

**The Victoria Insight Meditation Society 2011 Annual Report
for the May 4, 2012 Annual General Meeting**

Remarks from the Chairperson, Brock Brown

Background

The Victoria Vipassana Community (VVC) started the year 2011 with a newly formed interim Council. In addition to running the various VVC programs the interim Council investigated whether or not VVC should become a registered society. In April, 2011 at a general meeting sangha members gave an overwhelming message to proceed with a name change and to incorporate as a society. Sangha members also encouraged the council “to keep doing what you are doing”. On August 15, 2011, the Victoria Vipassana Community became the Victoria Insight Meditation Society. The interim Council became the first members and Directors of the Society. The Directors of the Society were: President Brock Brown, Vice-President Rod House, Secretary John Hilditch, Treasurer Joan Glover, and Director Joyce Elliott. Heather Martin is the guiding teacher for VIMS.

Each of the Directors has areas of responsibility for VIMS operations:

Brock Brown – Sunday Night Community Sit, Retreat Planning, Public talks planning

Joyce Elliott – Retreat Operations, Goward House contact

Joan Glover – Bookkeeping, Yoga studio contact

John Hilditch – Community Home Sit groups, Study Group, Social Evening

Rod House – Communications, Technology, Audio Recordings

Please refer to the reports from these Council members for more information about these areas.

Victoria Insight Meditation Society

Report from August 16 to December 31, 2011

During this period of time we continued with our regular programs of the Sunday Night Sitting Group, Community House Sits, Study Group, offered an Intro to Meditation Course, hosted talks by visiting teachers, organized weekend non-residential retreats, and we held our first residential retreat (for a listing of all the retreats during this time period see the report by Joyce

Elliott). We also had an enjoyable social evening where the many talented members of our Sangha provided great entertainment.

The VIMS Council invited June Fukushima to become a director on August 29 of 2011 to help with the communications area (newsletter and website). In the fall of 2011 Joan Glover announced she would step down as treasurer following the next AGM (May 4th, 2012) and we started looking for a replacement for this position.

During this period of time the Council planned the retreats we would offer in 2012. In addition to one day and two day non-residential retreats we looked into the possibility of a residential retreat and we accepted an offer by Margo McLoughlin to teach a 6 week course on the precepts.

On the organizational front the Council developed a budget for 2012 as well as a more specific budget for the various retreats we would be holding in 2012. We modified the Scholarship guidelines to include the courses VIMS offers.

The VIMS Council meets monthly and puts in considerable effort to sustain the health of the organization as well as organizing the many programs that are offered. I am grateful for the dedication and hard work of the Council members. In particular I also want to acknowledge Joan Glover's contributions. Joan put in many hours in the treasurer's role, was instrumental in establishing an accounting system using Quickbooks, and provided valuable input to the council. Thanks Joan!

I am grateful for the willingness of the many sangha members who volunteer to help run our programs. We greatly appreciate Heather Martin, VIMS guiding teacher, for the support and teachings she gives to our sangha. I'd also like to give special thanks to James Baraz for meeting with and encouraging our Council as we undertook changes this year.

VIMS is primarily funded by donations which allow the many programs to be offered. The generosity of the sangha makes it possible for the dhamma to be shared in our community.

May the merit of our actions be of benefit to all beings. May all beings find the greatest happiness, which is peace.

Submitted for the VIMS Annual General Meeting - May 4, 2012

Victoria Insight Meditation Society Financial report to Dec 31 2011

Victoria Insight Meditation Society (VIMS) was incorporated as a non profit society on August 16 2011. Its activities had previously conducted by Victoria Vipassana Community (VVC). As of midnight Aug 15 2011, all assets of VVC were considered transferred to VIMS and are included in these financial records. For a summary of our financial records please see, included:

- 1) Victoria Insight Meditation Society Balance Statement dated Dec 31 2011
- 2) Victoria Insight Meditation Society Profit and Loss Statement August to December 2011
- 3) Victoria Insight Meditation Society Profit and Loss Statement August to December 2011, detailed by class. This contains more detailed information about the profit and loss of some of the different programs we offer.

In considering these reports it may be helpful to know that:

- As of Aug 15 Victoria Vipassana Community had paid \$1679 towards the costs of activities to be operated by VIMS between Aug and Dec.
- As of Dec 31 2011 VIMS had prepaid \$1200 for costs of activities to be offered in 2012
- Although our residential retreat was offered after we had incorporated as VIMS, many of the income and expenses are in the previous VVC financial books, with a net profit of more than \$2400 occurring during VVC operations for the residential retreat. What looks like an overall loss, is not when one considers it over the whole year of 2011

Following, please see appendix A, the Victoria Vipassana Community and Victoria Insight Meditation Society Profit and Loss Statement 2011. From this, it can be seen that over the whole year of 2011 when VVC and VIMS finances are merged, as their activities were, there was a net profit of \$2872.95

For 2012 the VIMS council has decided to plan for a “break even” budget as there has been some profit for the past two years. This means that, for example, the requested dana from our retreats will stay the same, despite the fact that some will be more expensive due to teacher travel costs. This will be reviewed at the July council meeting to ensure that it is still viable. Please see appendix B the Victoria Insight Meditation Society proposed Budget for 2012.

Respectfully submitted

Joan Glover, Treasurer

Victoria Insight Meditation Society

Submitted: May 4, 2012

2011 Annual Report on VVC/VIMS Retreats

In 2011 VVC/VIMS offered a total of 8 retreats which was twice as many as were offered the previous year. Included in this number were 3, one day retreats which proved popular. A first for VIMS was the offering of a 5 day residential retreat on Thetis Island. The dana generously offered by retreat participants through the year covered the expenses associated with offering the retreats.

Because Queenswood officially closed their doors in October 2010, VVC/VIMS returned to primarily using Goward House, a non-profit activity centre across the road from Queenswood. With its spacious grounds and large meeting room, Goward House works well for our weekend non-residential retreats.

Title	Teacher	Attendance	Comments
Intro to Meditation, Feb 5 & 6th	Heather Martin	59	Waitlist: 13 Goward House
Mindfulness & the Brain, March 20th	Beth Trotter	54	Held at Goward House
Seeding the Generous Heart, April 30th	Margo McLoughlin	48	Held at Goward House
Metta Retreat, May 28 & 29th	Heather Martin	52	Held at Goward House
Loving the House that Ego Built, Aug 7	Howard Cohn	65	Held at Goward House
Seven Factors of Enlightenment, Aug 27 & 28	Ajahn Sona	55	Held at U of Victoria
Meditation in Nature, Sept 19 – 23rd	Heather Martin	27	Residential retreat on Thetis Island
Vipassana Retreat, Nov 12 & 13	Joanne Broatch	56	Waitlist: 13 Goward House

The volunteer work of many VIMS members contributed to the success of this year's retreats. Thank you to everyone who assisted with registration for retreats, managing of retreats, retreat set up & clean up. We also thank our guiding teacher, Heather Martin, and all the teachers who led retreats for us.

Submitted by: Joyce Elliott, VIMS Council Member May 2012.

Victoria IMS Sunday Night Community Sit Report

In 2011 we met every Sunday except Dec. 25 and the sessions were well attended throughout the year. Sangha members take turns facilitating the sit. We also had 5 guest facilitators: Heather Martin, Lama Tara, James Baraz, Ajahn Sona, Christine Mauro.

Thank you to the following facilitators from our sangha: Margo McLoughlin, Eric Bedard, Brock Brown, June Fukushima, Rod House, Isy House, Joanne Marks, Joan Glover, Yeshua Moser-Puangsuwan, Kevin Keliher

Submitted by Brock Brown for the VictoriaIMS AGM May 4, 2012

Victoria IMS Study Group with Heather Martin

The VIMS Study Group is dedicated to a deeper understanding of the Dharma through the study and contemplation of written material. This year we are focusing on the book "Kamma and the End of Kamma", by Ajahn Sucitto. The group, lead by our guiding teacher, Heather Martin, meets monthly, usually on the second Sunday of the month in the Lynn Wylie – Helga Beer Yoga Studio at 1600 Bay St. Each meeting begins at 1:30 with a 30 minute meditation, followed by a two hour teaching and discussion. There is no fee, but dana is requested to cover costs and as an offering to our teacher. On the average 25 to 30 attend, most of whom attend regularly although drop-ins are welcome.

Victoria IMS Home Sits

Home sits are offered by our sangha members from time to time. Many people enjoy meditating and sharing the dharma in the comfortable atmosphere offered by home sits. Currently two home sits are offered, the Sidney/North Saanich Vipassana sit, hosted by Marion Irish, and the Fairfield sit, hosted by Shelly and John Hilditch.

Submitted by John Hilditch, May 4, 2012.

2011 Report VictoriaIMS Technology and Communications

Website Changes in 2011

Brian Ripley, subcontractor, hosted the Victoria Vipassana Community website for several years. In the summer of 2011, Brian gave notice that he was ending his business in Nov 2011. I arranged for the VIMS website to be moved to HostPapa and re-designed the website to coincide with VVC becoming Victoria Insight Meditation Society, a registered society in BC on Aug 15, 2011. Our website name is <http://victoriaims.org/>. Anyone typing in, "VictoriaVipassana.org"

is automatically re-directed to the new website until the fall of 2012. After that we'll need to pay for this service.

Newsletter Changes

For many years, sangha member Linda Chan, kept the VVC membership email list and produced a weekly newsletter. In 2010 she began the use of Constant Contact, an email marketing company to create and send out the newsletter at no charge to VVC. In the summer of 2011, Linda stepped down from her role of Newsletter Editor. The interim VVC Council agreed to set up its own account with Constant Contact to allow multiple volunteers to access the account. VIMS pays a non-profit rate of \$126 per year, for up to 499 email addresses. I re-designed the newsletter to match the newly designed website and produced the newsletter until training sangha member June Fukushima to take over this task.

Public Address System and Audio Recordings

A small PA system (\$421.12) and a lapel microphone (170.00 plus HST) were purchased for use to improve sound and recording during retreats and talks. Training was provided so that it could be set up by several persons. As well as the ability to record talks we are able to offer service to persons that have hearing difficulties.

Support for Heather Martin and Salt Spring Vipassana Community

I also have designed and continue to offer technical support for Heather Martin and the SSVC web sites. Most of Heather's audio recording are hosted on the SSVC site. I offer advice and training to their volunteers. I have configured a sharing arrangement for the audio between our two sites.

Volunteer Support

My role as Council member is to oversee the Information Technology and Communications for VIMS. I provide technical support to the web, the newsletter and sound recordings. I trained June Fukushima to know how to update the website and to create the newsletter. She is now the Newsletter and Website Editor. June trained Joseph Briante and they produce the newsletter. Bruce MacRae posts information on the website. Bruce, Joseph, Brock Brown and I did sound recording at our events. Bruce and I edit these recordings and then post them on the website.

Brian Chapel, Joseph, Bruce, Nijjy Potikanen, Theresa Aspol and I provide summaries of recorded talks for the website.

We thank all contributors and volunteers.

Next year's goals include: Updating the 3 fold brochure, updating pages, reviewing and streamlining the website.

Rod House May 4, 2012

VictoriaIMS Newsletter and Website Editor Report for 2011

Council member, **Rod House** oversees all Communications and provides design and technical support for the VictoriaIMS website, the newsletter and sound recordings and postings. The Victoria IMS Council asked that I join the Council in August 2011 to represent Communications while Rod was in Mexico for the winter.

My role as Newsletter and Web Editor is to gather information and to make connections between VIMS event announcements on the website and in our newsletters. I am grateful for the timely information I receive from **Joyce Elliott**, Council member responsible for Retreat Operations; **John Hilditch** Council member responsible for the Study Group and House Sits; and from **Brock Brown**, Council member responsible for Sunday Night sits, talks, and VIMS business updates. **Heather Martin** kindly sends her Study Group notes shortly after she meets with the group, ready to be posted on the website. I took over checking the VictoriaInsight@gmail.com account from Rod (who had taken this over from sangha member **Linda Chan**).

Bruce MacRae provides reliable and expert support. Bruce does most of the posting of information on our website and prepares the online Registration forms. In the summer of 2011, Rod House trained me in using Constant Contact and updating the website. I then trained **Joseph Briante** who volunteered to help with communications. Joseph and I take turns producing the newsletter.

VIMS uses Constant Contact, an email marketing company so that we can create and distribute our newsletter. It works well for our needs. Constant Contact automatically responds to those wishing to subscribe or unsubscribe to our newsletters. It also tracks how many people open the email and if they make use of any links to the VIMS website or other online sites featured in the newsletter. Volunteers with some technical background can be trained in its use. Minimal volunteer time is needed for maintaining the email list.

In 2011, Rod House designed changes to our newsletter format and Subject Line that resulted in a higher rate of people opening the newsletter.

Date	Number of People on Mailing List	Open Rate
May 4 - 31, 2011	447 - 450	147 - 170 (33% - 38%)
June 6, 2011 New VVC Newsletter design	450	216 (50.5%)
June 15- Sept 1, 2011	429 - 446	174 - 199 (35% - 48%)
Sept 9, 2011 VIMS newsletter launch	449	220 (49.2%)
Sept 16 - Dec 31, 2011	442 - 461	163 - 222 (37% - 51%)

In December, those who had not opened a newsletter email since September were asked to confirm if they wanted to stay on our email list. I removed 66 names from our email list effective Jan 31, 2012 to stay within the limit of our payment plan (up to 499 names) with Constant Contact.

Other Advertising and Communications

Joyce Elliott and Linda Chan arranged for VictoriaIMS events to be posted on <http://mahasangha.blogspot.com/>. Linda arranged for free advertisements to appear in papers such as Monday Magazine. Updates on relevant programs were sent to BCIMS, Salt Spring Vipassana, the DIY (Do-It-Yourself) email listing, and to Sitavana Birken Forest Monastery.

Volunteer Support

Thank you to **Tess Wixted, Sandra Joy, Eric Bedard, Lawrie Thicke** and **Lois Badenhorst** who provided summaries of their retreat experiences for the newsletter. Thank you also to **Nijjy Potikanen, Chanthavouth Hy, Isabelle House, Eric Bedard, Joan Glover, Brock Brown,** and **Grace Golightly** who provided us with photos.

As well, **Birken Forest Monastery, Pacific Hermitage** and **Cloud Mountain** have given us permission to use photos from their websites so that we may share their beautiful images in our newsletter and highlight their organizations.

Next year's goals include: Updating the 3 fold brochure, reviewing the static pages on the website to make sure they are up-to-date and to consider adding information for new meditators.

Respectfully Submitted,
June Fukushima
April 25, 2012