



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

December 2008

General Meeting Tuesday, December 2, 2008 Annual Christmas Party beginning at 6pm

Names from A-L
please bring main courses, appetizers & salads

Names from M-Z
please bring desserts

BYOB and a gift under \$5.00
if you want to participate in the gift exchange

And money for raffle tickets

If you can help on Saturday, November 29 at 11:15am
we need people to decorate the clubhouse for the party.

Please come and help if you can.



Clubhouse News

This is the last newsletter for 2008. It seems amazing that it's eight years since the brouhaha of 2000 when the world was going to stop in it's tracks as the century changed!

December means the Christmas Party instead of the general meeting on the first Tuesday of December at 6 pm. Bring your contribution for the pot-luck meal. As well, BYOB and plate and cutlery (and take them home dirty to reduce the washing up load!)

Santa will appear and if you'd like to take part in the gift exchange bring a gift and Santa will give you a different one. If it's a gift for a child, please mark the child's name on it clearly as Santa's telepathy may not be up to scratch. Please bring a non-perishable food item for the Mustard Seed Food Box and MONEY for raffles and the silent auction. If you have any items for the silent auction please label them 'silent auction' and leave them on the table in the small room. Or let Mavis Pillar know at 590-4390 or e-mail pilarthetiler@shaw.ca. Money raised goes to the kids' Camp at Lake Shawnigan.

In preparation for the party, the clubhouse will be decorated on Saturday, November 29. Meet at 11:15 am, bring your lunch or some finger food to share if you would like to, although it's not mandatory, if you're not hungry. Any freshly cut holly would be useful too (for decorative purposes only).

December is also the month to start renewing your membership so that you can vote or be nominated at the Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, January 6 when the 2009 Executive is voted in. The last meeting of the 2008 Executive will be on the third Tuesday, December 16 rather than the usual second Tuesday of the month.

At the end of the year we will lose Lloyd Skaalen and Françoise Brunet as members when they move on to pursue non paddling pursuits. They have been active members, both serving on the 2004 and 2005 Executive. Lloyd has been very active in the outrigger program particularly and will be a hard act to follow. Thank you both for all that you have done, and good luck!

Merry Christmas everyone.

Linda Thomson
President, VCKC

Remembrance Day - 2008

For many, Remembrance day is just another holiday to while away but beginning a dozen or so years ago, paddlers from the Canoe Program decided to combine some sort of paddling outing with a meaningful Remembrance Day observance. In the past this was frequently a flatwater paddle around the naval base in Esquimalt harbour. In recent years we have chosen a popular river section on the Cowichan from Stoltz Pool to the Vimy (Heritage Road) take out. Near the put in at Stoltz is the Burma Star Memorial Cairn, a replica of the Kohima Monument in Myanmar (Burma). (Major Hoey, a native of Duncan, was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for his courage during the Burma Campaign.) As in past years we paused in silence for two minutes to remember those who served so that we might enjoy our freedom today. We found it gratifying to note that Parks staff had freshly raked the big leaf maple leaves away from the area around and on the path to the memorial and several long stemmed roses had been carefully laid on the pedestal.

After paying our respects at the memorial, fifteen paddlers launched canoes and headed downstream under overcast but warm skies and the frequent aroma of salmon on the banks. Many times we spotted a half dozen or more eagles in the trees along the river. The pace of the river was brisk. Our Moving Water course of 10 days prior was held while the Cowichan flowed at 25 cubic meters per second (m³/s). The rains of the previous week had pumped up the flow to 95 m³/s. Some favorite surf waves and holes were washed out but a friendly hole at Vimy taunted and tempted several tandems and solos to surfing attempts. Surprisingly there were no swims and the rain held off until we were off the water.

submitted by Tom Staebell



Kayak Trip Report

New Member Paddle on the Gorge Saturday November 15th

Tunnels are great places for echoes and we certainly made the most of it with calls, screams and songs bouncing off the concrete walls of the culvert as we paddled up Craigflower Creek under the Island Highway.

As new paddlers we had expected a calm day, safe waters and gentle guidance but this paddle exceeded all my expectations. The forecast was for cloud with a 60% chance of showers and as I packed up kayak and gear in a light drizzle I naturally left my sunscreen, sunglasses and sunhat at home. But much of the paddling day was glorious, warm and sunny and I really missed the sunglasses. The changeable weather - cloud then sun, then more cloud and even a little breeze, then back to sun - gave us newbies practice in finding, donning, doffing and storing gloves and poggies, hats and earmuffs.

Most of us new paddlers had never paddled the Gorge before and it gave us a new perspective on this beautiful city of Victoria. Being near high tide, the Gorge was at its best, with houses and parks, docks and seawalls, green swards and many trees to be seen. From our kayaks we picked small delicious red apples from an overhanging apple tree, watched cormorants drying their wings atop a dead snag, saw a heron keeping an eye on the waters below from high up in a huge old maple tree and collected acorns from several garry oaks. There were many species of ducks on the water, several groups of mallards watching from the reeds at the edges, numerous contingents of Canada Geese, often lined up in regimental rows on land and water, and a family of white swans, the two parents with three fully grown cygnets in their immature colours who swam close by us.

The slow progress was great for beginners as it enabled us to practice our strokes, test our stability, stretch the kinks out of our legs and pick up pointers from our guides. It was a small group of ten all told, so we had a lot of personal attention from the more experienced paddlers. I THINK that I now understand edging to turn, though being counter intuitive to riding a bike it will take a lot of practice to hardwire it into my brain.

We paddled from the clubhouse, west along the Gorge, under Craigflower Bridge into Portage Inlet, around Christie Point, then south to the entrance to

Craigflower Creek. Paddling up a creek, so cool! Much narrower, wilder, fewer houses, more overhanging shrubbery with grasses and sedges at the muddy edges. We passed beneath the bridge at Helmcken Road and stopped at a grassy park for a lunch break and to stretch our legs. After lunch we continued up the winding creek and after a few bends came to a huge log stretching across the stream. It looked impassable but Dorothea had been here before and knew the little passage at the end of the log. So one by one we wiggled our kayaks through the narrow space. Soon after that we came to the dark echoing tunnel under the highway. Exiting the tunnel we had to try to avoid underwater rocks (which now have some new white paint on them, courtesy of at least one of us) as the stream widened up again. A few hundred feet further on there was another log across the stream with no way around it. And the stream beyond, with white water spewing over and around moss covered boulders did not look navigable to sea kayakers, especially for novices like us.

So it was time to turn around and head back, meandering, lilydipping and enjoying the scenery. The sun came back and it was so warm that some of the group were seeking out the shady side of the Gorge. November? It felt more like July!

Thanks to Dorothea for organizing and leading the paddle, to Patti and Roy for their tips, suggestions and assistance and to all for good company. It was a great day and I will definitely be back for more.

Submitted by Janet Haigh



Wanted:

Woman on a budget looking for:
used kayak, cart, paddle, PDF, roof
rack with lock. Also used kayak
clothing, dry bag(s), wet suit, etc.
Call Kelly at 250-382-5035 or email
kellyqui4@yahoo.ca.

Canoe Trip Report

Flatwater Paddle
Sunday, November 2, 2008

From Agate Lane at Cordova bay to Willows Beach approximately 9.5 nmiles – at least, that was the plan!

Four tandem and a solo canoe set off from the Agate lane put-in. There had been some last minute changes. Two other tandems were unable to come, one through child minding difficulties, one because of sickness, and one tandem had become a solo. The marine weather forecast, issued at 4 am said a strong south-east wind warning was in effect, getting lighter and changing to light south westerly by late morning. At 8 am no change and Willows beach was calm with no wind. The tide was ebbing slowly all day, with maximum current of 4 knots at Bains Channel by 10:30 in the morning. It seemed reasonable to carry on with the original plan but in case of difficulties we decided to leave a vehicle at Telegraph Cove, at the half way point.

Everything was calm at Cordova Bay, with sun and no wind. Still calm, around Cormorant Point. We stopped for snacks in a small bay, for 'elevenses' although with our stomachs telling us it was noon, thanks to the hour change, it was more like lunch for some!

As we turned past Gordon Head, we suddenly had a head on wind and over the next 30 minutes the weather deteriorated rapidly. The sky ahead was black; it started to rain and the clouds were moving fast. And worst of all, the wind was increasing in great gusts, making it very difficult especially for the solo boat. We were now closer to Telegraph Cove our half way escape route than we were to the put-in but we still had about 1.5 nm to go. We were clearly in difficulties with south, south-westerly gusts pushing us out away from the shoreline. A quick raft up to consider the options and we turned back to have the wind behind us. Immediately paddling was easier even though we now had the current against us. Keeping close to shore we could use some back eddies and kelp beds, to help us. Things were looking better, and we suddenly realized it was 1:30 pm Our 'elevenses' point was near-by and we headed back to it for a quick lunch. From here on, we decided to tow the solo boat. The club canoe we had taken with us had a centre seat, so it towed the solo, with three paddlers.

We set off again. Heading around Gordon Head we were hit by winds in our faces again, and at times, gusting in all directions. The wind direction was changing. It was hard work and would have been impossible for a solo paddler so towing the boat had been the right decision. Shifting weight to the bow helped but keeping the lighter boats on track required some very active bow correction strokes. Five paddlers had taken the Level 3 tandem paddling course the week before so this was a good opportunity to put theory into practice. I think also it was a good example of the advantage of having a strong bow paddler with good correction strokes to aid the sterner. Flatwater bow paddlers are often thought to be more decorative(!) than anything else having the 'easy option', but this was true tandem paddling, requiring equal skills at both ends!

The squalls continued, at times more from the north, north-east, and certainly not southwest as forecast, and we slowly made our way back to Agate Lane in wind and with a rainbow to look at. By the end, we had done about 8nm, which in the circumstances was good going, I think. It was a good trip illustrating many things we talk about in courses. That weather conditions can change rapidly, and not always as forecast, and that for safe paddling, plans must change accordingly, even if it means turning back!

Thanks to Bon and Susan, Odette and Karen, Marianne and Daniel, Peter and Duane for coming. We will get around Ten Mile point, Susan !

Linda Thomson

Energy Smart!!

Please make sure the basement door to the clubhouse **IS NOT** held open for longer than necessary during the cold months. The wedge should be placed to keep the opening as small as possible while still allowing easy access while crews are assembling.

Also please remember to turn the thermostat down to at most 15° celcius when you leave if you have set it higher for any reason.

**Canoe Program
Special Meeting:
Into the Heart of the Tundra
and back - Solo.**

On the Remembrance Day Cowichan River Paddle on 11th November, (see article elsewhere in the Newsletter), an ex-Club member, Andrew Denholm, turned up and took part in the trip. He told us that he had some photos of his recent summer trip to show if we'd like to see them, but that he was leaving the Island soon. So we booked him in for the 14th and an e-mail was sent out to the Canoe Program membership. I don't know whether we all don't have a life, or whether it was the promise of an excellent presentation, but over 30 members turned up at 8pm on a Friday evening to see Andy's pictures.

An excellent presentation it certainly was. Andy has spent the last five summers taking extended solo canoe trips across Canada. Past trips have taken him from Rocky Mountain House to Montreal. This time he traveled over a 14 week period from Yellowknife to Wollaston Lake in Saskatchewan. His journey across Great Slave Lake and Artillery Lake was slowed by four weeks due to ice on the lakes. But he made it and followed the Hanbury and Thelon Rivers down to where the Dubawnt River joins the latter. He then proceeded up the Dubawnt for more than 500kms to Black Lake before crossing the height of land and finishing the trip along the Fond du Lac onto Wollaston Lake. The trip was done in a home-made canoe, with no radio, satellite phone, GPS or motor, and involved stretches of up to 5 weeks when he was entirely alone. The photographs were wonderful – birds, wolves, musk-ox caribou, moose, bears, ground squirrels, many flowers and scenery that seemed to go on forever into the distance.

We were very lucky to have the chance to see these pictures before Andy leaves the Island, possibly for good and his presentation was very well received by all those who attended.

Alan Thomson



Photos: Andrew Denholm

Trips - Kayaking

When: Saturday, December 6

Where: McNeil Bay

Beginner paddle from McNeil Bay. We will launch from Pirate's Cove, the little beach at the east side of McNeil Bay, down the stairway. Arrive at 9:20 am to be OTW (on the water) by 10:00. We will start with a beach talk outlining our trip plan along the coastline, returning by 2:00 pm **Requirements:** Flatwater or equivalent skills, immersion gear. Please contact Marianne by Thursday, December 4 at mariannejwest@gmail.com to sign up and to book a kayak if you need one.

When: Saturday, December 6

What: Level 1 paddle to view the 19th annual Lighted Ship Parade.

Meet at 5:00 pm at Gorge Rowing and Paddling Center to be OTW by 5:30 pm, return by 8:30 pm.

Watch the parade - Twenty-five lighted ships will marshal along Ship Point pier and make a slow loop of the Inner Harbour. After we hope to stop for hot chocolate or snacks at Fisherman's Wharf. For more info on the parade go to: www.victoriaharbour.org.

Requirements: Level 1 skills or equivalent; Immersion Gear; Navigation lights: white light on back of kayak, white light attached to PFD.

Contact Dorothea Hoffman by Thur December 4 to register, and to book a kayak if you need one: dmhoffman@shaw.ca.

When: Sunday, December 21

What: Beginner paddle to the Chain Islets

This paddle launches from the beach down the stairs to the right of the Oak Bay Marina parking lot. Meet at 9:30 am to be OTW by 10:00 am. There will be a beach talk to discuss our route. It will be the Chain Islets or the Oak Bay shoreline depending on conditions. Return is by 3:00 pm. **Requirements:** Flatwater or equivalent skills, immersion gear. Please contact Marianne by Thursday, December 18 at mariannejwest@gmail.com to sign up and to book a kayak if you need one.

Paddle Guidelines: *Club paddles allow new members to meet other members; to paddle in a safe environment and to introduce new members to Victoria area paddling locations. They are tailored to beginner paddlers although experienced paddlers are welcome to attend. The pace is set by those at the back of the*

"pack". All those who plan to attend need to wear immersion gear (i.e. drysuit or wetsuit OR insulating clothing such as fleece). ALSO remember to bring a change of clothes in a drybag. If you are unsure about the suitability of your equipment or clothing, please contact the trip leader for advice prior to the paddle date. It is also expected that you will bring adequate food and water for the duration of the trip.

Courses and Workshops

Paddle Canada Flatwater Course

(Introduction to Kayaking)

Dates: Jan 10+11 / Feb 21+22

Location + Time: Crystal Pool - Sat 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

VCKC Clubhouse + Gorge - Sun 9:30 am to 4:00 pm.

Cost: \$45

For information on Paddle Canada course content, please go to Paddle Canada's website and review the [Sea Kayak Program overview](#).

Wet Exit + Assisted Rescues Workshop

Date: Saturday, January 31, 2009

Location + Time: Crystal Pool - 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Cost: \$20

This workshop covers just those skills you must have to participate on beginner club paddles.

Bracing + Edging Workshop

Date: Saturday, January 31, 2009

Location + Time: Crystal Pool - 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Cost: \$25

Work on bracing strokes that will help to keep you balanced and upright in your kayak as well as edging your boat to make turning easy!

Rolling Workshop 1 (Intro to Rolling)

Date: Saturday, January 31, 2009

Location + Time: Crystal Pool - 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Cost: \$40

Rolling Workshop 2 (Improving your Roll)

Date: Saturday, January 31, 2009

Location: Crystal Pool - 8:00 pm to 9:30 pm

Cost: \$40

Continues next page ...

Space is limited, so don't delay! Please register by Jan 4, 2009 for any of these courses or workshops with Patti Stevens at pattilou_333@yahoo.com.

VCKC has a few kayaks that are available for members on these club courses and workshops. When you register for a course, please indicate if you would like to book a club kayak. When you use a club kayak, all the safety equipment is provided. However, it is your responsibility to transport the kayak to and from Crystal Pool. Therefore, if you register for any of the above sessions at Crystal Pool, you will have to arrange your own transportation including roof racks and tie downs.

If there is a workshop that you would like to see happen, get a group of four to six members together and contact Patti at the above email address.

Crystal Pool Practice Sessions

If you would like to practice your skills during the winter, you can play at Crystal Pool on most weekends. Pre-registration and payment is required by Friday morning to either Ocean River or Pacifica Paddle Sports.

Saturdays from 6:30 - 9:30
with Ocean River: 250-381-4233

Cost: \$12.50 pool only, \$32.50 pool + kayak

Sundays from 6:00 - 8:00
with Pacifica Paddle Sports: 250-361-9365

Cost: \$16.00 pool only, \$33.60 pool + kayak

Trips & Courses (Canoeing) Flatwater Trips

General

1. Please read the Club website for the [tripping guidelines and expectations](#). Listen to the weather forecast on the night before the trip (public forecast will cover the probability of rain; the marine forecast will include wind strengths and directions.) Call 250-363-6717 or look up the [local marine forecast](#) on the Internet;

2. E-mail notices to all Canoe Program members will be sent out the week before the advertised trips;

3. Minimum paddling level required is having taken and passed the Basic Tandem Canoe course;

4. Members of the Club's Sea Kayak program are welcome to join in any canoe program Flat Water paddles;

5. Please call or e-mail the trip leader by the Thursday before the trip date to let them know you plan to come along and if you require a partner and/or don't have a canoe;

6. Always bring food and fluids and a change of clothes. Also, check on the weather forecast for the day.

January 1, 2009 - Join the Club New Year's Day paddle. Meet at the Club house at 10:30 am and we'll paddle up the Gorge in whatever craft we need - tandems, Club canoe, voyageurs. Bring food for the potluck lunch that follows. Alan will have mulled wine to heat us up if it is cold or wet. After lunch, we take down the Christmas decorations in the Clubhouse, leaving it set up for the AGM that will happen on January 6, 2009. Any questions, call Don Munroe 250-385-2268.

There will be the usual Flatwater paddles on

Sunday January 11, 2009

Saturday January 24, 2009

Details will be announced by e-mails to the Canoe Program section.

Moving Water Trips

General

VCKC river trips are open to current members or invited guests (waiver required) who have received RCABC or equivalent instruction and who agree to abide by VCKC safety rules as outlined in the member guide.

Unless otherwise announced, we meet at 8:30am at the Millstream Park'n'Ride (exit 14/Sooke off the Island Highway) and carpool to the appropriate river section. Please contribute to driver's fuel and vehicle expense. (\$10 is appropriate these days.) Trips are subject to last minute cancellation due to water level or road closures so please advise by Thursday evening if you plan to attend and phone my cell (after 6:30 a.m., please) if your plans change. The three club river boats are available for a modest fee on a "first call" basis.

The next two paddles are intended to introduce new paddlers to easier runs.

Friday, December 5
Saturday, December 20

Tom Staebell
res 655-7113 after 5:00 pm
cell 588-2207 after 6:30 am
thestaebellfamily@shaw.ca

VCKC Executive

President		Voyageur Program	
Linda Thomson	592-4170	Don Munroe.....	385-2268
Vice President		Marathon Canoe Program	
Marie-Eve Tessier	386-5652	Ron Williams	380-7496
Treasurer		Education, Safety & Standards	
Sharron Larusson	478-2981	Doug Linton	727-0216
Secretary		Membership	
Tony Dalmyn	483-5224	Muriel Johnson	391-0560
Past President		Clubhouse & Grounds	
Mile Petrovic	250-733-2013	Lawrence Irvine	920-3622
Program Directors		Directors-at-Large	
Canoe Program		Diane Nishimura	383-3080
Joy Newham	385-5876	Maris Ratel	592-7082
Sea Kayak Program		Executive Volunteer Positions	
Marianne West	885-1723	Ray Patts (Soc.Coord.)	294-4445
Dragon Boat Program		Harold Gillis (Newsletter)	598-9488
Mike Fox	391-0160	Maris Ratel (Boat & Locker Storage) ..	592-7082
Outrigger Program			
Keith Larusson	478-2981		

For Current Calendar of Events

[Click Here](#)

