



## Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club

# Newsletter

April 2020

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

***To comply with recommendations to reduce the spread of COVID-19, VCKC has suspended all activities associated with the Club's building, compound, dock, equipment, lessons, courses and paddling activities until further notice.***

*Be sure to check the website for information on when courses and activities will resume !!!*

### President's Message

Well another month has arrived, and it seems everything has changed. As I am sure everyone knows, VCKC is just an empty building at 355 Gorge Rd West. Or that might be how it feels at the moment. I am sure some people are feeling a little restless and bored as much of our routines have been shuttered. Others are worried with all the uncertainties looming, financial, health, friends and family. There are definitely enough things to worry about. In the midst of this turmoil I would bet there is a lot of life in VCKC. VCKC members have always been people of action. Some of you are riding bikes, hiking, paddling, staying active, even if it means you're just finally getting around to the things you have never had time for.



*Life might be hard, but it can be beautiful*

I know Joe is dreaming of another Big Canoe adventure this summer. Check out the plans He and Mark are making elsewhere in this newsletter. I hope this Covid19 thing will not be still interrupting our plans. Regardless, "This too will pass" and VCKC will be ready to paddle.

Until then, I can't thank those of you working essential service jobs enough. Health care, food supply, etc. thank you for persevering with increased risks and pressures for the good of us all.

While I am waiting for my next group paddle, I have been looking at some of my past trip photos. No reason to think I won't paddle again just uncertain when. Take care, just not too close.

All the best to you today.

~ Tim Marks, President

## Big Canoe News



Our big canoe paddle for the kids came to an abrupt end after our last paddle in Sooke Basin on March 15th. "Last Sunday we had 19 paddlers out in three big canoes to paddle 13.4 km in mixed water conditions. Other than a bit of wind a very nice day to paddle." (Phil) I happened to see ice on the water, crystals in the sand and icicles on the rocks near Roche Cove. I think that deserves quite a few donations from our friends for Easter Seals. We have paddled on many frosty days and had a lot of great weather. I believe we were all wearing all our winter woolies under our paddling clothing for these paddles.

We were able to get out to Portage Inlet, Victoria Harbour, Race Rocks, Ladysmith Harbour and Sooke Basin this year. We had a few newcomers and many, many people who have paddled in big canoes for many years. We were getting great momentum going with fun and enthusiasm for our Sunday paddles.

COVID-19 impacted all paddling at VCKC in such a profound way. It continues to cut off all our club paddling activities with such uncertainty. It is my hope that we will continue to support Easter Seals and Camp Shawnigan in whatever way we are able. As VCKC has raised about \$330,000 over 38 years, it would be wonderful if we could contribute what we can to this worthwhile cause even though we are unable to paddle the main event this year.

We will include the online donation link for you below. If you would like a pledge sheet, please contact me. Let me know if you have any questions.

Rest awhile, then Paddles Up!!!!

Mary Marks

Big Canoe Director

bigcanoe@vckc.ca

### **ONLINE FUNDRAISING**

Fundraising online has proven to be very effective.

Your donors can click on the link you provide via email or social media and make their pledge securely with a credit card. We will track the online totals in the office, and I will bring the results of all totals to the event on March 28<sup>th</sup>, to add to the offline donations.

**\*\*Be sure to advise your donors that we need them to specify under the comment section (Message For Easter Seals BC/Yukon) :**

- 1) This is for **Peninsula Paddle for the Kids**
- 2) That they are pledging the amount to you, include **your name**.



## Peninsula Paddle for the Kids [Website](#):

Just select **DONATE TO PADDLE FOR THE KIDS TODAY**, and it will take them to our donation page where your donors will make their donation. Be sure to let your donors know to reference both Paddle for the Kids and your name under the comment section (Message For Easter Seals).

## GULF ISLAND PUB TOUR



The Big Canoe program is planning to offer (if current restrictions are lifted) a 5-day Gulf Island camping trip July 19 to the 23rd. The main theme will be a relaxing tour, with a civilized restaurant meal each night. We will depart from the Sidney area on Sunday morning, and make our way to Port Browning on Pender Island, then to Montague Harbour on Galiano Island.

There is room for up to 24 participants, but we can go with as few as 6. VCKC members can reserve a spot on this trip on the club website. [HERE](#) There is no charge for securing a place, but we may collect deposits closer to the date to help plan and secure camping.

## Canoe Program

Although all canoe courses and activities have been cancelled for the near future, we expect to be back in full force as soon as the all-clear is given, with the possibility of more courses offered later in the spring or early summer. The Canoe Instructor Course and Recertification is scheduled for early June and we are hopeful that will go ahead. At this point, Running of the Cow is still tentatively planned for the first weekend of May, but this is of course, is completely dependent on Provincial recommendations at that time.

For those of you dreaming of canoe adventures and looking for something exceptional to pass the time, I highly recommend reading the book 'Beyond the Trees' by Adam Shoalts. To mark Canadian Confederation's 150th in 2017, he sets off alone in late May on an unprecedented 4000 km journey across Canada's arctic from the Yukon to Nunavut, racing to beat the approaching winter of early September. He travels up raging rivers, portaging long distances across fields of jagged rocks, navigating labyrinths of swampy lands, paddling tirelessly into the endless arctic summer nights, continuously tormented by clouds of blackflies and without the luxury of rest days or the possibility of making a single mistake. His rewards, the beauty of the arctic wilderness, are many. This is a heart-stopping, wonder-filled adventure that kept me turning the pages to find out what happened next. Adam Shoalts, who has been called one of Canada's greatest living explorers, is an historian, archaeologist, geographer and in 2018, was named Explorer-in-Residence of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society. And if you need more convincing on why you should read this book..."Adam Shoalts, 21st century explorer, calmly describes the things he has endured that would drive most people to despair, or even madness...Rare insight into the heart and mind of an explorer, and the insatiable hunger for the unknown that both inspires and drives one to the edge...A 1st-hand look into the heart of a truly brave man."—Col. Chris Hadfield, astronaut, International Space Station commander



*Adam Shoalts poling his canoe through arctic ice floes.*

Stay safe and hope to see you soon!

~ Louise de Montigny, Canoe Program Director



## Moving Water One March 14, 2020

Day one of the Basic Moving Water course was held on March 14th. Due to some participants feeling they had to cancel for various reasons, there were only four participants. It was a very cold day so those who showed demonstrated their enthusiasm and courage. The course spent the morning on Cowichan Lake where basic strokes were reviewed and moving water techniques were introduced.

After lunch at the A&W to warm up there was a paddle down the river to First Beach. Despite the cold, everyone was open to the challenges of forward ferries, eddies turns and S turns. It was decided not to do rescues due to the weather. There will be another day to learn more, but the rest of the course has been postponed until further notice because of the pandemic. There may be two days added for additional confidence building if the break is long. Anyone who has done Moving Water One may attend the course at no cost. Updates will be advertised on VCKC web page when the Club is able to reopen.

~Ellie James

## CLUB DAYTRIP REPORT – Finlayson Arm and Squally Reach, February 29, 2020

The fifth Club Daytrip of the year was a special Leap Day paddle, held on Saturday, February 29<sup>th</sup>, taking us on a loop around Finlayson Arm. Nine hardy paddlers met at the clubhouse at 8:30 and quickly loaded up 2 tandem canoes, 1 big canoe and 1 kayak, leaving at 8:45 am. We regrouped at the Goldstream Boathouse Marina and after paying the unloading fee (\$12 per car), and using the handy facilities, we departed at 9:50 am.



Once again, Alan's extraordinary talent for planning a sunny day came through, along with light winds and calm seas. The high winds forecast for the more exposed waters in the area, made this somewhat more sheltered area a good choice. As we started paddling, the temperature was cool 3<sup>o</sup> C, winds were light and the seas calm.

Heading up the west side, we followed closely along the shoreline taking full advantage of the geography and boat

houses to practice maneuvering around, under and through the obstacles. Along the way we saw many water birds, eagles, otters and seals. The brilliantly clear water allowed us to see abundant jellyfish and starfish in the sheltered areas. Despite the very steep slope along this side, there was a surprising number of cabins and houses dotting this shoreline. Gunshots from Heal's Rifle Range could be heard as we moved up the Reach, but we heard very little noise from the Malahat traffic above us. Just before noon, at about 10 km, we stopped for lunch at Spectacle Creek where we enjoyed a welcome break on the warm, sunny beach. A few of us hiked over to view the nearby waterfall from Spectacle Creek.

After our generous lunch break, we continued to McCurdy Point, re-grouped for the crossing and paddled together over to McKenzie Bight. Thankfully, light winds and no boat traffic made the crossing uneventful and soon we were following the east coastline back to the head of the inlet. Along this uninhabited shoreline, the steep, rocky cliffs were covered with bright green moss and large arbutus and western redcedar trees. Again, many starfish dotted the rocks. Once around Elbow Point the water was flat and a small tail wind helped to push us as we made our way back. Coming closer to the marina, we passed Sawluctus Island and noticed big, dark storm clouds building, a little earlier than predicted. As we arrived at the ramp, the first drops of rain fell and five minutes later “all hail broke loose” with a torrential dump of pea-size hail for about 10 minutes. By the time we flipped the boats over to load onto the cars, we were given a good dousing of cold, icy water. It was all good though as we were off the water and we all agreed that Alan’s record for good weather held.



Today’s loop around Finlayson Arm took about 4 hours, we paddled just under 21 km, with an average moving speed of slightly over 5km/hr. This was a beautiful trip and a great way to celebrate Leap Day - the next opportunity to paddle on a Leap Day Saturday will be in 204

~ Raoul Wiart.

## Dragon Boat

As with many activities, our Dragon Boat Season has been put on hold at the moment. As further updates become available, they will be announced via Email, Facebook Chat Groups and on our VCKC Webpage. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or comments at [dragonboat@vckc.ca](mailto:dragonboat@vckc.ca)

Stay healthy everyone, take care of yourselves physically and mentally. Keep active and keep connected, we're all in this 'boat' together... Imagine Dragonz - let's keep up the fun on Team Chat Page!

*It's an all boat “HOLD” at the moment... awaiting further direction from our Stern.*

*Virtual pats on the backs and encouragement to your seat mates and those in the boat with you.*

*We're just awaiting the traffic in front of us to finish crossing our path and then it will be “Paddles Up!” once again... ♡*

Jana Savage, Director, VCKC Dragon Boat Program

## Marathon



There are many ways to think about being on water. One of the first is to give thanks for its very existence. Without water, life itself would fail to exist. Whether salty or fresh, cold or warm, frozen or boiling, water in all its forms shifts and changes lives and landscapes. On our doorstep the Gorge waterway has its own special gift box of lessons.

Marathon canoeing calls paddlers to pay particular attention to the water. That’s not to say that it isn’t important with all water sports, but a marathon canoe is more sensitive to both tidal and current shifts than most watercraft, and equally unforgiving of paddling errors and a lapse of judgement! “Going for a swim” is often an unintended initiation for new marathon canoers, but no marathon canoer is immune to the sensation of tipping

into the water. Waters above and below the Tillicum bridge can be particularly challenging, but that's not to say that other spots further up into Portage Islet don't have their particular twists and turns.

It takes quite a while to even start to "see" and "feel" what the water is doing as wind, current, tidal patterns, underwater formations and obstacles all pose their particular challenge. A tree branch or rock can be easy to circumnavigate one day and just submerged under water on another. Tides and the relentless erosion of banks can significantly change the depth and contour of the waterway from one time of the year to another. Deep water calls for one stroke rate and shallow water another. A pair of heavyweight paddlers may have an advantage in deeper water while a lightweight duo will persevere in the shallows. A well designed race course will have a combination of both. Of course, the eel grass on the Gorge Waterway presents its own challenge, but VCKC marathon paddlers learn very early on the importance of perfecting their bow clearing technique.



The lightweight nature of the marathon canoe makes it a delight to carry, but it can also act as a sail in a strong wind. There has been many a time when a marathon canoe has been placed on the outside edge of the club's dock, only to see the wind blow it completely across to the other side! Wind presents a particular challenge to not only judge turns and course direction, but also to set a stroke rate that maximizes stability and balance. The balance that needs to be struck is often a fine line between mitigating the force of waves hitting the hull of the boat and maximizing the keel-like form of the canoe.

The marathon program has been a regular feature of early Saturday mornings at the club. At one time of the year, 8 am is a post-dawn, frosty and sometimes frozen adventure. At other times a sun-soaked mist rises above the water and the canoes match this quiet magic with a steady rhythm of their own in harmony with nature. Resident waterfowl and seals observe the boats with a minimum of fuss while migrants and newcomers keep their distance, as do we during the breeding and fledgling season.

Races, such as the dedicated marathon race last June (see pix), was an opportunity to test skill and endurance against many of the variables I've already mentioned, and it attracted competitors from across the province. It's these multiple variables that both challenge – and reward the marathon paddler. The challenge is to recognize and respond to a shift in the water and the reward is a leap ahead of competitors in a race – whether in practice or reality. On that note, we have a possible date for the next dedicated marathon race in August, the Vancouver Island Classic, but like all competitions this year, the biggest obstacle will not be our capacity or willingness to organize a great race, but our collective capacity to defeat the COVID-19 virus.



~ Peter Elson, Director



## Outrigger

First and foremost, thank you to everyone who volunteered to help with Wake Up the Gorge, especially those who invested time in preparing for the races and then spent more time unwinding those preparations. I intend to make the most of all these efforts so that we will have a head start for next year's races. Please hold on to anything you have, and we will look at how to make the most of it for next year.

I hope everyone is enjoying solo and family activities in this time of social distancing. If you have any ideas for the resumption of group activities that I can help with as outrigger director, please pass them on to me through [outrigger@vckc.ca](mailto:outrigger@vckc.ca). We can be planning and preparing now.

When the club house opens up, I would like to have some volunteers prepared for tasks that will support the outrigger program.

- boats will need cleaning and repair,
- someone to take on the task of maintaining the safety gear for each of the boats,
- someone to take on the task of renovating the locker that the gear is stored in,
- Would anyone like to build a rack for the bent shaft paddles?
- The garbage can isn't ideal.

I have an idea for a timed race route from the club house around the centre pier of the Craigflower Bridge and back. A notice board in the basement would provide for bragging rights with the time and each team members name posted if they want.

We might be able to have some stern training sessions with the Big Canoe group.

Perhaps we could do some marine radio and safety training now while we wait for the resumption of normal activities. If any of these ideas interest you, or if you have any other ideas for now or when club activities resume please let me know.

Cheers

~ Michael Wheatley, Director

## Storage Report for April VCKC Newsletter

VCKC has been shut down. The access code has been changed and members no longer have access to the Clubhouse or Compound. If you need to get your boat or property out of the Clubhouse or Compound or you want to place a lock on your boat, contact the Storage Director (me) [storage@vckc.ca](mailto:storage@vckc.ca). I will arrange the required access for you for one occasion only. Boats or property removed from the Clubhouse or Compound cannot be returned to VCKC until the Covid-19 shut down has ended. You'll need to arrange alternative storage for your boat if you remove it from VCKC.

No Club boats or equipment will be available for member use during the Covid-19 shutdown.

A kayak (Nimbus Telkwa with yellow top and white bottom) is missing from the compound. Please let the Storage Director know if you have any ideas as to what might have happened to this boat.

VCKC recognizes this is a significant inconvenience for many but we want to ensure that we're keeping people and property safe while following government guidelines.

~ Dan Walker, Storage Director



## Adventures Trying To Sail My Canoe



I was on Murtle lake in central BC in the summer of 2018 on the VCKC trip. During that trip, I saw two big tandems make good way with what I found out were WindPaddle Sails. Being at a stage in life where I have to spend my fortune before I die and the right number of toys to try is always  $n+1$ , I bought the WindPaddle Cruiser in 2019 and had quite of bit of fun as well as a couple unintentional swims.

The “Cruiser” is the biggest model and works well on my large tandem. This is perhaps the best arrangement because person # 1, the skipper, steers and shouts obscenities to person #2, the hapless cabin boy who can’t do anything right. We were in a relatively small lake surrounded by big hills. Winds were light and the topography had a profound effect on wind direction. The cabin boy was able to man sheets and keep the sail, much like a spinnaker, aloft in spite of the frequent changes in direction of the wind. The sail had a strong desire to collapse and fall into the water to leeward where it became an effective sea anchor, other wise known as an unwelcome annoyance. All in all, it was a good day and I looked forward to trying again, perhaps on a bigger lake and in stronger winds.



Bigger winds came on Nitinat Lake in my solo canoe. I paddled up the lake in the morning and waited for the wind to pick up. I waited a bit too long and when I did fly the sail, I felt a surge of power as the wind caught it. The exhilaration was short lived because the waves, pushed by the wind overtook me. With both hands on the sheets, I was unable to steer. The canoe slid sideways into the trough and I capsized. I lost my paddle in the mayhem but N-1 created the justification and opportunity to buy a new paddle that I had been coveting but had felt guilty about succumbing to my materialistic desires. I did try the Windpaddle again the next day and enjoyed success. My GPS indicated that I traveled 4 km in 37 minutes under sail. When I returned home,  $N+1$  being what it is, I added float bags to my canoe and a paddle leash to my standard kit.

A few weeks later, I tried the WindPaddle in my solo canoe on Lake Cowichan and was provided the opportunity to learn the difficulty of recovering a sail that has fallen into the water and undergone a spontaneous metamorphosis into an unwelcome annoyance. The conditions were beyond my ability and once again I was treated to a swim. This time I only lost my hat. Here is my canoe on the beach drying out after the incident. You can see the light chop from the wind and conditions I look forward to mastering with my WindPaddle Cruiser in future adventures.



~ David Kilshaw



## How can we stay in touch while we are off the water and away from the clubhouse?

We have a Facebook page that is a closed group, just for members. You can find us by going to Facebook and searching for "VCKC Club Chat". An Admin will verify that you are a club member and once you've been approved you can get in touch with other members.

If you were fortunate enough to get to the very informative *Stretching and Nutrition* talk given by Certified Athletic Therapist Sandy Zinkowski early in March, you'll have some tips to work on during this hiatus.

### ***Things that we can do:***

Getting out and hiking  
Listening to music  
Enjoying family time  
Snuggling up with a good book  
Singing for the joy of singing (who cares if you can't hold a note)  
Laughing with friends, even if it's via email or across a wide beach blanket

Stay healthy, my friends, look after each other, help our friends who need a little extra these days, and we'll soon be back on the water paddling together again

~ Kim Capson, Director at Large

## For the membership enjoyment during this health crisis.

I've uploaded 27 video's (google **Uploads from Don Munroe – You Tube**) of my canoeing and travel adventures over the last 40 years.

Which include:

- **23 day Voyageur Paddle of the McKenzie River,**
- **2017 Paddle across Canada,**
- **40 years as the Voyageurguy,**
- **Around the World Adventure.**



~ Done Munroe

*Canada 150 Athabasca River Brigade*

## **Club Contact Information**

### **Officers**

President [president@vckc.ca](mailto:president@vckc.ca)  
Tim Marks  
Vice-president [vpresident@vckc.ca](mailto:vpresident@vckc.ca)  
Tony Hopkin  
Treasurer [treasurer@vckc.ca](mailto:treasurer@vckc.ca)  
Mark Sondheim  
Secretary [secretary@vckc.ca](mailto:secretary@vckc.ca)  
Susan Logan  
Past President [pastpres@vckc.ca](mailto:pastpres@vckc.ca)  
Joe Boyd

### **Program Directors**

Big Canoe Program [biqcanoe@vckc.ca](mailto:biqcanoe@vckc.ca)  
Mary Marks  
Canoe Program [canoe@vckc.ca](mailto:canoe@vckc.ca)  
Louise de Montigny  
Dragonboat Program [dragonboat@vckc.ca](mailto:dragonboat@vckc.ca)  
Jana Savage Cain  
Kayak Program [kayak@vckc.ca](mailto:kayak@vckc.ca)  
vacant  
Outrigger Program [outrigger@vckc.ca](mailto:outrigger@vckc.ca)  
Mike Wheatley  
Marathon Canoe Program [marathon@vckc.ca](mailto:marathon@vckc.ca)  
Peter Elson

### **Stand Up Paddle Board**

Shelby Hart [sup@vckc.ca](mailto:sup@vckc.ca)

### **Other Executive Positions**

Education, Standards & Safety [safety@vckc.ca](mailto:safety@vckc.ca)  
Ryan Ovens  
Membership [membership@vckc.ca](mailto:membership@vckc.ca)  
Debi LaHaise  
Clubhouse and Grounds  
(maintenance) [clubhouse@vckc.ca](mailto:clubhouse@vckc.ca)  
Brit Kohn  
Boat & Locker Storage [storage@vckc.ca](mailto:storage@vckc.ca)  
Dan Walker  
Director at Large  
Kim Capson [director1@vckc.ca](mailto:director1@vckc.ca)  
Ellie James [director2@vckc.ca](mailto:director2@vckc.ca)

### **Executive Appointed Positions**

Newsletter Editor [newsletter@vckc.ca](mailto:newsletter@vckc.ca)  
Susan Logan  
Webmaster [webmaster@vckc.ca](mailto:webmaster@vckc.ca)  
Arthur Caldicott