



Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club Newsletter

Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club
355 Gorge Road West
Victoria, B.C. V9A 1M9
Phone: 250-590-8193 (Info only)
Website: www.vckc.ca

April 2011

General Meeting Tuesday, April 5 7:30pm

In the summer 2009, Yves Aquin and Patti Stevens spent four months paddling 450 miles (833 km) in the Queen Charlotte's Islands and the North Coast of B.C. before flying to Auckland, New Zealand where they were invited to talk about their adventure at the 2010 Coastbuster Sea Kayak Symposium.

Patti and Yves will join us at our April General Meeting to present a collection of their favourite pictures and share their experiences with you.



VCKC Paddle For The Kids 2011

The 30th Paddle for the Kids took place on Saturday, March 26. While the day had been chosen for its propitious tides and currents, we were blessed by good weather and completed the paddle in just over ten hours. Getting the canoes up under the Tillicum Bridge and putting them away took another hour, but overall, a very good trip.

The Club mustered 30 paddlers for this year's Paddle, and we were augmented by eight paddlers from the Victoria Youth Paddling Club. So three voyageur



canoes made the trip from Brentwood Bay to the Clubhouse, round the Saanich Peninsula.

We left the Tsartlip Nation's boat ramp at 7am in calm waters and clear skies.

The paddle up to Towner Bay was cool and beautiful with the sunrise over the peninsula and the waterfront homes, mostly still shuttered, providing plenty to occupy the eye and mind. The change-over at Towner Bay



was right on time and the second shift took the canoes round to Swartz Bay in quick time—15 minutes ahead of schedule. The new Rest Centre, in the Saanich Heritage Society grounds was

full of interesting artifacts, as well as drinks and food, courtesy of the Lions Club.

The next switch took place just north of Turgoose Point and again was right on time. The threatened stronger winds had not started up and conditions were so good that the crews took the canoes straight across

Cordova Bay and into Glencoe Cove, south of Gordon head. They had to paddle for 15 minutes longer than planned but covered two nautical miles more distance, thanks to the ebb tide current.

The next shift had the advantage of that current round Ten Mile Point but encountered standing waves coming round the Victoria Golf Course and into Kitty Islet. There was little wind but these difficult conditions continued for the next crews until we were past Clover Point. The waves were irregular and large enough to

make the timing of switches a matter of judgement. After Clover Point, the waves were regular and could be quartered.

And the wind, which had been from the NE earlier on, switched to SE, and so drove us on to Victoria Harbour. There, the Tolonen safety boat from the Victoria Marine Rescue Society, left us

having shadowed our journey faithfully for more than 8 hours.



The journey up the Gorge Waterway was straightforward but the outflow under the Tillicum Bridge was strong. But after a little observation and the addition of some members from the 'off' shift crews, Don Munroe successfully sterned the Kawa up and back to the Clubhouse. Two more trips brought up the Blue Heron and NorthWest Territories boats. Then we could relax and enjoy the bountiful pot luck dinner, in the company of some of the children who have gone to Camp



Shawnigan over the years.

Thanks to Sarah and Verma from the Lions Society, to the Lions Club of Central Saanich for food and drink, to the Victoria Marine Rescue Society, and to the Tsartlip chief and council. Thanks also to Nancy Pearson and her helpers in the kitchen, and finally, and most of all, to the paddlers who took part in the trip. The total funds raised was a little under \$10,000—a little lower than we had hoped but a lot better than nothing!

Alan Thomson

(Photos: Alan Thomson

& Wendy Clapp)



Canoe Program Report

Thanks to everyone for attending the Canoe/Kayak Meeting on Monday, March 21. We were enormously entertained by Ellie's tale of her group's 2004 paddle down the lower Stikine River in Northwestern B.C., entitled "The Princess Paddles".

The group was made up mostly of women and several children/teens. Tony Shaw, very familiar with the river, guided them down. There was a kayak and canoes, and many levels of experience among the paddlers. But they found the trip very manageable. With this river, water level matters greatly and they had a great level for their early August adventure over about ten days.

The country is absolutely stunning and there are many side trips possible. One shown was a short portage to Glacier Lake which you can paddle as close as you dare to a glacier that calves into the lake—amazing photos from this. They got very lucky with the weather as well. Some trippers never see the sun on this one but they only had one day of rain. They paddled out to the ocean, connected with their shuttled vehicles and took the ferry from Prince Rupert home again.

There is likely more on both of these events elsewhere in the newsletter. But it's worth mentioning to everyone that April 17 is a big day for the club. In the morning we are doing a Clubhouse Cleanup and I encourage everyone who is available to come on down and lend a hand - it's fun. Other VCKC members will help with the yearly gorge waterway clean-up.

Later in the day, please participate if you can in a celebration of our harbour. If you think the mega-yacht marina proposal is dead, think again. We need your numbers and boats out there to keep our harbour safe for human-powered craft. Though I couldn't find anything about this rally specifically, more information is here: savevictoriaharbour.com.

Just a note from the Kayak Librarian, Victor Turkington, and myself: If you have a library book or video from the Canoe or Kayak Library and you've had it for a while, please remember to return it! You can do this at any meeting, and if Victor or myself are not present, just leave the

item in either the Canoe or Kayak mail slot at the clubhouse. And if it is news to you that we have a library of very interesting materials any member can sign out, please come to meeting and check out what we've got. Which brings me to the final topic for this month's column:

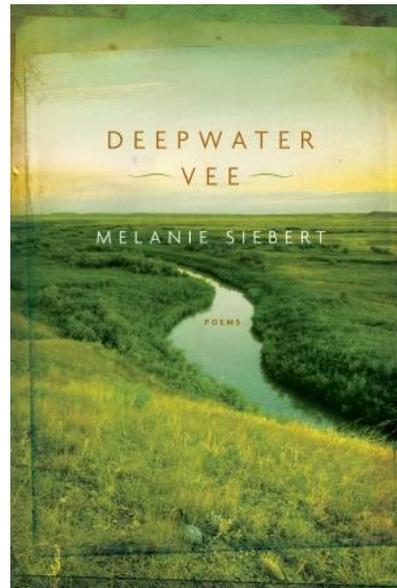
Next Meeting:

Please join us on Monday, April 18 at 7:30 pm at the Clubhouse. Our presenter will be Melanie Siebert who has just published her debut volume of poetry, entitled "Deepwater Vee".

Of course, this is inspired by her reflections on paddling and guiding all over Canada's remote and northern rivers, some of them threatened by development and resource extraction. This stunning work has garnered much critical acclaim and has won or been shortlisted for several awards.

Melanie now teaches creative writing at UVic. She will show slides from her recent trips and read from her book. Copies will be on hand if you'd like to get one, bring about \$20. For more information, here is her publisher's [website](#).

Happy Paddling
Yasmin Rampuri
Canoe Program Director



Canoe Courses

For more information or to register for any of the following courses, please contact Yasmin at canoe@vckc.ca. Your VCKC membership dues for 2011 must be paid in full order to register for any club courses below. You can join online at www.vckc.ca. An Individual membership is \$40; Family \$60.

Moving Water Tandem (Solo will run concurrently)

Saturday & Sunday, April 2 & 3

Lake Water Advanced Tandem and Solo (Level 3 & 4)

Saturday, April 16 (Tandem Level 3)

Sunday, April 17 (Solo Level 4)

Canoe Tripping Course

April 26-30 (5 days inclusive). To be held on the Sayward Lakes Route, this course will offer all levels of certification, Paddler, Leader and Instructor. Master Instructor Tony Shaw is teaching the course. The cost is going to be approximately \$200. Please contact Jay Crowley at j.crowley@shaw.ca directly if you are interested and to register.

Lakewater Basic Tandem and Solo

Saturday, May 28 (Basic Tandem)

Sunday, May 29 (Basic Solo)

Lakewater Advanced Tandem and Solo

Saturday, June 4 (Advanced Tandem)

Sunday, June 5 (Advanced Solo)

Eddy Hopper

If you are interested in testing out your skills on a river or getting a feel for sterning on moving water, this is the opportunity for you. In late May, we are looking at offering a chance for paddlers to go down a section of river with an experienced paddler in bow or stern. Please contact Tom Staebell if you are interested in trying this out at thestaebellfamily@shaw.ca.

Canoe Poling

If there is interest, a course has been proposed for late June, late July or early September on canoe poling. Please email Tom Staebell at thestaebellfamily@shaw.ca if you are interested in this course.

Instructors

We have some potential instructors or current ones interested in re-certifying. If this describes you, please contact Ellie James, our master instructor, directly at ejames@bgcvc.org. Some dates have been proposed, and we are hoping to have enough interest to certify some new Lakewater Instructors.

Costs:

\$25 for each Lakewater course (or \$50 for the Lakewater Basic Tandem and Solo which we encourage all paddlers to take together). In addition to the course cost, Lakewater Basic students may have to pay \$10 each to cover the costs of pool rental. Moving Water course fees are \$150 per weekend and include the use of a club canoe and transportation costs.

Ocean Canoeing Course

This RCABC course is open to all canoeists who have taken the basic tandem lakewater course. It is intended to teach paddlers about tides and currents, wind and weather, charting and navigation as well as canoe camping.

The course consists of three evenings of classroom sessions plus a three (3) day canoeing trip. The three classroom sessions will be held at the Clubhouse on Tuesday April 26, Thursday April 28 and Monday, May 2.

The Paddling trip will take place on May 7 to May 9 (Saturday-Monday).

If you are interested in taking this course, please contact Alan Thomson before Easter. Cost of the course is \$100, plus the costs of charts etc. 250-592-4170; 3135thom@islandnet.com.



Canoe/Kayak Trips

Flatwater trips

Due to other commitments, this month's flatwater paddles are on consecutive weekends

Saturday, April 16 and

Saturday, April 23

Notices will be sent out by e-mail beforehand to members on the Kayak or Canoe Program lists. All Club members can participate, provided they have taken a basic canoeing or kayaking course,

Frost-free Weekend Paddling Trip

The Club's annual frost-free weekend trip will take place, as usual on the Mother's Day weekend May 7, 8 and 9. (Note change of dates from those originally put in the March newsletter).

This trip is open to all Club paddlers who have taken the basic canoe and kayak courses. It is a camping trip so you will need to be self-sufficient for food, water, shelter, etc.

The destination will be Blackberry Point on Valdes Island. We will leave from Cedar ramp—about 2 hours from Victoria—and paddle over to the DeCourcy group and thence down to Blackberry Point Island group. The paddle is about 7.5 nautical miles/15 kilometres.

Once on Blackberry Point, you can idle away the Sunday, hike up the ridges, go paddling, as you wish. The Club will provide barbecues for the communal meal on the Sunday evening plus baked potatoes and a fruit grunt. You are responsible for all other food. If you are interested or have any questions, contact Alan Thomson at 250-592-4170 or 3135thom@islandnet.com.

Tenth Annual Running of the Cows April 29, 30 and May 1

Once again, for the tenth year in a row, the fearsome *Running of The Cows* will take place. Enjoy the tranquil upper reaches of the beautiful Cowichan River; thrill to the whitewater of the Canyon section (remember last year's debacle,

with four out of six tandems tipping at S-bend and Bernies?); relax in the warm and green calm sections of the lower river and show your control negotiating the log jams near the delta.

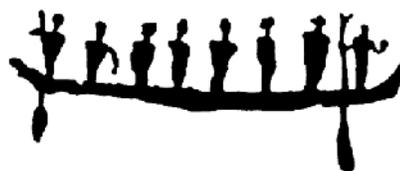
This event is open to all Club members who have taken a moving water canoeing course. Canoes must be rigged with airbags and paddlers must be wearing helmets and a dry or wet-suit. It is not required to paddle all sections; some prefer to miss out the Canyon section with its Class 2+ rapids.

The group campsite at Stoltz Pool has been booked for the nights of Friday, April 29 and Saturday, April 30, so you can relax in the company of your paddling peers round a campfire or the stoves in the shelters. The campsite will be open on Friday afternoon from approx 4 pm onwards. Cost will be \$10 per tent per night based on ten tents per night (Booking cost is \$204 for the weekend.) Bring your own wood for the stove/campfire or you can buy some on-site.

Contact Tom Staebell 250-656-7113
thestaebellfamily@shaw.ca if you plan to take part in this great event.

Advance Notice

The BC Marine Trails Network Association expects to formally open the first trails (in the Gulf Islands) on May 13 at the Ladysmith Paddlefest. The plan is to have as many paddlers as possible converge on the Ladysmith Beach at 3 pm on the Saturday afternoon. In the days before this, groups of kayakers and canoeists from different paddling clubs will paddle to as many of the Trail campsites as possible. If you are interested in taking part in this event, contact Alan Thomson at 592-4170 or 3135thom@islandnet.com.



Clubhouse and Gorge Waterway Cleanup

WHEN: Sunday, April 17th

TIME: 9:00am to 1:00pm

Please come on out and help to clean up the clubhouse and the Gorge Waterway. If you want to participate, be sure to wear clothes and footwear that you don't mind getting muddy.

The paddling group will be out in the voyageur canoes—it's a messy job but it's an adventure.

We are so fortunate to have such a lovely location for our club so please try to spare a couple of hours to help keep it looking spic and span.

Gloves and garbage bags are provided by the CRD.

Dumpsters, dumpage fees by Waste Management and refreshments and treats by Tim Hortons.

Don Munroe
VCKC representative for the
Gorge Waterway Initiative
(GWI)



Paddle for the Pot O' Gold

Sunday, March 20th brought out a group of members wishing to test their Irish "luck"!

The Paddle for a Pot O' Gold was entertaining as the water level rose to greet the green pots of gold (gold foil covered chocolate coins), strategically placed along the Gorge waterway for paddlers to test their tandem canoe skills.

Spirits were flowing during the delicious potluck and the "Leprechaun Hat game" ended the evening of good fun and laughter!

Diane Nishimura
Social Coordinator



Note from the Membership Director

Maris Ratel will be out of town for a month and a half beginning mid-May.

So if anyone wants to renew their membership for the summer paddling season, now would be a good time to do it.

If you'd like to help out by filling in as acting Membership Director during Maris' absence, give her a call.

VCKC Executive

President		Voyageur Program	
Bon Lee	477-1381	Alan Thomson	592-4170
Vice President		Marathon Canoe Program	
Mavis Pillar.....	778-430-4390	Ron Williams	592-6456
Treasurer		Education, Safety & Standards	
Linda Thomson	592-4170	Doug Linton	727-0216
Secretary		Membership	
Marie Lansdowne.....	email	Maris Ratel	email
Past President		Clubhouse & Grounds	
Linda Thomson.....	592-4170	Sandy Rattray	386-9144
Program Directors		Directors-at-Large	
Canoe Program		Michael Fox	391-0160
Yasmin Rampuri	655-4859	Wendy Clapp	email
Kayak Program		Diane Nishimura (Soc.) ..	383-3080
Herb Stark	email	Elizabeth Hoffpauir	email
Dragon Boat Program		Ron Crabtree	email
Brian Clark	email	Executive Volunteer Positions	598-9488
Outrigger Program		Harold Gillis (Newsletter)	email
Dave Schweter	email	Doug Magnuson (Boat & Locker Storage)	email

[VCKC Calendar](#)
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