Louise

Thank you for your skill

Thank you for your unwavering dedication

Thank you for your blistering work ethic

And thank you especially for creating a spot for me to shine."

- Slide show by Lori McFarlane and Isabelle Fusey.

See next page for:

DIMS 2021 FINANCIAL STATEMENT
GENERAL ACC'T/PRE-NEED ACC'T/CARE FUND ACC'T

DIMS 2021 FINANCIAL STATEMENT - Final
GENERAL ACC'T/PRE-NEED ACC'T/CARE FUND ACC'T

1. GENERAL ACCOUNT:	Sub-Totals	Totals
Carried Forward from 2020		14,925.98
INCOME:		
Cemetery Operations:		
Open/Close Grave	3629	
Interments	7700	
Scatterings	400	
Plaques	3000	
Admin fee for pre-need ROI	1800	
Sub-Total	16,529	
Other:		
Memberships	0	
DIRA Bottle Depot	210	
Donations	833	
Care Fund Interest	86	
Other	0	
Sub-Total	1,129	
TOTAL INCOME:		(+)17,658
EXPENSES:		
Cemetery Operations:		
Insurance	1481	
Promotion/Admin/Supplies	329	
Open/Close Grave	2889	
Plaques	1154	
BC Society Annual Report	40	
Transfer to Care Fund from General Acc't	800	
Manager's Fees (stipend + fee-for-service)	6955	
Other	0	
Sub-Total	13,648	
TOTAL EXPENSES:		(-) 13,648
BALANCE		18,936
Bank Balance at December 31, 2021 (actual)		19,628.23
		See over
BANK RECONCILIATION GENERAL ACC'T:		

General acc't balance Dec 31, 2021 (actual)		19,628.23
+/- outstanding deposits (\$0)/withdrawals (\$192.36 + \$500)		-692.36
Balance		18,935.87
Shares		37.46
2. PRENEED TRUST ACCOUNT:		62,285.08
Shares		28.80
3. CARE FUND TRUST ACCOUNT:		9,915.00
Interest (to be deposited to Gen Acc't Jan '22)		112.02
Shares		28.80

Prepared by:

Lori McFarlane, Treasurer

Approved:

Charlie Johnston, Manager

Jane Lighthall, Co-Chair