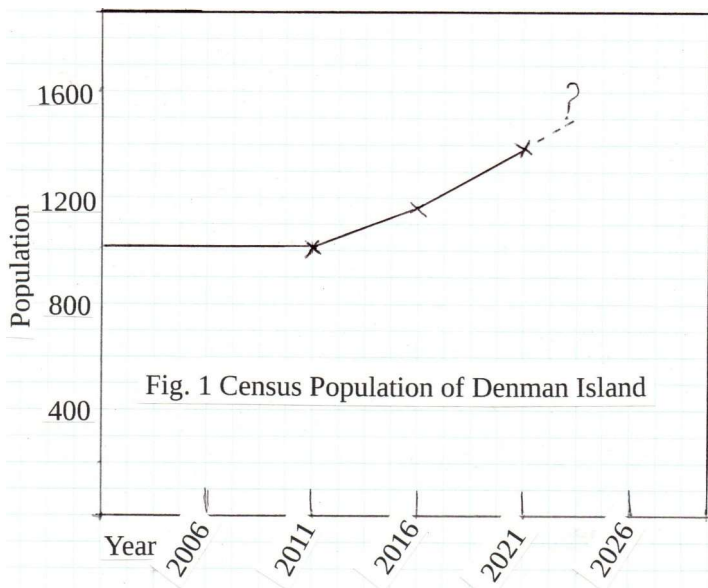




**2021 Census:
Ages and Housing of Denman Residents**
by John Millen

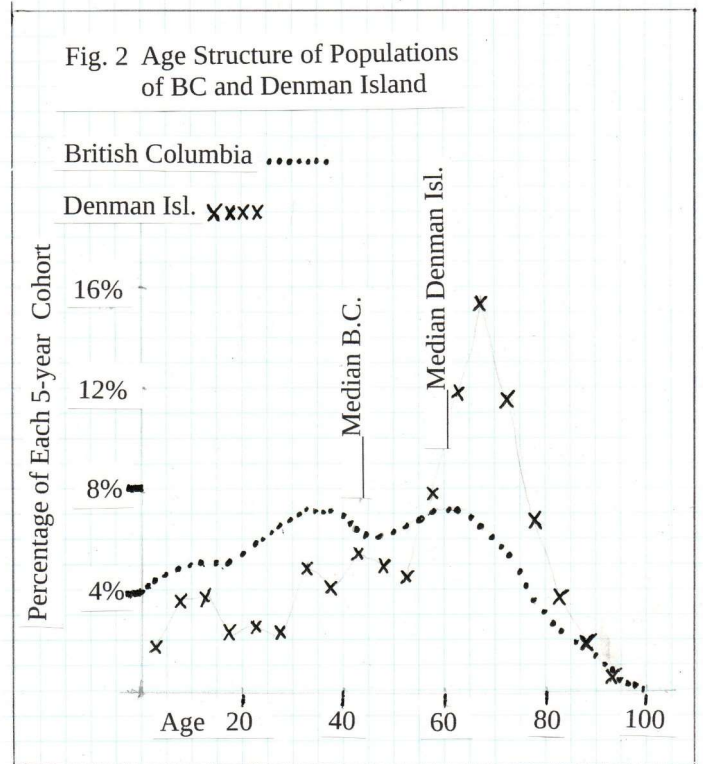
Detailed results of the 2021 Census of Denman Island were released in December 2022. While we already knew that the population for 2021 was recorded as 1391 we now have much more detail about such matters as the age distribution, family sizes, housing, education, income etc. of islanders.

Population growth to 2021 continued the trend established in 2011-2016 after the years of no growth for several previous census periods. See Fig. 1. If that growth rate has continued for the 21 months since Census day Denman now has another 100 residents, making a likely present day total population in the vicinity of 1500.



The age structure on Denman is noteworthy! The median age is 60.8 years. That is, there are as many residents older than that age as younger! Median age on some other Islands Trust localities are: Mayne 62.8 and Gabriola 63.2. But for a truly geriatric community we can look to the precious municipality of Qualicum

Beach with its median age of 67.5! The median age for all British Columbia is 42.8 years. See the comparison of Denman age structure with that of all British Columbia in Fig 2.



A note about census practises: All the reported numbers are rounded to the nearest 5. This can be disconcerting. Take the number of our youngest residents: between 0 and 4 years there were, on census day, 25 residents: 10 boys and 10 girls...?

The male:female ratio is puzzling. Why there are so many fewer males than females in the 0-14 age group (50 boys and 75 girls) is beyond my powers of speculation! The well known female superiority in life expectancy starts to show up at age 60 and is prominent in the age group from 60 to 70 where there are 165 men and 225 women. But guys, take heart, after 70 the age groups on Denman are almost all equally balanced male to female. To a degree these numbers must merely reflect who came to Denman when and at what age. However the numbers for BC as a whole do reflect that a noticeably higher death rate for men occurs in the decade after age 60.

The census recorded 695 occupied residences on Denman Island out of a total of 881 private dwellings. The occupied dwellings were almost all single

detached houses but there were 15 'movable dwellings'. Household sizes were 240 single, 315 2-person and 135 of more than 2 people. The average household size is 2.0 persons. The average household size for British Columbia is 2.4 persons.

Census data related to housing mostly comes from the 25% sample (people who filled out the long form). 660 households are represented in this data. Of these 570 were owners and 85 renters. Of these 660 households 45 reported that the accommodation was not suitable to their needs. 210 of these houses were built prior to 1980 and 55 were built between 2016 and 2021. The rate of building new houses on Denman since 1960 has remained between 7 and 14 per year, and is usually about 10.

The census tried to determine how many households had 'Acceptable Housing' by asking questions about the need for major repairs and the proportion of household income spent on housing. A need for major repairs was reported for 95 houses. The census concluded that of the 635 households sampled 455 had Acceptable Housing. Of the 90 tenant households represented in the sample 27.8% reported spending more than 30% of their income on 'shelter costs'. Average monthly shelter cost for rented dwellings was \$580.

Enough numbers for now! Next month's article will explore education, incomes, mobility, in the labour force or not, place of work and getting there.