



Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club

Newsletter

Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club
355 Gorge Road West
Victoria, B.C. V9A 1M9
Phone: 361-4238 (Info only)
Website: www.vckc.ca

December 2006



Cowichan River Clean-up
October 2006
(see page 7)

Message from the President

Thanks to all the volunteers who showed up for a rainy November cleanup. Great strides were made and the house and grounds are looking very good. The oddest/most disgusting item discovered was a bucket of pee. Why anyone would leave or even put that inside is beyond anyone's guess but at least it has been removed from the premises.

We have a new dragonboat director, Mike Fox. Mike is also our webmaster. Mike can be reached at foxes@shaw.ca and he will be making the necessary changes to the website to make sure the contact information is current.

We look forward to seeing you at the Christmas pot luck on Dec. 5th, and have invited a special guest. Mrs. Kelso Read grew up at 355 Gorge Road West and has many pictures of the house as it was in 1923. Lloyd Skaalen, our local historian, has met with her and is documenting the information.

We're not sure if Santa is coming this year, but I'm sure his list includes all those who've been very good.

See you then!

Judi Murakami
President, VCKC

Canoe Program

The next Canoe Program meeting is planned for January 22nd at 7.30pm. No topic has been selected as yet; an e-mail will be sent out ahead of time.

Kayak Program

Well, Christmas is fast approaching and on December 5 it's time for the club Christmas Party. Since the kayak program doesn't have a meeting in December it would be a great idea to see your paddling buddies from the kayak program and the other programs at the party. You can find details on page 5 of this newsletter.

We had an interesting meeting on the 15th of November. The pictures and presentation from Susan, Glynis & Gary were great. I'm anxious to see the next presentation that they put on. I expect Gary's pictures of Glynis might be especially interesting. At our next meeting January 17th Michael Jackson will present his trip titled "3 Sticks on the West Coast". Mike and two colleagues paddled over 250 km down the West Coast of the Island this past July - all three were using Greenland paddles. Mike will talk about some of their adventures, planning for the trip as well as some lessons learned.

Since there is no meeting in December, I will bring the kayak library to the Christmas party. If anyone wants to sign out or return any items at that time talk to me. The library will not be in the open.

Note that parking across the street from the clubhouse has become more difficult. There are bicycle lanes there now which means there are only two legal spots. If those are full, you will probably be best to go up to a side street.

I would also like to remind you again that I am still maintaining a list of people who are looking for paddling partners. Send an email to fredinvictoria@yahoo.ca. It seems there are many members out there yet that haven't heard about this.

Fred Trudell
Kayak Program Director

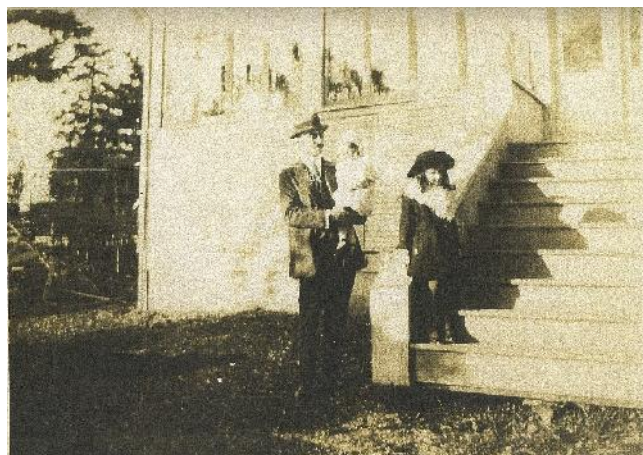


Photo of VCKC clubhouse in its original day
as residence for the Hamilton family
(see page 6)

Trip Report - Sooke Harbour

The intention had been to take advantage of a high tide to explore the Chemainus delta, but with only 5 paddlers, and a forecast of rain starting in the afternoon, we switched objectives to the Sooke area as being nearer and so give us an earlier start. We went out to Whiffen Spit via Serious Coffee and set out along the Spit to the entrance.

The Straits were calm (maybe we should have tried the traverse to Aylward Farm) but after a look out into the open water and into the excavation for a possible marina for Silver Spray, we took the tidal current back into Sooke Harbour, sighting on the line markers that are a feature of this anchorage. Many parts of Sooke Basin are very shallow, so that precise routes must be followed into the docks to avoid running aground. There were plenty of geese and ducks and two eagles high overhead, seagulls following a feeding sea lion, swooping down and squabbling over the remains of the salmon it had caught and was eating. No one had taught it anything about eating tidily, that's for sure.

The rising tide carried us round and up to the mouth of the Sooke River and Billings Point. The tide was high enough that the usual marsh and mudbanks to the west of the river were covered, but we still had to fight the river current as we paddled upstream to the Sooke campground. One kayaker preceded us up the river as we stopped for a snack. The water was up to the top of the bank, and spilling over onto the grass of the camping sites - not only was the tide high, but the river was quite full. As those who took part in the Clubhouse clean up the day before are well aware, it had rained quite a lot. Plenty of salmon were heading up the river and up DeMamiel Creek, which we followed up under the road bridge to the first cabin on that creek - further up than I've ever paddled before. The river itself allowed straightforward paddling, with one curve that required us to dig deep to get past the speeded up current to the next flat stretch. About a mile up the river we came to the next riffle that proved too strong for the 5 pre-prandial paddlers. So we stopped for lunch there. The smell of rotting salmon was strong in our noses but not enough to lose our appetites. The trip down was quite a bit

faster than the trip up - no surprise - and we found 2 swans had taken up residence by the campground, leisurely swimming in a large flooded area, surveying us with lordly eye.

The route back to the Spit was along the shore, seeing how many docks, jetties and gangplanks we could paddle under at high tide. By dint of limbo techniques, we managed to traverse under them all but two, one of which was a floating walkway, the other was just too low, so we'd to paddle round the wee marina. Always fun to see what you can do! The first rain drops started as we neared the Spit and we got our gear into the vans and the canoes and kayak on the racks as the rain really started - good timing indeed.

Taking part were Dave Whitehead and Pauline Campbell; Alan Thomson and Maris Ratel, and Peter Kabel in his kayak. Thanks to you all - a fine trip snatched between storms.

Storage Update

New boat rack:

Thank you to Aaron Baxter and Marc Dickson for doing a beautiful job of building a new boat rack in the outside storage yard. Also, thanks to Alan Thompson for dropping off salvaged lumber for the construction of this rack. The rack has increased outside storage capacity by 6 boats.

Winter storms:

If your boat is in the outside storage racks, please ensure that it is securely tied. We have already experienced some high winds and there will be more to come before spring time.

Payment of storage fees:

The end of the year is fast approaching. Please ensure your 2007 membership and storage fees are paid by January 1. To maintain security at the club, all combinations on doors and gates will be changed January 1. The new codes will only be provided to those whose fees are up-to-date.

Trips & Courses (Canoeing)

Flatwater Paddles for December

There will be no paddles arranged for December due to shorter days and other competing activities. They will start up in January. Tentative dates are Sunday 7th and Saturday 20th - to be confirmed in the January Newsletter.

Moving Water Trips

These are generally held on the 2nd Saturday and 4th Sunday of the month. Only one trip has been tentatively scheduled for December on Saturday 9th. Contact Tom Staebell at 655-7113 or e-mail thestaebellfamily@shaw.ca.

New Year's Day Paddle

The Club will run its traditional New Year's Day paddle on the Gorge. Meet at the Clubhouse at 10am, bringing some food for a pot-luck lunch afterwards. The voyageurs will be used as needed, but bring your canoe or kayak and join in the first paddle of 2007. Any questions, call Don Munroe @ 385-2268 or Alan or Linda @ 592-4170.

Safety Guidelines:

Trips are usually 4 - 6 hours plus paddle time, so bring food/hot drinks etc. Newcomers are welcome. It is preferred that paddlers have taken a Lakewater 1 course. Meet up at the clubhouse at 9am unless informed otherwise by the leader of the trip.

Bring along a waterproof bag with a change of clothes, rain gear, lunch, water bottle and snacks. When carpooling, riders can offer the car driver an appropriate amount to cover gas costs.

Courses

The next courses will be held in 2007. Let Tom Staebell know if you are interested in LakeWater or Moving Water (river) paddling courses, beginner or advanced - call 655-7113 or e-mail thestaebellfamily@shaw.ca. If anyone is interested in Tripping or Ocean Paddling courses, contact Alan Thomson at 592-4170 or 3135thom@islandnet.com.



Paddle to Port Angeles

The 2007 Paddle to Port Angeles and back will take place on Saturday, March 24 and the training for this "Special Community Event" will start on Sunday, January 28. Training will carry on every Sunday at different sites from Nanaimo to Sooke. Our Ron Williams is going to put a new coat of paint on the canoes (one, Silver Birch) and the Navy is going to provide two escort boats (Yags) and two zodiacs (Ribs). The Marine Rescue Society is providing an 18 person zodiac and Glenlyon-Norfolk School is providing their trailer and two extra Voyageurs which means 72 to 74 paddlers get to enjoy this event.

Because this will be VCKC's Silver Anniversary for the Kids it would be nice if we could raise enough money to send even more kids to Camp Shawnigan! Besides raising money by hitting up friends with pledges, this year we're going to put miniature Voyageur Canoes (provided by the inmates at William Head) on the counter tops of businesses around the city. So far we have requests from Western Foods (11) CIBC (1) and BC Liquor Stores

If anybody knows of any other possible sites please let me know. You can add the money you get from businesses to your pledge money total and be eligible for some great prizes.

Don Munroe 385-2268

Trips & Courses (Kayaking)

Christmas New Members' Paddle

The fourth annual Christmas New Members' Paddle will be on Saturday, December 9 this year.

We will paddle across Esquimalt Harbour and up Mill Creek (hopefully to the falls). On the way back, we will 'beach' at the Six Mile Pub to have a glass of "Christmas Cheer" and lunch before heading back to our launching site.

Please contact Glynis (gnewmandvm@shaw.ca) or 655-1272 for information on time and where to meet. I will need a headcount for reservations at the pub. Please read the guidelines for New Members' Paddle that follow if you plan on attending.

Guidelines:

New Members' Paddles (NMPs) allow new members to meet other members; to paddle in

a safe environment and to introduce new members to Victoria area paddling locations. They are tailored to beginner paddlers although experienced paddlers are welcome to attend.

All those who plan to attend NMPs need to wear immersion gear (i.e. drysuit or wetsuit OR insulating clothing such as fleece. ALSO remember to bring a change of clothes in a drybag. The trip leader has the right to deny your participation in the paddle if he/she thinks you are not adequately prepared for the possibility of immersion. If you are unsure about the suitability of your equipment or clothing, please contact the trip leader for advice prior to the paddle date. It is also expected that you will bring adequate food and water for the duration of the paddle.



Christmas Party

VCKC's annual Christmas party takes place on Tuesday, December 5 beginning at 5:30pm.

If your surname begins with A-L, please bring a main course or salad and if M-Z, please bring dessert. Bring your own drink (if it's not tea or coffee).

Also, bring a Christmas gift worth about \$5.00. If it's for a child, put their name on it. There have been rumours that Santa may make an appearance at the party.

And, if you can, bring along something for the annual Christmas raffle. Funds raised go to our 25th year of raising money for the Lions Society of B.C. And the Shawnigan Lake Easter Seal Camp. Raffle tickets will be \$2.00 or 3 for \$5.00.

There will also be a box for the food bank. So if you could bring a non-perishable food item or

toy that would be appreciated as well.

If you have some time to help organize the party, please contact Mavis Pillar at 384-4390 or pilarthetiler@shaw.ca.



Our Lady of the Gorge

The builder and original owner of the house now occupied by The Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club was Richard E. (Eric) Hamilton. His plans for the building at 355 Gorge Road West were conceived at almost the same time as was his eldest daughter, Kelso, who was born to Eric and his wife, Alice, in 1918.

Then, they lived in a cottage at 357 Gorge Road West and part of the original Causeway Boat House owned by Eric's father, R.J. Hamilton, who had long been providing Victoria transport facilities, including a boat launch service from Wharf Street to Gorge Park.

Today, Mrs Kelso Reed (née Hamilton) still resides in Victoria and has provided us with some of the original pictures of her family and of the house that was constructed in 1923 and became home for all including sisters, Jean ('22), Erica ('26) and brother Ian ('28).

Mrs Kelso Reed, our "lady of the Gorge", has agreed to be our guest at the next annual VCKC Christmas party, Tuesday, 5 December 2006, when more of this history will be told. Incidentally, that date happens to be a birth anniversary for her father, Eric Hamilton.



Membership Renewals

Please be advised that memberships for 2006 expire on December 31, 2006 and that 2007 membership renewal payments are due in January. So don't blow all your money on Christmas presents, etc.

VCKC has had an excellent year with more members than ever and I'm sure that you will want to renew so you don't miss out on any activities.

The membership application/renewal forms are in a rack at the back of the clubhouse and will be on-line at vckc.ca. Please note that we have redesigned the form to make it easier to use:

- you now only have to enter information that has changed from last year unless, of course, you are a new member;
- all members (new and renewing) should enter their name so we know to whom the form belongs;

- be sure to check the correct fee box(es) and include a cheque or money order in a sealed envelope;
- all members should read the complete form as we have clarified policies relating to boat storage and use of club boats;
- we now collect your current paddling certification level and certifying body for future course planning (e.g. Level I, CRA, CRCA, Paddle Canada or BCU);
- for renewing members, please identify information that has changed by checking the "New or Changed?" box where applicable;
- if you have any problems with the form or with membership issues, please contact the Membership Director.

Tony Copping
Membership Director, VCKC

Picking up Garbage The Scavenger's Dilemma

Every year, the Club runs some Clean-Up events. The Gorge Clean-Up, organized by the indefatigable Mr. Munroe is one; the Cowichan River Clean-up every fall is another, thanks to Tom Staebell. These events are organized specifically to clean up the shoreline of the waters we paddle. This article is not about these, but about the casual paddler on a trip who picks up garbage in passing.

In his book 'The Tipping Point', Malcolm Gladwell quotes research to the effect that, in a tidy environment, people are less likely to litter; whereas places that have already been used as a dumping ground seem to give license to others to litter there. There are many possible reasons for this finding, but in the end, the tidier you are and the cleaner you make places, the more likely they are to stay clean. Sounds simple, doesn't it, but in all apparently simple propositions, the devil is in the detail.

Consider. At the extremes, it is easy. Ruling out as behaviour beyond the pale the leaving of garbage of your own, you can pick up no garbage at all - and get in more paddling - or pick up all garbage you see, thereby diminishing your paddling time, possibly to zero. Most of us don't try to pick up every cigarette butt and toothpick - to do so is time-consuming, dirty, and turns the trip into a clean-up, not a paddle. On the other hand to pick up none is to encourage others not to tidy up and even to add to the mess.

So how do you decide what to take and what to leave in place? One rule might be SIZE. If it is small, you may decide to leave it alone unless very obvious or perhaps harmful - pins, pieces of glass etc. The thinking might be that if the object is small, it will not make the overall area look very untidy and encourage littering in others, so is not important. If it is too big to move - like the waterlogged mattress we once found in the Gorge - then there is only one choice to make, at least on that trip.

Then there is BIODEGRADABILITY. If the material is going to rot down quickly - apple cores, small amounts of paper, and it isn't obviously littering the locality, leaving to nature to dispose of it makes some sense - you don't slow down the trip; the garbage isn't an eyesore.

Then there is ACCESSIBILITY. If you see something shining in the bushes 5 metres or more inland from the shore, do you get out of the boat to get it, or stay with what can easily be seen and reached from the canoe (or kayak)? Perhaps if the landing is easy - on a beach, no dense bush, you may decide to make the effort - it is in plain view and may encourage more littering - but if it is in salal, like a wave-tossed bottle along the West Coast, maybe you decide that the effort is not worth it.

And how about PROFIT? Most of us collect cans and bottles, partly because they often float and so end up on shores downstream on a river or along the coast. And the bonus is that you can return them to Bottle Depot or another recycling venture and get some money for them. Quite an

incentive. But what about the bits of polystyrene from fast food places; or paper coffee cups that also float and lodge along the littoral? No money for them, but they are visually untidy. The coffee cups will degrade in time; the polystyrene foam will take longer and may well end up in an animal's gut (bird, fish or mammal) and do some harm. Do you pick these up or leave them in place.

And what about the TYPE of garbage. Do you pick up dumped diapers (always used)? And leaking paint containers? - our van has the silver paint from one such item dripped across the fender. Picking up garbage often isn't clean or pleasant for the collector, and maybe it makes a difference whether you are dressed in your new, spiffy recreational clothes with the latest gear, or only in your scruffy work pants and gardening jacket.

What about the ECOLOGICAL aspects. When is one person's garbage another person's ecological niche? Many of us remember the discussions over exactly when a supermarket cart tipped into the Colquitz counted as garbage, and when it became an anchor for new creek life, growing along the metal wires. Does a bottle, encrusted with living shells, count as garbage or a useful base for biodiversity and so to be left alone?

So, where do YOU fit on these various dimensions? We tend to go for the bottles and cans, plus the more obvious, visually offensive litter, plus any dangerous items, but draw the line at getting very dirty or slowing our trip to the point that we can't do the planned trip. What you do, is up to you as long as you leave none, and pick up some.



VCKC Executive

<p>President Judi Murakami 360-2776</p> <p>Vice President Mile Petrovic 893-1904</p> <p>Treasurer Paul Post 412-4323</p> <p>Secretary Lorna Petrovic 733-2013</p> <p>Past President Paul de la Bastide 598-9611</p> <p>Program Directors:</p> <p>Canoe Program Linda Thomson 592-4170</p> <p>Dragon Boat Program Mike Fox 391-0160</p> <p>Outrigger Program Keith Larusson 598-7193</p> <p>Sea Kayak Program Fred Trudell 480-0880</p>	<p>Voyageur Program Don Munroe 385-2268</p> <p>Marathon Canoe Program Ron Williams 380-7496</p> <p>Education, Standards & Safety Doug Linton 727-0216</p> <p>Membership Tony Copping 479-1308</p> <p>Clubhouse & Grounds Kathleen Gunn 384-6436</p> <p>Social Coordinator Irena Jazwinski 388-9757</p> <p>Boat Storage Alex Mann & Lynn Sanderson .. 382-7781</p> <p>Newsletter Harold Gillis 598-9488</p> <p>Directors-at-Large Mavis Pillar 384-4390 John Close 384-8077 Joy Newham 385-5876 Fraser Tweedy 380-6952</p>
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VCKC Clubhouse Bookings and Club Activities December 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5 Christmas Party 5:30pm	6	7 Dragonboat Meeting 7:30pm	8	9
10	11	12 VCKC Executive Meeting 7:30pm Judi 360-2776	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

The Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club is a member of:
 RCABA (bccanoe.com);
 CRCA (paddlingcanada.ca);
 CORA (canadianoutrigger.com)

General Meetings
 First Tuesday of each month (September to June)
 January Newsletter deadline: December 17, 2006