



Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club Newsletter

Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club
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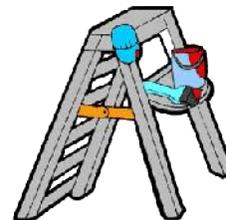
November 2009

**General Meeting
November 3, 2009
7:30pm**

Kayaks

**Murrough O'Brien will
talk about kayak
construction and
maintenance**

Don't Forget
We'll be having our fall
Clubhouse Cleanup starting at
9:00 am on Saturday,
November 14
All helping hands welcome



Clubhouse News

The Fall cleanup is planned for Saturday, November 14. We will need people to cleanup the house and the yard. Things will get started at 9 am and if we have enough people should be finished by noon. Come for the morning or for an hour if that's all you can manage. It all helps. Bring rakes, gloves, secateurs, buckets, cleaning materials or whatever you may need for the task you plan to do, inside or outside. ***The more people, the sooner the task is done!***



2010 is getting closer!

Are you interested in being on the Executive for next year? It's a good way to find out how the club works and to get to know people from other sections. The meetings are at the clubhouse on the second Tuesday of the month at 7 pm except for July when we don't have a meeting. If you are interested, talk to any present Executive member.

Linda Thomson
President, VCKC



Trapper with hides and dogs

Canoe Program

In the absence of Joy Newham, our Canoe Program director for the last three years, the Program has been carrying on to the best of the temporary director's ability.

A rather impromptu joint Canoe and Kayak Program meeting was held on the evening of Monday, October 12 - Thanksgiving. The meeting watched a Canada Safe Boating Council video on cold water survival (Cold Water Boot Camp) and a slide show on a paddling trip this last August in the Cordero Channel area (see page three of this newsletter for a written report). We also discussed whether a program on planning for day trips would be useful to members of both sections, and there seemed to be support for the idea.

The Canoe program Lakewater courses in October were well attended and the weather was helpful, too. 13 paddlers passed the Level 1 - Basic Tandem course – and three completed the Level 2 - Solo course the next day. At the time of writing, the Club's first Big Canoe course is very well subscribed with about 15 paddlers due to take the course. While no further canoe courses are planned before 2010, if you are interested in taking a canoeing course that has not been advertised, please let the program know at canoe@vckc.ca or contact Alan Thomson at 250-592-4170.

The next Canoe Program Meeting will be held on Monday, November 16 beginning at 7:30 pm.

This program meeting will include:

- * a slide show by Mike Rott and Yasmin Rampuri about their canoe trip in the Canadian Shield this summer;
- * a session on aids to day trip planning and
- * a search for a volunteer to stand as the Canoe Program director for 2010.



Cordero Channel by Canoe

Linda and I are on a somewhat desultory quest to paddle the main waterways from the Georgia to the Queen Charlotte Strait before our paddling muscles and joints finally seize up. Thanks to the guidance and companionship of numerous Club members, we had paddled the northern islands beyond Port Hardy, the Broughton Archipelago area and the Quadra/Cortes/Read Island waters. This left the waterways from Cracroft Island down to Sonora Island above to be explored. Since last year's trip to the southern Discovery Islands had gone well, we decided to carry on from where we left off and paddle north and west and see how far we could get.

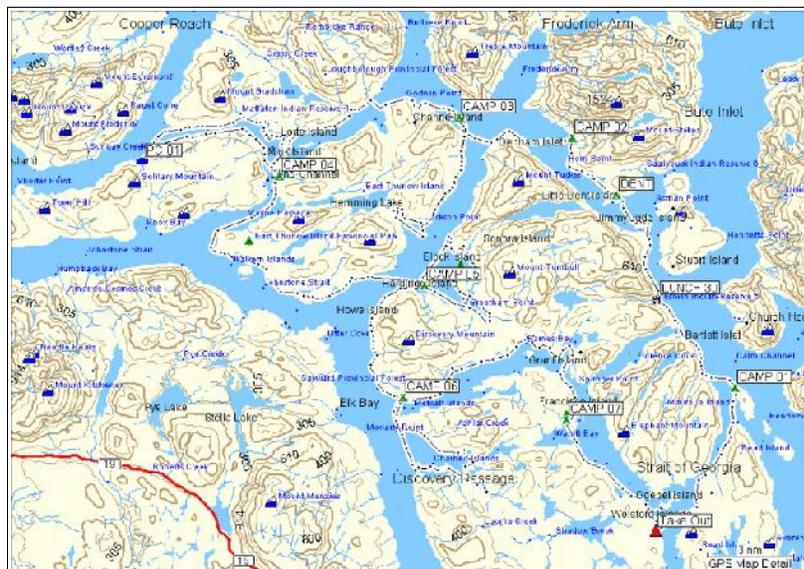
Thanks to John Kimantas' Wild Coast series of guides and his Recreational Small Boat Atlases, and Kirby Stevens' Coastal Waters Recreational Maps, the planning of these trips can be done with a lot more confidence that you will find campsites. Yachting manuals are also useful in that they show where there are marinas and describe some of the waters, particularly the stronger currents, in detail. Our choices were to follow the Vancouver Island coast through Discovery Passage and the Johnstone Strait with forays up the various passages to the east; or to follow the Mainland coast by Cordero Channel. Since the first route is heavily used by large vessels and is more subject to wind, we chose the second.

The main planning parameter, apart from camp site location, was the presence of strong currents along the proposed route. We had to plan to traverse these rapids at or near to slack to avoid some difficult and

dangerous water. There are 12 Primary Reference stations for currents in Volume 6 of the Canadian Tide and Current Tables, and our route would take us through 5 of them, plus a secondary station, so timing was important. As much by luck as good judgement, the timing of our trip coincided with relatively weak currents, which simplified matters.

The put-in was by Surge Narrows on Quadra Island at the end of a gravel road that goes by the put-in for the Main Lake Chain paddling route. The final 200 metres of the road down to the water is very steep - more than 25% slope - so we parked at the top and carried the boats and all the gear down the deeply rutted slope. Obviously not everyone is as cautious as us and the gouges in road surface showed how hard it was to get back up, 4-wheel drive or not.

In the nine days that followed, we had lots of sun, no rain and very little wind - perfect paddling conditions - which made the absence of other paddlers, kayaker or canoeists, all the more surprising. Plenty of fishing boats, power boaters and yachters, but not a single paddler, apart from those launched from powered boats for local bay exploration. Why there were no other paddlers on the route in early August - prime high season for tripping - we have no idea. In fact, the only probable trippers we saw were six kayaks pulled up on the beach at Yeatman Bay on Quadra, spotted on the day we ended our trip. Still, it meant no competition for campsites, so we weren't complaining.



Our route went from Surge Narrows via Whiterock Passage to the Rendezvous Islands, then northwest through the Yuculta Rapids and into Cordero Passage. The tricky spot was the Rapids – actually three rapids in succession – Yuculta Rapids proper, Gillard Passage and Dent Rapids, all in distance of under 5 nautical miles. As the tides set from the Northwest in this area, the timing of slack was in the wrong order when approached from the south i.e. the furthest rapid was at slack first. So either we hit the nearest rapid early, while it was still flooding and caught the 3rd rapid at slack, or we hit the nearest rapid at slack and reached the farthest one when the ebb current was building up. We chose the first approach and found that we could easily paddle up the back eddies and the narrow channel of quiet water between shoreline and the kelp, avoiding the fast water in the main channel. This enabled us to cut across below Dent Rapid to the resort marina in very good order, much to our relief. The yachting guides and Wild Coast Guide all warn boaters about these rapids and it was good to find that the reality was much safer.



Once through the main obstacle, we spent five days paddling along Cordero Channel, looking into the various arms to the east, into the Coast Range, and west, down the passages leading to Johnstone Strait. There was snow on the high mountains like Estero Peak but the weather at water level was warm and the views were great. Apart from the scenery, we could watch the processions of power boats and yachts that came and went in the Channel, coming in groups as they all time their passages through the rapids at the same time; and then there were the morning and evening clusters of salmon fishers trolling in the back eddies. It is not surprising that salmon are getting scarce given the gamut of lures that await them

around every corner. The many fish farms also don't help.

In addition to the fishing, there is still quite a lot of logging, with log rafts being shepherded along by tugs; self-loading log barges and other industrial traffic using the waterways to move heavy good. There being no roads on the mainland or the islands, apart from logging roads, movement by sea is the obvious alternative.

One of the purposes of the trip, apart from the filling in of a gap in our charts, was to check on possible campsites along the Channel. The BC Marine Trails Network Association is working to establish protected campsites all long the BC coast in a series of 'trails' that can be published and made available to paddlers wanting to sample the superb scenery and wildlife of this province's coastline. So we ducked into many bays and looked for evidence of old campsites or places where a tent or two could be placed. It was surprising how many there were, if you are prepared to look and to do a little clearing of fallen wood and undergrowth. We checked out more than 20 sites, getting their coordinates, checking on landing beach conditions (slope, exposure to wind and waves, etc) and sent the information, along with photos to the Marine Trails.

Having paddled Cordero Channel, we went down Maybe Channel to Johnstone Strait, round into Thurston Bay; round by Chatham Point into Okisollo Channel and hence down to the Octopus Islands. There, if anywhere, we expected to see other paddlers, but none were to be seen, although there were 25+ yachts and other boats in the Marine Park anchorages. So we could have our favourite campsite, up on a bluff on one of the islands, looking south. No fires were allowed – a province-wide ban on camp fires was in place – which diminished the pleasure a little, but since we were at this site when we had the only strong wind and rain of the trip, we probably wouldn't have sat by the fire in any case.

By the last day, we had gone through rapids at Okisollo, the Yucultas, and Greene Point, leaving us only Surge Narrows to go. The difference was that, if we wanted to avoid the full current, we would either have to start very early – on the water by 7am – or quite late, which would mean we'd be driving home in the dark. In the event, we left at the usual time of about 9 o'clock and reached the rapids about 30 minutes before maximum ebb. It was a hard struggle,

(continued on page 7)

Canoe Trips

Flatwater

Due to conflicts with canoe courses, the next flatwater paddle will be on Sunday, November 15th.

Usual arrangements:

- * Meet in the parking lot by the Clubhouse at 9 am;

- * Call or e-mail Linda and Alan Thomson by the evening of Thursday November 12 if you would like to take part, and let me know if you need a boat or partner;

- * Check the weather forecast for likely wind and rain conditions (250) 363-6717 or -6880 by telephone or the Environment Canada [Internet forecast](#) - and bring clothing suitable to the day;

- * Bring lunch and hot drinks, too.

- * The Club's website ([click here](#)) tells you what is expected of trip participants.

A second flatwater trip is planned for **Saturday, November 28.**

Trip destinations have not been chosen and will, as always, depend on the weather forecasts. If you have any favourite trip you'd like to suggest, let me know.

A reminder note will be e-mailed to all section members the weekend before the planned trip.

Moving Water

Here comes the "river food"! Though some may call it rain (or worse), it signals the start of the moving water season. We'll start this year with our Remembrance Day observance at the Burma Memorial at Stoltz and finish at Vimy. After that the trips will depend on water levels and what the group is into. Here are the proposed dates although feel free to initiate a paddle any time.

Wednesday, November 11 (additional notes below)

Saturday, November 21

Sunday, November 29

Saturday, December 12

Sunday, December 27

All the details same as last year, 8:30 Millstream etc. A brief email reply is helpful to ensure we will wait if you might be a minute or two late or to call you in the event of a cancellation and save an unnecessary trip to the p&r. If you are no longer interested in participating drop me a reply to that effect and the harassment will stop otherwise it's "game on". Club boats are available for rental use by moving water course graduates but give me a call to make sure one is available. Sometimes a tandem seat will open up if you need a partner. See you on the river!

Tom Staebell

Courses

Moving Water Level 2 (solo)

Saturday, Nov. 7 & Sunday, Nov. 8

To register for Moving Water courses, contact Tom Staebell: thestaebellfamily@shaw.ca

Res: 250-655-7113

Cell: 250-588-2207



Remembrance Day Trip Wednesday, November 11

The traditional VCKC Remembrance Day paddle on the Cowichan will take place if water levels allow.

Voyageur canoes will be taken if demand warrants. Please let Alan Thomson know if you would like to paddle in one of these big canoes so that the right number of boats can be taken.

Moving Water skills are not required, but are desirable. Everyone must have a wet or dry suit and a helmet, in addition to the usual PFD and

paddle.

The meeting place for this moving water trip will be at the Clubhouse, not the usual Millstream Park and Ride as we will need everyone to help move the big boats.

Time - 8:30 am at the Clubhouse parking lot; 9:30 am at Serious Coffee in Duncan; 10 am at Stoltz Pool. The plan is, as usual, to observe two minutes silence at the Burma Star memorial at 11 am.

Note that there are some log jams on the Cowichan below Stoltz. If these are not washed away by the November 11, we will paddle another section of the river (e.g. Lake to Skutz or Sandy Pool to Duncan).

Tandem and solo canoes are welcome, of course. Please let Alan know if you plan to take part. Paddlers must have passed a Moving Water course and be properly equipped – canoe with airbags, bailer, painters, throwbag, as well as helmet and wet or dry suit.

Alan Thomson Tel 250-592-4170
email: 3135thom@islandnet.com



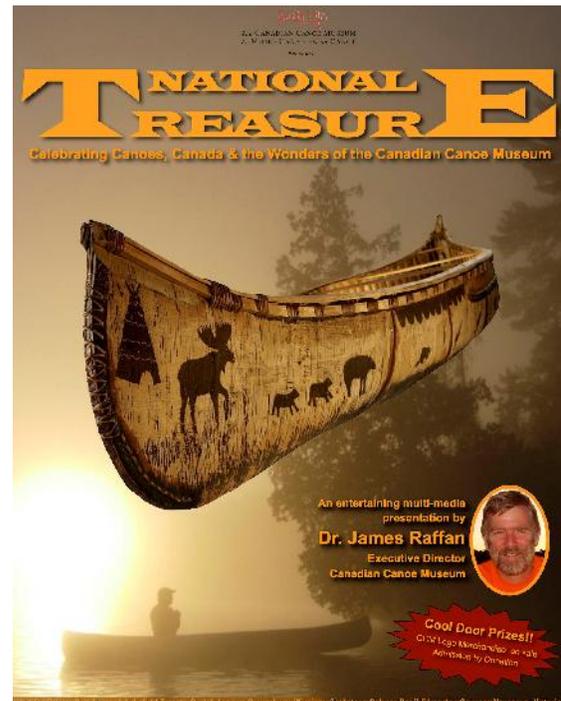
VCKC paddlers at Burma Star Memorial on last year's Remembrance Day

Canadian Canoe Day VCKC Festivities - June 2009 (Photos: Maris Ratel)



New voyageur canoe (donated by Harold Nishikawara) piped to the water

Coming up at Ocean River Sports Friday, November 6, 7:30 pm



A Multi-Media presentation by
Dr. James Raffan, Executive Director of
the [Canadian Canoe Museum](http://www.canoe.ca)

creeping up the eddies then fighting the current at the next point of rock, but the shoreline allowed for lining, and we made it round to the slacker waters where the passage widened.

The trip took 13 days, we covered about 125- 130 nautical miles and explored most of the waterways around Sonora and the Thurlow Islands, as well as Kanish and Granite Bays on Quadra. We can recommend this trip to any paddler who can read the current tables. There are plenty campsites, freshwater is not hard to find; bears are present on the Mainland and Sonora Island but not on Quadra, and there is the chance to see orcas as they pass along Nodales Channel.

Thanks to John and Brenda for their company; now for the Cracroft/West Thurlow stretch in 2010.

Alan Thomson



A Couple of Other Things ...

The grand Masters OC (Open Canoe) 6 crew of Doug, Bon, Susan, Bob, Liz and Ronnie paddled the VCKC Calmar to a second place finish in the ORPC Bridges race on Oct. 18. It took about 40 minutes to cover the 6.3km course, finishing about 2 minutes before the third place boat, and about the same distance behind the winners (a much younger group). A great effort, enjoyed by all.

Within the last couple of weeks someone (unnamed) attempted to fold the handle on the Hose reel without releasing the catches, thus destroying said catches. I have replaced the folding mechanisms with braces **WHICH DO NOT FOLD** – so don't attempt to fold them again.

The moral of this tale, for those who seemingly haven't progressed beyond the application of brute strength to solve all problems, is to take a look and figure out how things are supposed to work before applying undue amounts of force.

Doug Linton

Help Needed (No heavy lifting involved)

As editor of the VCKC newsletter, I'm grateful to several contributors who almost without fail provide content each month. However, over the last few months I've had less and less content for the newsletter. The past two months I've not even had enough content to fill the ten pages allowed for the printed version of the newsletter.

So this is a call for paddle related content from those of you who've perhaps never submitted anything to the newsletter.

It doesn't have to be an epic story involving storms and high seas. Maybe a day paddle that was particularly memorable this past summer; or finally doing a trip that you'd meant to do for years; or a review of a book about or involving paddling; or practical tips for stress-free days on the water.

And, it's true: a picture is worth a thousand words (well, almost). Large size jpgs appreciated. Send to: newsletter@vckc.ca. Don't be shy.

Harold Gillis
VCKC Newsletter Editor

VCKC Executive

President		Voyageur Program	
Linda Thomson	592-4170	Don Munroe.....	385-2268
Vice President		Marathon Canoe Program	
Bon Lee	477-1381	Ron Williams	592-6456
Treasurer		Education, Safety & Standards	
Sam Ludmer	298-7004	Doug Linton	727-0216
Secretary		Membership	
Diane Nishimura	383-3080	Carolyn Rattray	386-9144
Past President		Clubhouse & Grounds	
Mile Petrovic	733-2013	Sandy Rattray ..	386-9144
Program Directors		Directors-at-Large	
Canoe Program		Jack Louie	598-1569
Alan Thomson (Acting) ...	592-4170	Maris Ratel	592-7082
Sea Kayak Program		Muriel Johnson	391-0560
Still Vacant		Mavis Pilar	857-9564
Dragon Boat Program		Executive Volunteer Positions	
Mike Fox	391-0160	Mavis Pillar (Soc.Coord.)	857-9564
Outrigger Program		Harold Gillis (Newsletter)	598-9488
Max Nock (Acting)	544-0051	Dave Whitehead (Boat & Locker Storage)	email

[VCKC Calendar](#)
[Click Here](#)



Fine day for a fall paddle



Friday Flyers

Photos: Wendy Clapp