



Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club

“The Paddling Post”

September 2023

The Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club respectfully acknowledges that its activities take place on the traditional territories of the Lekwungen peoples, and that the land and waterways’ historical relationship with the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples have existed since time immemorial. The Club is committed to taking meaningful action to build respectful and reciprocal relations with the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples on whose land and waterways club members have the privilege of living, working, and playing.



The next trip is eagerly awaited at the VCKC Canada Day Paddle

Photo credit to Kim Capson

President's Message

As I sit here typing this from my home in Sooke, I can hear the Fog Horn sounding off Whiffin Spit. I was on the water today, and the breeze was crisp. Fall is beckoning. It's nice to think back to all the different activities we've been busy with around the club this summer - Big Canoe trip to Ken Gibbard's place on Piers Island, tour of Camp Shawnigan, Potluck BBQ socials, Brigades, Canada Day rides, Dragonboat Team racing at Festivals, weekly SUP and small boat paddles, selling new club hats etc. Whew, we've been busy! I hope that whatever type(s) of paddling you enjoy, it was a wonderful summer. But don't let it slip away too fast - there's still plenty of good weather and opportunity to be on the water!

Congratulations to the Small Boat Program for successfully launching the OCI Introduction Course! The OCIs are quickly becoming a popular craft for paddlers in our club. Please watch the calendar for future Introduction Courses in the New Year if you'd like to get involved paddling them.

Also, If you're on Facebook please make sure to join our private club group called "VCKC Club Chat" - it's a great way to connect with other members, share about paddling pursuits and interests, and arrange informal get togethers on the water etc.



SUP Sunset Paddle

Photo credits to Cindy Dunphy and David O'Coffey

Paddles Up into Fall!
~ Jana Savage, President

Canada Day Paddle



Photo credits to Kim Capson & Hannah Griffith

Canada Day

Dragonboat and Big Canoe programs organised a very successful Canada Day Event. Turnout was a bit slower than previous years likely due to a mix of Covid recovery and the recent road works. Rides in both the Dragon Boat and Big Canoe were equally popular and we raised a total of \$699 for Big Brothers Big Sisters. Thank you to all the volunteers who came throughout the day to help in a variety of roles!

Club Tour of Camp Shawnigan



Photo credits to Kim Capson

A small group of VCKC paddlers made the trip up to Camp Shawnigan for a tour arranged by our Easter Seals contact Shannon Bearnays. We have been fundraising for them for years to help kids with disabilities attend this camp. On a personal note, I have a nephew in New Brunswick who attends a similar camp and it has always been an absolute highlight of his year. For that week he is just a normal kid, not a kid in a wheelchair who gets treated differently. Also, since these kids may continue to think and behave as kids their whole lives, the camp now accepts campers up to 49 years old. It's a pretty wonderful thing!

It was a beautiful day and we were amazed by the variety of buildings and activities available to the campers. We saw their boathouse (a favourite for us naturally!) and the big dock with its waterslide.

We had to include a picture of our two top fundraisers, Irena and Mavis. They consistently bring in hundreds and hundreds of dollars each, year after year. Well done, ladies!

As an extra-special treat we happened to be there when they were performing in a talent show. We of course couldn't take any pictures of the show, due to privacy concerns for the campers, but it was a delight. There were lots of songs and stand-up comedians and we had a great time!

For VCKC members who are not familiar with this big fundraising we do for Camp Shawnigan, it's the Peninsula Paddle for the Kids and we've been doing it for over 40 years. We've raised over \$400,000 and expect to continue for many years. Watch your emails in early 2024 so you can join in on this fun paddling event. We start with a number of one-day paddles in late January/early February to places like Race Rocks, or Maple Bay to Genoa Bay, to get ready for the epic final which has us paddling in shifts from Brentwood Bay back to the clubhouse. You can get a taste of what it's like by checking out the videos on the club's Big Canoe page.

Kim Capson, Past President

Dragonboat Update

July seems like a distant memory but we kicked off the summer alongside the Big Canoe program at the annual Canada Day festivities and we raised a total of \$699 for Big Brothers Big Sisters. Thank you to all the volunteers who came throughout the day to help in a variety of roles!

The VCKC Dragonflyers have had a busy season of training on the Gorge and competing at several festivals on the Island. The team competed at three festivals over the summer, FGPC Nanaimo Dragon Boat Festival, Canada Dry Victoria Dragon Boat Festival and FGPC Vancouver Island Dragon Boat Festival. It has been really fun to see the team develop and improve on their standings at each festival throughout the season.



Racing



Highlights from the Dragon Boat racing season.

Photo credit to Hannah Griffith

One particular highlight of the summer was the team successfully winning the photo competition at the Nanaimo Dragon Boat Festival with the theme '20th Birthday' celebrating the festivals 20th year. The winning prize is 25% off next years race festival entry fees and a \$400 donation in our name to the Nanaimo Hospital Foundation.

We also enjoyed hosting the Salam Water Otters at the Victoria Dragon Boat Festival where several members of the VCKC team paddled with them at the festival.

We may be at the end of the racing season but we are excited to be carrying on paddling throughout the Autumn and Winter including some dryland training. We had lots of interest in the program over the summer and are please to be offering a Learn to Paddle session in September. The event is currently full but

if anyone is interested in trying out Dragon Boat or interested in our Autumn / Winter paddles please reach out to dragonboat@vckc.com for more information.

Finally, I would like to extend a big thank you to everyone on the team that made this season so much fun. Special thanks to our coaches, sterns, team captain and all the paddlers who took on different roles throughout the season. The team spirit and camaraderie within the group has been awesome to be a part of! Please see photo collage of our season above.

Paddles up!

~ *Hannah Griffiths, Dragonboat Director*

Outrigger Update



On the morning of Wednesday 13th September 2023 the club had a nice surprise. A lady by the name of Mrs Grieg walked into the canoe compound and found Ron Williams at work there (as usual). She asked if he thought the club would like to accept her donation of two paddles that belonged to her late husband. Ron gratefully accepted the paddles, they are perhaps 50+ years old but in beautiful , practically unused condition. They are both 60" Avirons Clemente paddles made in Trois-Riveres Quebec. One of them still has the original label intact, and the other looks like the label has only just come off. Looking on the internet I see they are sought after both by historic canoeing purists and for their collectible display value. Two photos are attached.

Ron brought the paddles into the clubhouse where he found myself and the Kingfisher team snacking after a huli practice. Ron asked that the club sends a letter of thanks to Mrs. Grieg, I have passed that request to Jana. We have her address, but not her first name unfortunately.

The two paddles are in one of the paddle buckets with other canoe stern paddles. There I assume, they will live out their working life, unless there any better use that James McBeath or any of the canoe group can suggest?

~ *Graham Hayes, Director*

CALL FOR A STERN

We (Friday Flyers) paddle outrigger OC6 every Friday morning 0900-1100 and would appreciate a dedicated permanent stern for our team. We are a recreational senior's team and do not do any competitions. Would prefer someone who is experienced as we like to paddle in the inner harbour as well as the Gorge. We paddle year round with usually some time off around Christmas. Please email me (Anne Ardiel, Team Captain) at gardiel@shaw.ca if interested.

Canoe Update

Annual Remembrance Day paddle November 11,2023

For information on this event and for canoe course registration request please scroll to the end.

Please see website for 2023 Canoe Program details.

~ *James McBeath, Director*

Kayak Update

Please see website for 2023 Kayak Program details.

~ *Wade Martinson, Director*

Big Canoe Update

It has been a busy summer for the big Canoe. Two big trips with the Big Canoe and a small local trip. Below is a little about the local trip written by Ken Gibbard:

Big Canoe Outing

What a weekend! On Saturday August 19 ten of us had a Big Canoe camping weekend at Ken's place on Piers Island. Anna Childress arranged the trip and for Joe Boyd to tow the club trailer with Monroe and Canada to the Piers Island lot at Swartz Bay where we launched. We made a slightly diverted route to Piers Island in calm seas. Soon tents were up on the green lawn. Lunch was on the cabin deck and later we paddled halfway around Piers Island to a north west facing beach. Ken wanted to return a book to the Piers Island library in the fire hall and invited the others to come along for a look. The Piers Island library ladies had coffee and eats at a big table outside and invited us to join them and others there. We had planned to just complete the loop of Piers Island but did a much longer paddle between Knapp and Pym Islands and around islands and narrow channels near Canoe Cove. Then we went back to Swartz Bay to pick up Debi at 5 PM. Dinner was on the deck and some continued to chat in the warm evening until after 10 PM.

Sunday breakfast was on the deck and then we went for a walk. Stops were made at the Piers Island "Stonehenge", foundation blocks from the Doukhobor prison water tower from the 1930's, the "Big Rock" and the community orchard where most found a ripe apple to eat. We left a little after 2 PM for a calm paddle back.

Participants were Joe, Roy, Anna, Debi, Fran, Lynda, Glen, Jen, Malachi and Ken.

See pictures below, including some of the group on The Big Rock (a glacial erratic) and some really calm paddling by Knapp Island.



Highlights from the Piers Island Trip.

Photo credits to Anna Childress.

Thank you for supporting the Big Canoe program throughout this year.
Cheers, Anna

~ Anna Childress, Big Canoe Director

SUP Update

Hello fellow VCKC paddlers! I hope the summer has been good and full of time on the water. It's been a busy SUP summer and it's not slowing down any time soon.



The SUP program will continue to paddle weekly. Check out the calendar or reach out to James to RSVP or to set something up.

With the cooler weather and shorter days don't forget to account for this. We have some lights for night paddles but it's always good to bring along a headlamp if you have one. Don't let the weather or conditions stop you (unless it is above your abilities), there is plenty of great sessions waiting to be had. Hope to see you out there.

Happy paddling!

sup@vckc.ca .

~ James Roorda, Director

Marathon and Small Boats

This was a very busy summer for the marathon and small boat program. Sunny skies and warm water made paddling a real treat, even if the eel grass sometimes got in the way! While there were some great collective efforts made by the program. I want to start with recognizing some individual efforts.

Canadian Outrigger Hall of Fame Award for Norm MacDonell



Norm MacDonell was recently posthumously elected to the 2023 Canadian Outrigger Hall of Fame. We all know what a contribution Norm made to VCKC, so its even more gratifying to see his contributions to the greater outrigger community recognized in this way. If you read his profile, you will recognize the vintage Norm. Paddling with Norm was never for the faint of heart!

<https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/canadian-outrigger-hall-of-fame-2023-inductees/>

Paddle for Norm 2023



On July 16th about forty marathoners, canoeists, and outriggers gathered for the 2023 Paddle for Norm. The paddle, starting at 2pm, took people on the Gorge Waterway for about two hours and was followed by a pot-luck BBQ. There is considerable support for making this, or a variation thereof, an annual event. Below are some pictures of the paddle.



Gathering for the Paddle



Getting ready to Paddle for Norm





On the water: Canoes, kayaks, marathon canoes, OC1's and our OC6 (with dog).

Mario DeSantis Brings home Gold, Silver Medals from Canmas



Mario DeSantis and paddling partner Grant Rawstron at Canmas

Mario won one gold medal (K1) in the 80–84-year-old category and three silver medals for the Fort Canoe Kayak Club (men K2, mixed K2, and mixed K4) in the 75-84-year-old category! In his journey to Canmas 2023, Mario says he couldn't have realized this committed dream without the support of the canoe marathoners of the Victoria Kayak and Canoe Club, others from Fort Langley, and, of course, his family.

VCKC and marathon canoe member Mario DeSantis participated in the 2023 Canmas competition. Canmas is the Canadian Sprint Kayak Championships which took place in Halifax on September 3rd, 2023. With the resources provided by the Mic Mac Amateur Aquatic Club (MMAAC), Mario DeSantis and paddling partner Grant Rawstron were able to compete in the following 200m races: men's K1, men's K2, mixed K2, and mixed K4. They also participated in the men's K4 race. In this regard, Grant joined the Viking club, while Mario joined the younger partners of the K4 False Creek club team.



CanMas 2023: Bill, Mario and Kim

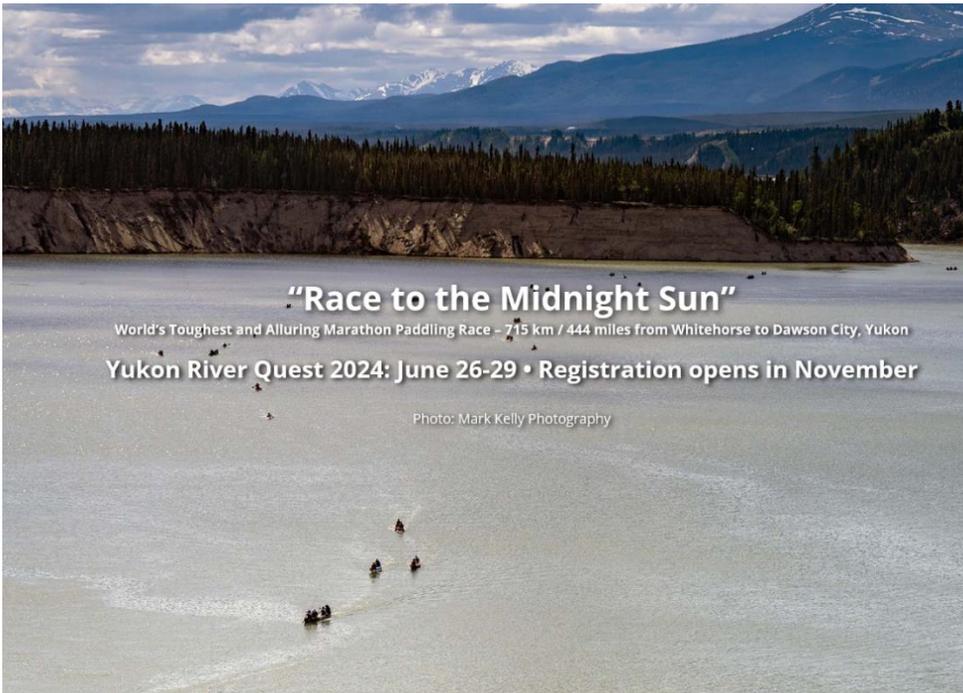


CanMas 2023: Kim, Mario, Grant and Matt

**Congratulations
Mario!!**

VCKC Marathoner makes a splash at the Yukon River Quest

Mike De Abreu is an outstanding paddler and migrates from Ontario to VCKC on a regular basis. He has competed in the Yukon River Quest on five previous occasions. This year he and his partner Sophie Coupal, paddling under the banner of Planned Grit, came in second Overall, as well as second in the Tandem Canoe and the mixed tandem category. Their time? 47:00:05, five seconds over 47 hours!



“Race to the Midnight Sun”
 World’s Toughest and Alluring Marathon Paddling Race – 715 km / 444 miles from Whitehorse to Dawson City, Yukon
Yukon River Quest 2024: June 26-29 • Registration opens in November
 Photo: Mark Kelly Photography

Race to the Midnight Sun - World’s Toughest and Alluring Marathon Paddling Race – 715 km / 444 miles from Whitehorse to Dawson City, Yukon



54 teams and 134 paddlers participated and while some were there for fun, for others, like Mike and Sophie, there was stiff competition to be had. Congratulations Mike and Sophie!

Sophie and Mike, just before the Yukon River Quest Race



Start of the 715 km race



On the course

Anyone Interested in testing your skill and endurance in the Yukon River Quest? Registration is limited and opens in November. For more information go to: <https://www.yukonriverquest.com/>

OC1 Introductory Course Launched

On August 19th eight intrepid VCKC members took the plunge and participated the first OC1 Introduction Course. As a pilot, everyone, participants, and instructors alike, maintained their good humour and flexibility throughout. The participants were Catherine MacKellar, Mike Jensen, Craig Lamont, Kevin Moore, Pooneh Saheli, Mhairi MacDonell, France Gagnon, and Jayne Takahashi. The instructors were Bon Lee (lead) with Rob Sainsbury and Ron Williams.



OC1 Course Participants and Instructors with VCKC's Hurricane OC1 in the foreground

The participants learned the basics of the OC1 design and some of the variations associated with different models. An emphasis on safety and careful handling of the OC1 was paramount throughout the course. Removing the boats from storage, assembly, safe handling and carrying an OC1 was covered first. Then it was off to the dock to review how to both put an OC1 on the dock without damaging it and safely putting it in the water, using the safety strap to anchor it to the dock.

Everyone got into at least two different OC1s to experience the difference a design makes, tested the weight of the ama, and generally got comfortable. While strokes are not an emphasis in this introductory course, bracing was reviewed, and everyone was then asked to practice it. Then it was off to the beach to review how to safely put an OC1 in and out of the water. While a dock entry is a priority, it is recognized that a safe beach entry and exit is necessary at times.

The huli was the last item on the morning's agenda and following a demonstration, everyone successfully completed both an on-side and an off-side huli, getting back into the boat, stabilizing themselves and returning to the dock. Then participants were guided through the process of cleaning all the various parts of the OC1, covering them, and returning the boats to their storage spaces in the compound.

While not everyone was able to stay for the potluck BBQ, everyone agreed that it was a great way to end the course and it will be repeated when other courses are offered.



Learning to transfer body to boat.



Ron Williams prepares to demonstrate a brace stroke.



Participants with Rob Sainsbury on their first OC1 outing.



Bon Lee, with Rob Sainsbury, explains how to safely carry an OC1 out of the water.

Feedback from the first OC1 course was very positive and there were plenty of helpful suggestions to make it even better. It has been decided to keep the length of the introduction course to four hours, followed by a pot-luck BBQ. Instruction on specific strokes, surfing and wave management will be reserved for an advanced level course. The next two OC1 introduction courses have been scheduled for September 16th and September 30th. The popularity of this course is evident in the significant waiting lists for both courses. Further courses will be offered in the Spring.

See you on the water,
 ~ Peter Elson, Marathon and Small Boats Director

Canoe Update - Annual Remembrance Day paddle November 11,2023

The November 11th Remembrance Day paddle will be a community event which includes members of VCKC, South Island Whitewater Paddling Club and U of Vic Paddling Club. There may be some short speeches and a reading of “Flanders Field” before a minute of silence at the Burma Star Memorial at Stolz pool at 11AM sharp. The Memorial is here at Stolz Pool in Cowichan River Provincial Park dedicated in memory of all who lost their lives in the WW11 Burma Campaign. It is known as the “Forgotten Army”. Many paddlers leave a poppy at the Memorial. Interested VCKC paddlers are required to have RCABC Moving Water 1 or equivalent (must confirm with the event organizer). Please register under VCKC events. VCKC members may book a canoe@vckc.ca if a canoe is needed. Everyone who books a canoe must assist in outfitting the canoe with proper safety gear and floatation. A time will be scheduled before the event. Although there will be individual volunteers who will lead groups down the river, each canoe is expected to be responsible for outfitting their canoe and be comfortable with their paddling skills on Grade 1-2 water. Car shuttles will be setup first and arranged at Gibs N Dots 9:30AM on the morning of the 11th. This event is very dependent on water levels so everyone who registers will be kept informed. Any questions or concerns please contact Ellie James at director1@vckc.ca or 250-885-8030.

Note re when registering for a canoe course.

"When trying to register for a canoe course, if the course is full please add your name to the waiting list. Because participants are asked not to pay until the week before the class, several participants for each session cancel and the course could accept waiting list participants. If there are enough people on a waiting list we will add an additional course if at all possible."

~ *Ellie James, Director at Large*

Club Contact Information

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Gord Evans

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