

4 INTEGRATION



"As we recover our presence within the earth community, we experience a feeling of intimacy and rediscover our sense of courtesy towards the earth and its inhabitants, our sense of gratitude, our willingness to recognize the sacred character of our habitat, our capacity for the awesome, for the numinous quality of every earthly reality."

Thomas Berry, **The Dream of the Earth**

Surprise

Alicia Tyndall:

By the time the Sanctuary was officially recognized, it was winter. There was snow on the peaks and at the Sanctuary. We had some organizing to do, for the Park requirements. Luckily, Tak was an experienced administrator, and he was taking care of all those details when something totally unexpected happened. Something wonderful!

A friend of mine, Barbara Kromm, had taken some of her friends to the Sanctuary one day, before it was discovered, and they had noticed a young woman doing exercises on the top of the ridge. It must have been Rebecca, because she liked to do her chi gong exercises there. I must have mentioned to Barbara that we had talked about having a place to do yoga close to the Sanctuary, because that idea appealed very much to one of the women who had seen Rebecca. She and her husband owned some land beside Kanangra Creek, and through Barbara, she contacted me, and wondered if we would consider it as the location for a place to do yoga.

It was incredible! I could not expect something like that to come along in a hundred years. Having a space to do yoga was simply a fantasy. But that was how the Sanctuary began—a vague idea in Ned's mind. Now this second fantasy might become a reality as well.

Denise Lara:

I first heard about the Sanctuary from a friend, Barbara Kromm, a short time before it was in the news. I've been doing yoga classes with Barbara for many years, and when I asked her about the Sanctuary, she offered to take me to it. I'd tried meditating several years ago, but I hadn't continued with it, so I can't say I meditated very seriously at the Sanctuary. But it was a wonderful place! I loved it immediately, just sitting there, feeling so calm and peaceful. A sort of calmness that's hard to describe. It seemed a wonderful change of pace, a quiet time away from everyday worries.

As we were leaving, we noticed someone on top of the rocks above the little pavilion where we'd sat. At first I couldn't tell if she was doing some sort of slow dance or a form of yoga I didn't recognize. It looked wonderful as she did the different movements, very slowly, and Barbara told me that Alicia and others in the group had talked about having a place where they could do yoga or tai chi and things like that. It was possible to do some yoga poses on the bare rock, but there weren't many flat areas up there.

It was only when I got back home that I saw an interesting possibility. Many years ago, my parents had bought some land beside Kanangra Creek. They built a small cabin close to the

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creek, and part of the land was used by the Highways Department during the upgrade of the Skyline Highway about ten years ago. After my mother died, my husband Ted and I thought about building a new cabin there when he retired, but after he became ill, we decided we'd be better off staying in the city. We visited the old cabin every now and then—it's so beautiful there where the creek comes out of the mountains—but it was obvious we weren't likely to ever build the new cabin.

I loved the idea of doing yoga and then meditating in a place like the Sanctuary, and it occurred to me that part of our land could be used to build a place to do yoga on the way to the Sanctuary. Our property extended away from the creek along the highway and we certainly didn't need the part used by the Highways Department. It had been cleared and levelled—I think they used it as a parking lot for their trucks, mainly—but new trees were growing up and there were still some big trees near the highway. It was quite close to the Samilkawen Hotel, and after going to the Sanctuary with Barbara, I knew it must be quite close to the Sanctuary also. I talked to Ted about it, and he thought it was a good idea too. So when it was announced that the Sanctuary could stay in Skyline Park, I called Barbara and asked her if she thought Alicia and her friends would consider it.

Alicia Tyndall:

All of us were overwhelmed by generous offer from Denise. It added another dimension to the Sanctuary that we had considered before, but only as a dream: the combination sitting in the Sanctuary and doing yoga or tai chi in a natural setting.

When we saw the land, we saw very quickly that there was enough space to build a small structure against the foot of a ridge that came down near the highway. While Denise and I walked along the creek, Ned went up the ridge to see exactly where it led. He came down, running and jumping down through the trees like a big schoolboy! It was the ridge leading to the Sanctuary and it appeared we could easily build a trail directly to the Sanctuary. The possibilities were unlimited.

Ned Kinloch:

Denise's offer was extremely important in two ways. First, it showed support for the Sanctuary concept. It was a major commitment on her part, and it wouldn't have happened without the Sanctuary.

Second, it opened up a possibility that I was keen to explore: the connections between mind and body and nature. It was a logical expansion of our thinking about the Sanctuary as a place to sit, to get centred, and then get fully energized with a walk or hike.

The whole mind-body relationship still seems to be on the edge of science. The studies that have been done are relatively small, and there's hardly any scientific evidence for the existence of things like chi and chakras that are basic elements in Asian concepts of health and wellness. It's the same with acupuncture. At least in the West. Chinese research gets great results, but they haven't always been replicated in the West.

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There's no shortage of evidence that attitude plays a large role in peak physical performance, and there's other evidence that shows links between physical activity and mental performance. I've seen reports of scientific studies that show that yoga and tai chi can help to maintain aerobic fitness and lower blood pressure slightly. They have to be part of a regular weekly routine, not a few minutes here and there, and not just once a week. And the results were seen over several months, not a few weeks.

It seems so logical to me to engage your mind and your body for a short period every day or two—for less time than you spend eating meals. Stretching, working all parts of your body, breathing, relaxing. That's what yoga and tai chi involve. Done mindfully. Consciously. And it's enjoyable. It isn't the drudgery that working out a treadmill or a stationary bike can be. That's why people read magazines or watch TV while they're at the fitness club!

Yoga and tai chi are both part of very old philosophical and spiritual traditions. For the earliest practitioners, it was spiritual enlightenment they were seeking, as much as simple physical well-being. That's what people need today, in addition to more physical exercise, more than recreation. They need a touch of enlightenment, and then perhaps the world will find peace.

So what happens when you do yoga and tai chi and combine them with meditating in a natural setting? And adding physical exercise: walking or running in a glorious natural setting? Those were interesting questions, and we'd have a chance to explore them by accepting Denise's offer.

Possibilities

Rebecca Watson:

When we built the Sanctuary—the original four of us, and then eight of us—we built it for ourselves, and for anyone else who might like to go there. It was small and easy to do. We all contributed time and effort, and we shared the small cost of the materials without too much trouble. It was a pleasure to do, and a pleasure to “donate” it to the Park.

Building something on Jim and Denise's land, if it was to be fully integrated with the Sanctuary, was a bigger project. We got together a larger group of people to decide how best to approach it. Everyone in the original group, friends of Alicia's who did yoga, Denise and her friends, and I invited some friends who I did tai chi with. And a few other people who'd been to the Sanctuary and were enthusiastic about it. There were nearly twenty people, I think.

We had a lot to discuss. What exactly did we want? How much would it cost to build and maintain whatever structure we built? What arrangement could we make with Denise? We spent a lot of time discussing who would use the Activity Shelter—that was what we decided to call it in the beginning. The Sanctuary was open to anyone, but we weren't sure about the Activity Shelter. It was right on the Skyline Highway and if it was just like a picnic shelter,

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open to anyone, it was more likely to be used by people who weren't interested in yoga or anything like that. It would be more likely to be damaged or vandalized.

We talked about the idea of an organized retreat centre. A place one could go for a day of meditation, movement, and outdoor exercise. People could come as group, sit in the Sanctuary, then move to the activity space for yoga or tai chi or chi gong. That sounded good to everyone.

Nearly everyone who was into yoga and tai chi knew about other retreat centres: places where you went for a week or more, with classes and organized activities. We talked about all the possibilities if we had one here, and the more we talked, the bigger our ideas and plans got. It was fun! But Ned brought us back down to earth pretty quickly. He did it gently, though.

Ned Kinloch:

Everyone was very enthusiastic, and that's the way good ideas come up. But I thought we should try to be consistent with the principles of the Sanctuary, and they were at a much lower level: simple, small, a symbol of restraint in an age of excess.

There's no shortage of luxury retreats and wellness centres and spas across North America. There are more serious places with an emphasis on spirituality, not luxury, and they provide a closer model for what I was thinking of. If we were to build some sort of activity shelter, I thought it should be just like the Sanctuary—open to anyone and everyone, with the focus on individual initiative and involvement. Individuals, or groups of three or four, could use the space to practice yoga or tai chi, and at the same time be aware of the spiritual energy of the natural world around them. We'd provide a small, free public service. That's what was different about the Sanctuary. And an activity shelter could be another example of doing things in an efficient, resourceful way; not another monument to consumption and excess.

We had to remember, at that point, we were a very small group with limited resources. We had a lot of practical things to consider. How much would it cost to build even a simple shelter? How would it cost to maintain it? Not just in monetary terms, but in hours of work. Who would do that? If we had to raise money or recoup some of our costs by renting the space for classes or anything else, well, that would be too bad, and I wouldn't fight it. But I definitely preferred no courses, and no commercial activities. It would be totally consistent with the concept of the Sanctuary.

Takao Matsushima:

When Ned and I started drawing plans for the Activity Shelter, we did a lot of sketches and tried to make all our ideas fit together. That's how we planned the pavilion for the Sanctuary. Again, we were trying to keep it simple, but good-looking. And again, we came up with a structure with a more-or-less traditional Japanese style. Wood post and beam, rectangular shape, sliding doors down each side, and wide overhangs on the roof. We could see it fitting

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in nicely among the trees at the foot of the ridge. We sketched out different angles, and it seemed to be just fine. Then Ned said “Damn!”

I wondered what was wrong! I thought we must have forgotten some vital feature that would mean having to make drastic changes. He said “It looks great, and it’ll be easy and quick to build. But you know what? It’s *too* damn traditional. It’s too simple. Too ordinary. We’re not going anywhere new with it. And that’s what we’ve got a chance to do here.”

So it wasn’t a matter of one or two major alterations. We went right back to square one and started all over again. We started thinking about a modern structure. Still with wood, and still with clean, simple lines—not something with curving metal and shiny surfaces. Ned wanted light. Big windows. Windows and doors that would open up the building to the trees around it. But it still had to be a symbol of restraint. Not a flashy, modernistic structure that drew attention to itself. It had to fit right into the site. We wondered about having a green roof, with grass or mosses on it.

So this time, we didn’t design the structure ourselves. Ned had an architect friend, and we thought it would be worthwhile to talk to him about building something a little more interesting. Ned had another idea at that time: if our plan was simple enough, perhaps we could build it ourselves. Then we found that Roger had exactly the same idea, and he had someone else who might help us.

Roger Maltenby:

I knew a guy, Dan Hedin, who had a small-scale timber-framing business in Grenville, and I asked him about an idea I’d been thinking about ever since we’d been discussing the Activity Shelter. A small group of people had built the pavilion and the Sanctuary. I wondered if we might be able to get enough people together to build the shelter ourselves. We’d had a “platform-raising.” Could we have a real barn-raising? I thought that’d be a good way to save money and get people involved in the project.

I discovered Dan had heard all about the Sanctuary, and actually, he had mixed feelings about the whole Samilkawen business—the protests and everything. He thought he might get some extra work if the resort went ahead. The last thing he expected was to be talking to us about building something to go with the Sanctuary. Still, he was very encouraging, and he was willing to work with us. So Dan and Ned and Tak and I went to the site, and we walked around the foot of the ridge—in a couple of feet of fresh snow—and looked at the views and the trees and checked out all the possibilities. Ned was looking for a southern exposure with lots of sunlight. He thought we might be able to put solar panels on the roof.

Well, we found a possible site. We’d have to remove a couple of good-size trees, so it wasn’t a perfect solution, but Dan was sure it would work. We started thinking about a wall of glass on the south side, with a high roof slanting down into the foot of the ridge. Chris Dampier, the architect, got together with Dan and they produced some sketches for us, and they were the basis of the finished building. They came up with a fan-shaped structure, with a high prow pointing south and walls of glass on the south east and southwest so the building was

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flooded with sunlight in winter and full of light, but shaded in summer. They made it strong enough to have a sod roof and it had a low, thick wall on the north side against the ridge.

It wasn't a large structure; just big enough for a dozen people to do tai chi. More people could do yoga because that uses a lot less space. Nothing fancy. A place for personal practice, combined with a trip to the Sanctuary, and then a day hike. Something like that.

To keep costs down, we decided not to have any lighting and heating at first. From a practical point of view, we guessed not many people would want to use it in mid-winter. The Sanctuary would be under three or four feet of snow, the Skyline Highway could be snowy or icy, and it would be a long, hard drive from the city under those conditions for an hour or two of yoga or tai chi. We'd see how everything went during the first winter, and if we had enough money, Dan and Chris agreed it wouldn't be hard to add an LED lighting system later, and put in one or more alcohol fireplaces. They didn't need any pipes or ducts and we could place them wherever we liked. In any case, we'd have insulated walls and low-e double-paned windows, and again, if we could afford it, we could put insulated shutters over the windows. The unanimous choice for the floor was bamboo. That was it. A big, open room with plenty of natural light from the southeast to the southwest. Everyone loved the design. There was no problem, there.

The big issues were labour and money. Everyone at the meeting, when we discussed the plans, was willing to contribute their labour, even if, for most of them, it was totally unskilled. Dan had a basic crew with timber framing experience, and he was willing to give us a break on his charges. Most people were willing to contribute something towards the cost of building it, but it was going to be a stretch for some of them. We only had a rough idea of the costs at that time, and it was still the middle of winter, so we had time to find ways to raise money and confirm that we had enough willing volunteers to make the barn-raising idea work.

We talked about all sorts of ideas, but none of them seemed very promising, until Reb came up with a plan, totally different to anything we'd discussed.

Rebecca Watson:

At that time, at school, I was working with another grad student on a set of planning diagrams. On his computer, he could show different elements of a project in different colours, and he could show changes that occurred at different stages of the project: the buildings, the transportation corridors, the streetscaping; things like that. He was really good with computers. That's why I liked working with him.

He said the system could be used to keep track of all the costs, and how design changes affected the budget. That's pretty well where I got my idea from. It wasn't exactly the same, but I started asking Michael about different things, and together we worked out a system—well, I guess he did most of it—a system where people could “buy” parts of the Activity Centre on-line and we could keep track of what had been bought and what hadn't. That was the basic idea. I got really excited, and Michael got excited about writing a program to make

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the whole idea work. He really wanted to do it! I told Ned and the others about it, and we agreed to give it a try. It meant more work for a start, especially for a Michael and Dan and Chris, the architect. And for Roger, too. He did a lot of work on it.

We set up the Morning Light Co-op website—that was the easy part—and on it, we put a complete set of the plans for the shelter: the ground plan and the elevations—the side and end views. Michael did it so that every piece of the structure was identified. He said that wasn't much different from the way architects use computers in the design process. From there, it was like buying something from an on-line catalogue. Only he made it a bit more interesting than shopping from a catalogue.

For buyers, it was very simple. You looked at the plans, and when you clicked on a section of the building, say a post or a roof beam, a pop-up identified the piece and gave its cost, for example, thirty five dollars. Some pieces were expensive, some were cheaper. When you found a piece you wanted to buy, or could afford to buy, or were willing to buy, you double-clicked on it and the colour of that piece changed from red to green. Then you were directed to another page where you could pay for the piece with your credit card in the usual on-line shopping way.

If you changed your mind, you could click on a "Cancel" box. Then the colour of the piece would change back to red. Or if you double-clicked on something and didn't go to the payment page, the colour would automatically change back to red. Michael made other pages that were more like a regular on-line catalogue with lists of things like nails and screws, and fittings and fasteners. Smaller items that people could also "buy" in the same way. Most of the prices on the list were in the \$10 to \$250 range. Later, when we saw how well the system worked, we added another list of services and equipment we thought we'd need, such as foundation work, gravel supplies, Bobcats, trucks, and perhaps a crane, and people could make a contribution towards the estimated cost of those items.

The final touch was really cool! Once the payment had been received—we had to set up a special account at the credit union for that—we would change the colour of the piece on the plan from green to yellow. I called it gold. So we could see exactly how much of the building was paid for and confirmed. That was so exciting to see.

Takao Matsushima:

It took a while for the process to get going. It didn't all happen in a couple of days or weeks. We set up the website with pictures of the Sanctuary and all the plans for the Activity Shelter. We contacted as many yoga and tai chi groups as we could, and all the environmental and recreation organizations, letting them know about the Sanctuary, the website, and plans for the shelter. Someone told the local newspaper about the on-line "sale." It ran an item on the website and the fund-raising scheme, and I guess someone else got the attention of TV and radio stations in the city.

Most of us bought pieces of the shelter to see how the process worked. It was easy, and everything worked as it was supposed to. It was like the street musician putting his hat on

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the sidewalk with a few coins in it to encourage people to add more. Some of the bigger pieces were expensive, but there were plenty of smaller ones, things down in the ten to twenty-five dollar range. Someone bought all the roofing material in one go; all the dirt and plants that we were going to put on the roof. That was the earliest “big buy” I remember. We felt great about that, even if nobody had bought any of the roof itself at that time. But most purchases were smaller. We tried to appeal to all sorts of people, not just wealthy ones. One of the TV stations showed a class of school children that bought a \$10 item. Evidently their teacher had told them about the Sanctuary. After the TV coverage in particular, the whole process seemed to pick up steam.

Ahead of Christmas, we got a boost from another TV item about giving to charities instead of buying presents for family and friends. Or perhaps it was in addition to buying Christmas presents. That idea wasn't just a local one. Around that time, we began to see people from all over the country, from all over North America, buying pieces of the shelter. There was even someone from Europe. It was amazing! The best part of it was, everyone could see what had been already bought, so there wasn't any overlap, and we could see how much money we were raising, not just in total amounts but in direct reference to the shelter itself, before we even started to build. I'd have a look at the website every few days and it was fascinating to see the images go gradually from red to green and then to gold.

That was the high point: over the Christmas season. After that, things slowed down quite a bit. By the early spring, we had a hard decision to make: go or no go? A lot of the shelter was accounted for, but there were a lot of small items still uncovered. Not very exciting things like stain and paint and fixtures, none of them very big, but all together they added up to a fair amount of money. All the publicity about the Sanctuary had faded by that time. You're in the news for a few days, and then you're forgotten. We expected that. It was never a big story, except in the time around the Samilkawen decision.

It must have been some time in March when we agreed to buy more items ourselves. That triggered other purchases, and then one day, I saw that finally, the entire roof had been bought! That was the start of a wave. The pace really picked up. You could see it right on the screen. When one section of the building was nearly finished, the more gold there was, the more everyone wanted to get it finished. It was like doing a jigsaw puzzle; everyone wants to get the last piece in. It was great! By May, we weren't at a hundred percent, but close enough. We knew there'd be all sorts of unexpected last-minute costs. There always are. But we decided to go ahead and start building. We were optimists. I think you have to be in situations like that. There's no point in being otherwise.

Community

Alicia Tyndall:

In the weeks, before we started work on the Activity Shelter, I had the feeling of a small, hidden community coming together. It was parts of other communities: yoga and tai chi and Zen, environmental groups, and outdoor people. And people I knew nothing about. It seemed to me there were so many people who were part of the “Sanctuary community.” That is what I saw in the contributions to the Activity Shelter. People were so generous. They were wonderful!

We saw it again when started work on the new trail. That was one of the first things we could do in spring, once the snow was gone. Ned and Roger made several trips and marked out the line of the trail and then we organized some work parties. When we formed the Morning Light Co-operative—we had to do that as a legal requirement for the Park—we had about thirty members. I think more than half of them came to work on the trail. And that was hard work! It was wet and muddy on a few of the days, and we even had a late snowstorm when we were working on the top section near the Sanctuary!

The trail was not a rough trail like our original one. Skyline Park helped with advice on final section of trail that was in the Park. After all the protests and conflict, I must say the Park officials were very helpful and friendly in all our dealings with them. Having a new trail outside the Park was a benefit to them no doubt, but the Sanctuary was still inside the Park and they had to make sure that everything was done properly. We made the trail longer than Ned originally planned, so the gradient was not very steep. It meant more work, but there were no difficult sections. We did not remove or damage any trees or bushes.

The trail-building went very well. It was an excellent test of our ability to organize ourselves and our supporters and work together. After that, we were very eager to start building the Activity Shelter.

Roger Maltenby:

Building the shelter ourselves wasn't the fastest and most efficient way to go, but it was a great way to get people involved in the process, and that involvement gave them a real sense of commitment to it. I think that was important in the long term because we wanted the shelter to be a permanent and useful part of the Sanctuary concept. We wanted it to be a useful facility to the community; the local community, the yoga and tai chi community, and the community of Park users.

We were really pumped up by the response to the fund-raising. We could see by April that most of the building was paid for. Naturally, there were things we hadn't thought of, or minor changes we had to make, so there were other costs. But the publicity, the website, and the fund-raising process, they all attracted more members to the co-op. When we saw how

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well the trail-building went, we were feeling pretty good about our chances of getting the shelter built that summer.

Outside of Reb's fund-raising process, local people from Grenville and some companies in town gave us a lot of support. Dan got a special price on some recycled timber from an old mill in Grenville. We got a reduced price, and lots of help and advice from a company that built "green" roofs. And we got a good deal on the window panels. I should emphasize, we didn't do everything by hand, and there were a couple of companies in Grenville that contributed a Bobcat and trucks that came in handy.

It was a challenge. We were very lucky to have Dan Hedin in charge of things. It could have been a real circus otherwise. We had plenty of people willing to do the work, but we were only a bunch of amateurs when it came to building anything more than the pavilion that Ned and the others put together.

Dan and his crew organized the site preparation and the assembly of the lumber and other materials. They also did all the work on the foundation. We got the volunteers involved when we were ready for the main event: the "barn raising"—getting the walls up and the roof on.

Rebecca Watson:

When everything was nearly ready, we chose the date and started signing up volunteers. We announced it on the website and contacted everyone who'd expressed interest before. We put a notice in the local paper. Sandy did a terrific job keeping track of everyone. She worked with Dan and Roger so we had a rough idea of how many people we'd need, ideally, and how many people we had.

Sandy was a great organizer. We didn't know that, when we were creating the Sanctuary. She was one of our spotters when we were carrying the loads up to the ridge, but she always wanted to do more. When we set up the website, we found how much she could do. She was the main person who monitored the payments and accounts, and sent the orders to the lumber yard.

Sandy also made sure that everyone on the worksite had the proper safety gear, and she arranged food and drinks for everyone. That was really important; keeping everyone happy on the job. She was always on site early, and she was always one of the last to go. I don't think she missed a single day when we were putting up the shelter.

Takao Matsushima:

We got a lot of work done on three consecutive weekends. The weather wasn't perfect for the first weekend. Ned had predicted rain showers, and that's what we got. Luckily, most of the rain was overnight, and Sunday was dry, so we weren't held up much.

Dan Hedin and Roger organized everyone in work crews. Two of Dan's regular guys were the crew chiefs. They supervised and checked everything that the rest of us did. And there

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were another six or eight experienced guys that did most of the precision work—connecting posts and beams and wall sections, finishing the window framing, things like that.

We put up the posts first. With lots of hands, that wasn't too hard. And then we did the roof beams. They were bigger. Much longer and heavier. We thought we might have to get a crane for that, but when we saw how many volunteers signed up, Dan thought we could do it ourselves. After that, adding rafters and other crossbeams was much easier.

We got the main structure up on that first weekend, with the framing for the roof and the wall sections in place. And most of the framing for the big windows on the south. Dan and his crew had built the wall sections, in a warehouse in Grenville. All we had to do was lift them into place and attach them to the posts and framing. Most of them, except for the back wall against the ridge, were windows, and the neatest thing about them was the fact they could be opened out, like swing doors, to let in fresh air and breezes in the heat of summer. Sealing and insulating them took a bit longer, but by the end of the second weekend, the structure was nearly complete. Over the next few weeks, it was the finishing work that took a lot of time: getting the floor down, and all the painting and staining.

On all of those weekends, Roger and Dan co-ordinated everything. Roger's quite different from Ned in that respect. Ned is laid back. He works just as hard as any one else, but most of the time he's happy to be just one of the workers. With Roger, there's a different dynamic. He's a take-charge sort of guy. I guess from his experience leading expeditions to the Himalaya and the Karakoram, he's used to organizing people. I read his book about his first expedition. The first part of it was all about the troubles he had dealing with bureaucrats to get climbing permits and then haggling with porters to carry the gear up the glacier. The decisions about the route up the mountain seemed easy by comparison, even though they had to make some tough choices when the weather turned bad on them. Talking about his later trips, he said it was much easier. He learned a lot on that first expedition and his later experiences were much better.

Roger sometimes seems very hard, but he's also very persuasive. He gets people to do the work in the way he wants, and really, as far as the shelter was concerned, he was responsible for getting the right people to lead and supervise the work, and for the great support we got from local companies. When there was work to be done, he was always ready to take charge. I mean that in a good way.

There were a couple of glitches—that's inevitable—but for most of the first two weekends, the only breaks we took were rest breaks. We had to have those. But we hardly ever had to stop and wait because something wasn't available or ready.

Sandy Colborne:

This was a wonderful, exciting project for me! I loved helping with the Sanctuary, but I never felt that I did very much. Once we got started on the Activity Shelter, I was happy to be doing something useful again.

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A lot of the volunteers signed up on the website. A good number of them were locals from Grenville. I've got two cousins who live there and they did a great recruiting job! When they heard about the "barn-raising," they wanted to be part of it. We certainly had more volunteers than I expected. We had reporters from the television news taking pictures and interviewing people. And a reporter from the local paper. I guess it was one of the biggest stories in town that month.

I thought we should have some extra food and drinks for people, at lunchtime and for snacks. So I got my kids to help me set up tables and benches, and my mom was there too, to help me with the soup and salad. We wanted to have something for the vegetarians, and there were quite a few! For the others, Tak was the barbeque chef. He and Karen cooked up sausages and hot dogs. Some of the volunteers had brought their own lunches, but we had hot and cold drinks for everyone and it worked out just fine. It was work, but it everyone helped, and it was just like a big family reunion. We were a community. You know, people who did yoga—there were a lot of them, women mainly, young and old. People who did tai chi. And a lot of people who simply loved the outdoors and loved the idea of the Sanctuary and the Activity Shelter.

But you know, one of the absolutely best things? People who were driving by, stopped when they saw the crowd of people at work. And when they found out what we were doing, they wanted to stay and join in! There was one family—mum and dad and their teenage son, they came back several times.

Kevin Cameron:

We were going to go up to Bryson Lake that day, to have a picnic and maybe walk around the lake. I was driving up there, and when we got to Kanangra Creek, the traffic slowed right down. I thought there must be an accident up ahead somewhere. But when I saw the crowd of people and the framework of a building, I remembered seeing something about that on the news. A Sanctuary, and a building they were going to put up. So I stopped to take a look. I spoke to a guy who looked like he knew what was going on and he asked if we were volunteers. I remembered they were looking for people to work on the building.

Well, my wife was the one that said we should be part of it. I'd done some construction work when I was in college, and my son was big and strong. She thought there must be something we could do. We didn't have any special plans, so we signed up and worked for the rest of the day. The work wasn't very hard. The people were friendly, and we got a good lunch out of it.

I liked the idea of people doing something like that, and we all went back the next day—even my boy! And the weekend after that, too. It was great to do something like that with my son, to have him working along with me. And my wife. She was really into it. We don't do yoga or any of those things, but it seemed like it was a good project. You know what I mean?

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We went back later and saw the finished building. It looked great. It feels good to know that we were part of it. We didn't go up the mountain to the Sanctuary but maybe I will one day. My wife is talking about doing yoga now. Maybe this summer.

Gardening

Ned Kinloch:

When we decided to put the Activity Shelter right against the foot of the ridge, we had to move some good-sized rocks out of the way, and I felt we could almost certainly use them somewhere in the landscaping around the shelter, so I made sure that Dan didn't move them too far away.

I guess I like rocks. Small ones, big ones. Mountain-size ones. They're great to climb on. They're great to look at. Sounds crazy, doesn't it? Stones. Trees. Water. Very simple. Very subtle. Very interesting.

Anyway, from the time we started thinking about the Activity Shelter, I was also thinking about the area around it. I always thought the landscaping was as important as the shelter itself, so I spent a lot of time looking at various possibilities. I didn't say much about it until the shelter was almost finished, and then when we started to talk about it, Tak and I had pretty well the same idea at the same time. We were looking at those rocks we'd moved, and they said to both of us: "garden."

As you know, both Tak and I were interested in traditional Japanese gardens, and we were both thinking the same thing when we saw those rocks. A meditation garden. Just like the Sanctuary: open to everyone for silent contemplation and meditation. It would be very small, but we could design it with several distinct features that could be focus points for meditation. Like the rocks.

I thought a meditation garden near the Activity Shelter would be useful in a number of ways. It would be good to have a place to sit when the weather was bad up on the ridge. Especially when the trail was snowy or icy, or closed down by the Park. It would also be good for anyone who couldn't easily walk to the Sanctuary. It would give them an experience a bit like the Sanctuary, but without the views. And I suppose it could be used by people who wanted to sit, or use the shelter, but not have to pay for the Park Pass. I wasn't too sure about that. I wanted to encourage support for the Park, not help people avoid it. It would be better to have people sit and get a feel for the Sanctuary idea, than to go away completely.

Takao Matsushima:

By the time we had the Activity Centre up and just about finished, a lot of us were exhausted. Most of us had regular jobs, and we'd spent an awful lot of time and effort working on the shelter, and we'd need more time and effort to do basic, simple landscaping. Another, more important thing was: we were out of money! In almost any project, there's

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always a lot of small things that seem to add up at the end, and then you find they cost more money than you've got. Well this project was no different. We'd had some extra costs as we finished up the shelter, and they were a real strain on the budget. Between financial costs and volunteer labour, we'd pushed things to the limit. I really wondered if we were ready for anything else.

But Ned was on a roll! He couldn't stop once he had the germ of an idea. He could see all sorts of ways for it to grow and expand, getting better and better every time. For the garden he was not thinking only about traditional design ideas, but the sort of East-West fusion ideas he was interested in. I guess it was too good an opportunity to miss.

Naturally, volunteers were welcome to help, but they'd done so much work on the shelter, we didn't think we could ask for more work on the garden. Everything had gone so well, we figured there must be a limit to what you can ask of people, and we didn't want to ruin the great feeling everyone had by asking for too much. Ned thought the two of us could do most of the work ourselves! We'd need help moving the big rocks but he was willing to pay for things like that, that we couldn't do ourselves. He was happy to take things slowly and steadily. No hurry, even if it took a couple of years before we got it done. He was so persuasive, I had to agree with him. I figured it was something I had to do. That I wanted to do. It would finish off the Activity Centre properly.

But when we announced what we wanted to do, we got an incredible surprise. A lot of people still wanted to help! As well as people who hadn't been involved until then. We got the gardeners involved! They wanted to be part of it. I tell you! Somebody knew somebody who knew somebody else, and we had a dozen volunteers before we'd even started.

So Ned and I walked around and looked at the possibilities, just as we'd done with Dan and Roger when we were planning the shelter. There was a small area, near the shelter, before the ground sloped down towards Kanangra Creek, where we could place a group of large rocks, spread gravel around them, and we'd have a "sea of rocks and gravel." Like a traditional *kare-sansui*, dry rock garden, with sitting benches around it. That would be the heart of the garden. We never even drew plans. Ned sketched it out on the ground as we walked around.

Ned Kinloch:

I talked to Denise and Jim about the landscaping—I didn't want to do anything without their knowledge and permission—and they liked our ideas, so we announced one more project, and set the date.

And people came out to work. The hardest job was moving the large rocks into the centre of the garden. One of Sandy's relatives in Grenville had a Bobcat, and he was willing to help us. So we cleaned up the big rocks—they looked pretty good—and he managed to drag them into the places we'd prepared. We had to lift them and lever and turn them into the final positions. We didn't have a Japanese master to select the rocks and place them according to ancient principles, but we did the best we could with them. They were "found" rocks. We'd

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used a fair bit of recycled lumber in the shelter, and I was really happy to use those rocks. We scoured the area and found a few more small, interestingly shaped rocks, so we had seven stones in our “pond.”

We had lots of willing hands to spread gravel around the rocks, and then on the paths. Around the pond, we built up some mounds with topsoil and we planted several trees there—ones we’d saved from the area of the shelter. At one end of the pond, we planted native grasses and added a scattering of wildflowers to make a tiny meadow. It’s one of the focus points. We planted some azaleas and rhododendrons around the pond, and a few Japanese maples in more sheltered areas. Nothing fancy. Nothing very big. Most of the trees and bushes were donated by ordinary people, and we got a few from nurseries. They’re still getting established, and I hope they’ll survive.

We’ve made five benches and five people can sit in the garden at a time. They’re uncovered, so they’ll be used mainly in good weather. The plan is that when the bushes grow bigger—that’ll take a few years—each person will be screened from the others. Each person will have a separate view of the pond or a particular focus for meditation. I’d like to put a hedge around three sides of the garden, to give it more privacy, and we’ll probably do that soon. The garden is still pretty bare-looking. It’ll take a few years for it to grow in, especially at this altitude and in a mountain environment.

Again, so many people worked long and hard. I made it clear we weren’t creating a lush, colourful garden, but people seemed cheerful enough, and I think they had fun, like the people who worked on the shelter. In the case of the garden, it’ll take a bit longer to see the full fruits of their labour. I hope they all get a chance to sit in the garden and enjoy it.

Roger Maltenby:

The last big thing we did was the entrance gate. That was in the following spring, well after the landscaping and the garden were finished. We wanted to put up a suitable entrance gate to what we called the Base Area. The Sanctuary was up on the ridge, the shelter and the garden were the Base.

We wanted the main entrance to be like the entrance to the Sanctuary, only bigger and more imposing. Ned had another idea for this, too. If the ancient people in Britain could set up the massive stones of Stonehenge, and if the Easter Islanders in the South Pacific could set up their huge stone heads, surely we could raise two big wooden posts and a crossbeam ourselves, without cranes and heavy machinery. It would be like raising totem poles. And that’s how we did it. With ropes and poles and a ton of people. Another barn-raising weekend.

The posts were squared-off tree trunks about as thick as a totem pole—or maybe a little smaller—and about sixteen feet long. Getting them up wasn’t too hard at all. Placing the crossbeam was a bit harder. We lifted one end of it and put a wooden cradle under it. Then we lifted the other end and put a block under that. Not right at the end, though. Both stacks of blocks were close together in the middle. That made it easier to lift each end because the

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whole beam was almost balancing on the blocks. It wasn't a matter of strength and weight. It was a matter of balance and timing—everyone pushing at the same time and evenly from both sides. We were all ready to run at a moment's notice if looked like falling off the blocks.

The last moves were the trickiest. We got it just above the posts and then we had to slide one end over onto one post and then slide the other end onto the other post. Everyone gave a big sigh of relief when the crossbeam dropped into place. The posts shook a bit, but they didn't sway or fall over, and at the end, we gave Dan Hedin a big hand for the way he'd directed the whole operation.

By then, we really had pushed ourselves and all the volunteers to the limit.

Inauguration

Sandy Colborne:

Once we got the walls and roof of the shelter finished, and the floor down, it was so hard not to want to use it. I was dying to try it out! Ned and Tak were still working on the paths and the garden, and Roger was still building the fence, and when the shelter was finished, we all pitched in with the landscaping to get it done faster. On those weekends, Tom and the boys hardly saw me at all! We agreed to get all the finishing work done first, and when everything was ready, we'd all use it together, and then we'd have a real opening.

You see, when the trail was finished, and approved by the Park, we announced that the Sanctuary was open once again, and invited everyone to come and sit there. And we all went up—on a Saturday—and lots of other people came too. I was sorry we didn't have a special ceremony to mark the occasion. There must have been more than twenty people there in the morning, and we sat everywhere—in the pavilion, on the rock, and up on the ridge. In complete silence for an hour. It didn't matter if you meditated or not, as long as you sat quietly and looked at the view or whatever.

When the shelter was finished, we decided to have a celebration, a real inauguration. But first, we had to give it a name. It was too good, too special to be just called the "Activity Shelter." I don't remember who suggested it—Alicia I think—who said since the sides can be opened, it was more of a space than a closed building—the MindBody Space! MindBody. One word. And that's what it is! It seems like a strange name to some people, and it takes a bit of getting used to. But Alicia said when we do yoga or tai chi, our minds and bodies are working together, and when the building is opened right up, it's connected to the Sanctuary and to the trees and the air and the light, and that's the whole idea! Mind, body, and nature, all together! I love it!

Alicia Tyndall:

The Inauguration Day—the day we had all been waiting for—was almost a disaster! We invited everyone who had worked on the shelter, all those who had bought a piece of it, no

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matter how small, to come and see it. Do yoga or tai chi or chi gong—or any other form of mind-body exercises—and go to the Sanctuary, and then go for a hike, or a run, up to the Hawk River Viewpoint. That combination represents mind, body, spirit, and nature. That's what the Sanctuary and the MindBody Space were for.

Well. First, the weather was horrible! After so much good weather, we had rain and wind and storms. I am sure many people stayed at home because of the weather. We still had a very good number of people, though. Denise cut the ceremonial ribbon to open the MindBody Space, and we all went in. It was a very short ceremony in the rain. We made a few short speeches once we were inside, thanking everyone who had contributed to the shelter project. Roger found some tarpaulins and we put them just inside the door to protect the floor. We could leave umbrellas and wet shoes and jackets there. Unfortunately, it was impossible to open the walls and windows because of the wind and rain.

Nevertheless, in spite of the weather, so many people came to the opening, it was not possible for everyone to do yoga at once. We had to divide into two groups. While one group stayed in the MindBody Space, the other group went to the Sanctuary. Of course, that was not very attractive in the rain. Luckily, the wind was not so strong then, and Ned encouraged everyone to go. Feel the power of nature, he said. Feel the wind and rain on your face. Nature is not all picture postcards. It is wild and free! That is why it is so great!

That cheered up everyone, and the first group went up to the Sanctuary. Then they came down and did some yoga while the others went up to the Sanctuary. By that time the wind was quite strong, and we agreed that it would not be wise to do a hike up to the Viewpoint as we had planned. It would not be very pleasant higher up and the Viewpoint was already in the clouds. Lower down in the forest, small branches were being blown off the trees, and we did not want anyone to get hurt.

So when we were all back inside the MindBody Space, we formed one complete circle, at first holding hands. But we could not quite fit in the space that way. So we put our arms around each other's shoulders, and that worked! There was just enough room for everyone to face into the circle. And of course, it brought us together even closer together. And at that moment, I had an inspiration. I suggested we all say "Om" together. I did not expect that we all shared the same beliefs, and I did not want to impose a particular set of beliefs on anyone, but "Om" represents the unity of all things in the universe, the connection of all things, and it seemed to be the perfect way to sum up what we'd done, working together, to build the MindBody Space.

And that's what we did. A long, drawn out "Oooooooooommmmmmmmmmm."

Quite spontaneously, some started clapping, and we all clapped and laughed. As the wind and rain blew all around the building, we felt so happy!

Somehow, the day was a success. In difficult circumstances, everyone was patient. At the Sanctuary, everyone understood the principles of silence and stillness. In the MindBody Space, people doing yoga made space for others who wanted to do tai chi. We learned that we had to be very organized to manage the daily operation of the MindBody Space and the

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Sanctuary. At the end of the day, I was exhausted! But Sandy and Rebecca and Karen, they were going strong. Young and strong! It was lovely to see.

Yes, that was a special year! In early spring, we had our tiny Sanctuary in the Park. But once the Sanctuary was discovered, and when it was finally accepted by the Park, it became something bigger. It became a community project. I think people liked the fact that it was started by a small group of people, and not by the Park, or by some large organization.

That was the start of a type of community that few of us have in ordinary life — unless we are church-goers. There is an irony there, isn't there? People want to get involved. They want to control some small things in their lives, especially when world events seem so threatening. Building the shelter, they were doing something practical for the future, and for other people as well. Of course, we have a sense of community with environmentalists and climbers and skiers and people who are active in the out of doors. Many members of the co-operative are people who have been doing yoga or tai chi. But not all of the volunteers were members. While we were building the MindBody Space, a number of the volunteers went up to the Sanctuary for the first time. Making the connection between the shelter and the Sanctuary, they became very committed to what we were doing and they joined the co-operative.

We have taken on a lot of work and especially, responsibility. So much more than Ned and Tak and I ever imagined when we first talked about sitting in the mountains. It is, I think, a form of service. To the large community, and to the natural environment. Protecting the environment is a very large task, and the Sanctuary and the MindBody Space are very small contributions to that task. We will have to see how well we manage our responsibilities here, and see how we can do even more.

