



Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club Newsletter

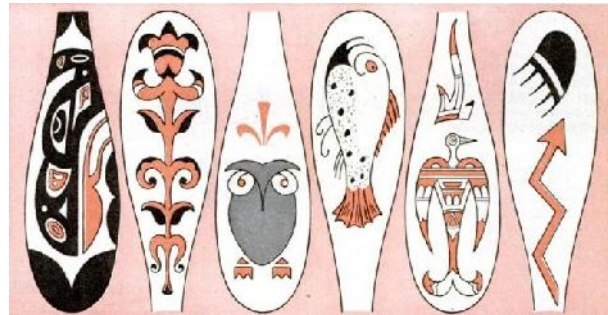
Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club
355 Gorge Road West
Victoria, B.C. V9A 1M9
Phone: 250-590-8193 (Info only)
Website: www.vckc.ca

November 2011

General Meeting Tuesday November 1, 2011 7:00 pm

The guest speaker for our November meeting will be VCKC's own Doug Linton.

Doug will give a talk about building your own kayak from scratch.



Fall Cleanup

Our annual house and grounds and Gorge waterway cleanup will take place on Saturday, November 5 beginning at 9:00am

Any gardening and/or cleaning equipment and supplies that you can bring along will be much appreciated.

Clubhouse News - Summer Report

The fall clubhouse and grounds cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, November 5. As our club have no paid employees, we depend on our members to volunteer a few hours throughout the year for tasks like this. Volunteers have a choice to join one of two groups: the clubhouse group or the grounds cleanup group.

If you wish to help with the grounds group please bring rake, shears, or other tools for gardening.

If your plan is to help with the indoor clubhouse cleanup, please bring rubber gloves, cleaning rags and bucket. The fun begins at 9:00am. If there is a good turnout we should be finished before noon.

Another year is coming to an end. The club's executive roster has six vacancies to fill for 2012. If you have an interest in becoming more active with the club, this is your opportunity. This is your club. Let's continue the 40 plus years of running our club by volunteers only. You can make a difference.

Note that all executive positions can be contested, regardless of whether it is vacant or not. If you have questions, talk to any current executive member. If you wish to nominate

someone, please ensure he or she is a willing candidate. For all nominations, please contact Marie Lansdowne at secretary@vckc.ca, our nomination committee member.

The attendance was very poor at this past month's general meeting. Could the lack of interest by the membership be caused by our program directors not attending themselves? The idea of the general meeting is for the many programs to report and present upcoming events and activities from their program, and it gives members an opportunity to ask questions about each program. The general meeting also allows members to meet and talk to other paddlers coming from different programs. I hope we will see more members on November 1 for our next general meeting.

Members who paddle out of the clubhouse will have noticed our dock needing attention. Once we have set a date for the dock repairs, we will be asking our members to help detach and re-attaching of the dock ramp and arms. The dock will be out of commission for about two weeks while repairs are being made.

Bon Lee
President, VCKC

VCKC Membership

It's never too early ...

Before you start shopping for Christmas and before I forget – a friendly reminder to renew your membership and pay any storage fees before January 1, 2012.

There's a lot of data entry to do for each membership so it's a big help to the incoming Membership Director if renewals come in early.

Only paid-up members can vote at the AGM which is held in early January and we do want everyone to participate.

Thanks from me and the new Director.

Maris Ratel (Membership Director 2011)

Canoe Courses for Fall 2011

To register for any of the courses outlined below or for more information, please send an email to canoe@vckc.ca. All courses require an up-to-date membership with VCKC.

All our courses are taught by amazing volunteer instructors certified by the BC Recreational Paddling Association, and in some cases, Paddle Canada as well. You do not need to have your own canoe, paddles and lifejacket, just let us know what you need to borrow from the club.

For all details such as where the course will be held, the exact times, what to bring/wear/etc., the instructors will be in touch with that info once you have emailed in to express interest in a course. If the cost is not listed, it was not known at time of printing. The instructors will also be able to provide that information when they get in touch with you.

Canoe Tripping Paddler

Friday eve, Saturday and Sunday,
November 4/5/6, 2011

You will learn all the details and logistics for planning safe, fun and exciting multi-day canoe trips. If there is a canoe trip in your future or one on your bucket list, such as the Nahanni, this course is for you. This is an experiential course, so you will camp out overnight on a river or lake.

Lake Water Advanced Tandem (Level Three)
Saturday, November 19, 2011

Cost: \$25

Continue your learning of beautiful and efficient canoe strokes/steering and additional rescue strategies. Finessing and skill building.

Lake Water Advanced Solo (Level Four)
Sunday, November 20, 2011

Cost: \$25

Same as above, but just one in the boat!

Big Canoe (Voyageur) Canoe Course

A Big Canoe (voyageur canoe) course is being planned for November. This two (2) day course will train paddlers to stern one of the large canoes. Pre-requisites are basic tandem and solo canoeing courses (Levels 1 & 2), and experience in paddling in a big canoe is preferred.

The dates have not been set, but if any members let me know of their interest, I will tell them when the time has been set. It will probably take place on two single days on different weekends. Alan Thomson, 250-592-4170 or voyageur@vckc.ca.

Canoe Trips

Flatwater Trips

Sunday, October 30

A flatwater trip is planned for the Sooke region. Depending on the wind, Sooke Basin and Roche Cove or Sooke Harbour and Sooke River will be the destination.

Sunday, November 6 - A flatwater trip is planned in the Cowichan Bay area.

Sunday, November 20 - site to be determined.

Notice of these flatwater trips will be sent by e-mail to all Canoe and Kayak Program members the week before.

All Club members can take part in these trips provided they have taken and passed the basic tandem Canoe course or the introductory Sea Kayaking course.

Alan Thomson

For any brave and qualified souls, we need some more people to come forward and lead day trips. Please send an email to canoe@vckc.ca if you are interested in helping out in this way. Watch your email in-boxes for anything we have been able to organize.

FOR SALE

"Redtail" Ottortail paddle approx..58" \$40

"Greyowl" River paddle, approx..52" \$40

Both paddles are in good condition and have been only lightly used.

Call Maris at 250-592-7082 if you're interested.

Trip Report Sayward Forest Canoe Route

After our dismal spring and chilly beginning to summer, I was filled with energy when the clouds finally parted and the temperatures began to rise to something resembling summer weather. Since moving to the island six years ago, I have wanted to explore the Sayward Forest Canoe Circuit northwest of Campbell River. When I first read about the route six years ago, it sounded rather daunting. What reports I could find talked about rough portages and difficulty finding put-ins and takeouts. It did not sound like much 'fun' to me.

So I tucked the Sayward route away as a possibility for the future.

Then last year a paddler from Comox named Michel Gauthier published his personal guide to the "Sayward Forest Canoe Circuit". Along with a supplemental map, I now had a clear idea of what to expect on the circuit. It appeared that a lot of improvements had been made and where there might be confusion, Michel Gauthier supplied clear directions along with GPS co-ordinates.



With sunny skies forecast, the dog and I set out at the end of July to explore the Sayward forest by canoe.

It was a short drive off Highway 19 to a campground at the bottom of Mohun Lake. And that's where we spent the first night with the plan to set off early the next morning. The [Mohun Lake Campground](#)

allows you to leave your car/van on their grounds for a small daily fee. It seemed to be a secure parking place as there is a gate of sorts and a campground attendant/owner who seems to keep a close eye on things.

The first morning we set out with ideal paddling conditions. There was light cloud and no wind. The only sound was my paddle in the water. This also turned out to be the longest paddle on one lake on the entire circuit.

After a lovely paddle in warm morning sunshine with no wind and no bugs, we arrived at the first portage. Up until this trip, I have carefully avoided trips that might involve a portage. I started paddling a canoe when I lived in Calgary. There are many river trips

in Alberta where you can paddle hundreds of kilometres without the need to portage. But the jig was finally up.

I had brought along my canoe cart. I strapped the canoe onto the cart and loaded up and we started off. The first portage is the second longest on the circuit. About



1.6 kilometres. Why I expected the portage route to be flat I have no idea. This is Vancouver Island after all. But I didn't expect the trail to rise quite so steeply. I would have been huffing and puffing on this trail if I was just hiking with a light pack. But I was pulling a 17 foot canoe with five or six days worth of gear in it. I will say that the trail was in very good condition despite the occasional bit with roots or rocks. I quickly found that my canoe cart was not designed for this trail. The wheels often got hung up on the aforementioned roots and larger rocks. And some of the switchback turns were a challenge with a 17 foot canoe in tow. If I do this trip again I will definitely take a cart with wider wheels.

The trail went up for what seemed like forever. Finally after a short downhill section, we came to the first put-in. This section of the route requires navigating two very short swampy sections of water. The take out from the first swamp was quite awkward for a solo paddler. The shoreline of the 'swamp' dropped quickly into deep water and there was no way to get the middle of my canoe (where as a single paddler I was sitting) into the takeout. I manoeuvred this way and that but it was just impossible. Finally I decided I would take a chance and step out onto a log that promised a step onto drier land. Unhappily when I stepped onto the log, the log rolled and I ended up in the swampy water almost up to my neck. Luckily the dog stayed in the canoe. I crawled my way out of the ooze onto shore and pulled the canoe and gear up onto land. I might



also mention that during the portage it had clouded over and it now began to rain. I decided it was time for lunch and set up a tarp and changed into some dry clothes. I was *not* in a good mood.

The second less-swampy pond was crossed without incident even though the route to the next lake involved climbing over a beaver dam. Eventually we made our way down Twin Lake and to the last portage of the day. It was a .8 kilometre trek from Twin Lake to Amor Lake. Although there were thankfully no switchbacks this time, the trail did go up and down quite steeply in places. It was an effort on the downhill sections to simply keep the canoe from running away. In the longer stretches of downhill I would occasionally have to run the canoe gently into a tree trunk to slow it down and give myself a rest.



All this effort was finally rewarded with our arrival at Amor Lake. It's a fairly large lake with lots of beautiful camping spots. We chose one on a sandy beach with a little tent space set back from the beach. I was exhausted but happy. I also knew I would be taking some ibuprofen that night.

Since we'd covered about one-third of the canoe route on the first day, I decided to rest my stiff muscles and spend the next day on Amor Lake. Amor Lake is a pretty place with islands and lots of shoreline to explore. There are also lots of sandy beaches for swimming. It was a lovely place to spend a summer day swimming, reading and doing a little paddling.

The rest of the trip was quite a bit less exhausting although I did get used to getting in and out of the canoe for the frequent though sometimes short portages. We spent the next night at the north end of Brewster Lake.

For the third night I discovered a brand new campsite at Fry Narrows where Fry Lake joins Campbell Lake. The site must have been prepared this spring as the tent platforms were new lumber and it seemed to have lightly used. The site was up on a bluff above the narrows. Very private with lovely views up Fry Lake.

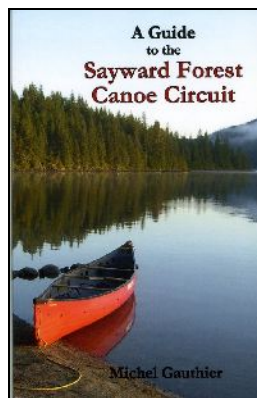
Finally a few impressions of the Sayward Forest

Canoe Circuit.

I now have a healthy respect for canoe portaging. There are a dozen or so portages required for this route. Some are short—barely a few hundred metres. One is 2.2 kilometres but is mostly along old railway right-of-ways so is quite flat. It seems to me the portage to paddling ratio is quite high. Definitely take a canoe cart with BIG wheels for the rougher sections of portage.

The northerly part of the route is the most remote and perhaps the prettiest (less visible logging). The southern part of the route has more forestry service campgrounds and so there are motor boats and many more people about. At the Fry Narrows campground, there were many motorized campers relatively nearby. And there was also some fool racing back and forth along the logging roads on an unmuffled motorcycle. But this was a holiday weekend so the woods were crowded. Things quieted down nicely after dark. Elsewhere on the circuit I only came across two groups of paddlers.

I didn't have any problems finding fine places to camp. Most of the campsites for paddlers have pit toilets or composting toilets. The newer ones are quite large with lovely views. And some have tent platforms which was nice when it rained.



Our only wildlife encounter was coming across a bear swimming towards us in a narrow inlet leading to Whymper Lake. I don't know who got the bigger surprise. Both paddler and bear beat a respectful retreat. The dog missed the whole brief encounter.

I would suggest not being in a rush to do the circuit. The lakes, especially Amor, Mohun and Brewster, are

lovely to explore. I'd also suggest buying Michel Gauthier's book. Besides his very good descriptions of the nuts and bolts of the route, he includes many of his own observations and poetic descriptions of what he's seen on this route over the years. And he concludes:

"My aim in writing this book is to have you come to the Sayward Forest, fall asleep in its arms, and dream of it forever. Sometimes, when enough people dream the same dream, it becomes real."

Michel Gauthier's guide and map to the Sayward Forest Canoe Circuit is available from [Dogwood Avenue Books](#). If you'd like to look at more photos from my trip this summer you can see them by clicking [here](#).

Harold Gillis

20 Hour Wilderness First Aid Course \$200

Nov 26 & 27, 2011

This course is designed for those of us who love to be outdoors. Offered in a practical and enjoyable format with 90% outside, you can't help but come away a safer person. We keep this nationally recognized course small—12 people max per course. Additionally our instructors are all wilderness guides and have years of amazing outdoor teaching experience. Built in is a Standard, CPR "C" and AED Certification to make it more applicable to what you do when not outside!

If you find that you are leading groups or are farther away from help, you can always upgrade this to an advanced 40 hour course.

For more information, contact Dave at Ridge Wilderness Adventures.

David Footbridge

Ridge Wilderness Adventures Ltd.

<http://www.ridgewilderness.com>

dave@ridgewilderness.com

(604) 477-4663

The course is being held in Nanaimo, but the organizer is offering 10% off for VCKC members and if 6 or more would like to do it, a discount of 15%

Christmas Party

This is an early head-up that our annual Christmas party will take place on December 6 at the clubhouse.

Please remember fellow paddlers with surnames A to L should bring main courses or appetizers and those with surnames M to Z should bring desserts or salads.

Also if you want to 'do' Santa you should bring a small gift with a value around \$5.00.

As usual, there will be a 50/50 draw and items to be raffled off. Please let me know if you have any items to donate to the raffle.

And as is our custom, please also bring a non-perishable item for donation to the food bank.

See the December newsletter for further details.

Mavis (778-430-4390)

Canoe Program Report

Thanks to everyone who came out to our October meeting where we had some new faces and some familiar ones, and enjoyed a presentation on the Broken Group Islands, a magical destination right here in our own back yard. We discussed merging the Canoe/Kayak meetings into the General Club Meetings and there seemed to be a lot of support in the room for this idea. But I'm really interested to hear from folks about what they think of this proposition.

We get amazing attendance at our Canoe/Kayak meetings and lots of new people check us out. But numbers have been dropping steadily at the General Meetings, so this could be really good thing—one less meeting to go to and a broader appeal to all paddlers in the club.

Please drop me a line at canoe@vckc.ca to chime in if you have questions or strong feelings about this—for it, or against it.

That being said, we are planning the November meeting at status quo for now. So it will be on the third Monday of November

and canoe/kayak focussed as usual. Hope to see you there on Monday, November 21 at 7:30 pm at the clubhouse on 355 Gorge Road West.

I'm working on something for the presentation after the break. A message will appear in your email inbox once I've got the plan finalized to let you know what's on offer. I am not able to chair the meeting this month but I promise to leave it in capable hands.

Please let me know if you have any interest in becoming more involved in the Canoe Program. There are many ways I can share the workload and I'd be delighted to spread around the responsibilities to give others some opportunities to get a bit more involved in the club without biting off the whole Program Director enchilada! If you'll have me, I do plan to stand again at the AGM in December.

Yasmin Rampuri
Canoe Program Director



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.) ..	589-3080
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

For current VCKC calendar
[Click Here](#)



Photo: Wendy Clapp