

## Bowen Island Memorial Society - OCP Submission

The first meeting of the Bowen Island Memorial Society, a registered charity, took place on August 13, 1987. Subsequently, representatives from the BI Historians, the Seniors Association 133, The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 150, St Gerards' Catholic Church, Cates Hill Chapel, the United Church, the Community Church and the Bowen Island Garden Club molded the objectives and aims of the society. A site was chosen and duly approved in principle by the GVRD Parks Community in March 1988. Until this time, there was no place to memorialize former island residents. There was and is no official cemetery.

Our Memorial Garden requires maintenance of both hard and soft landscaping, as well as a fence to keep out the deer and dogs. The current location behind the library is small and unprotected because GVRD District disallows fencing. Theft of plants and misuse of the benches is an ongoing concern, as is the GVRD' s right to take back the land on short notice.

The Society needs extended acreage to facilitate services for an ever growing community. Acquiring land that can be fenced, is wheelchair accessible and near a bus route. In addition, the Society would like to have a community garden to create a hands-on learning center for all ages, young and old, including the disabled and the visually impaired. A pet cemetery might also be included. We feel strongly that any OCP update should include the provision for a Memorial Garden because our present garden is at the pleasure of GVRD and places very stringent limits on what improvements that can be made as

previously mentioned..

At present the garden is maintained and upgraded as funds are raised through two main annual Society events:

1.The People, Plants & Places Tour, held the third weekend of July

2.The Plant and Bake Sale, held the first Saturday of May, .

An Honor-a Life evening was introduced in 1997 for the benefit of the bereaved and to fill needs of the Bowen community.

BIM Society memberships of \$15, and volunteer involvement of time and interest are welcome as the keys to the success of a vital, living, memorial society. We look forward to the day we can improve the location, ambiance and usefulness of the Memorial Society Garden.

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