



Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club

Newsletter

Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club
355 Gorge Road West
Victoria, B.C. V9A 1M9
Phone: 361-4238 (Info only)
Website: www.vckc.ca

November 2006



Photo: Martin Davis

Russell Island

Trip Report - Page 3

Canoe Program

The next Canoe Program meeting will be on Monday November 20th, the third Monday of the month. The main entertainment will be a presentation by Doug and Cathy Hull who have spent the summer paddling in Eastern Canada. The presentation is called "Paddling with Powerboats" – a one month trip on the Trent-Severn Waterway in Ontario.

There will be some other items to discuss. Anything members would like to raise, please contact Linda Thomson 592-4170 or 3135thom@islandnet.com.

Kayak Program

Hi Fellow Kayakers.

Well, Fall is upon us and the weather is cooler and wetter. For many this is actually better kayaking weather. Fewer people (and large boats) on the water and less heat to make you uncomfortable while wearing immersion clothing. And if you don't have good immersion clothing, now is the time to buy it and wear it.

The October meeting went well. We will had presentations on trips to the Queen Charlotte Islands (Haida Gwaii). Jennie, Jan & Knut presented their trips using a mother ship. The presentations were excellent and the room at the Club House was filled to overflowing. Gary & Glynis will present their trip (without using a mother ship) at the November 15 meeting.

Also at this time I would like to announce that I will be stepping down from the Kayak Director position at the end of the year. I'm sure we have many people out there who can do this job and will find it enjoyable. I will assist the new director in any way I can and Gary has offered to continue as Course Coordinator. Glynis has also volunteered to continue organizing club paddles and sending out emails. So the job of Director is not too onerous. If you have any questions don't hesitate to give me a call at 480-0880 and let me know if you are interested.

Don't forget to return your library items. Other people want to see them also. I would like to mention again that I continue to maintain a paddler's list for people who would like

someone to join them paddling. Solo paddling is not a good idea and there are many paddlers in the club who have similar interests and skills who would be willing to join you paddling. Send me an email at fredinvictoria@yahoo.ca including your email address, phone number and a short description of how and when you like to paddle and I will add you to the list. The list is sent to other members who are on the list only. It is not used for any other purpose.

Note also that the free double and single kayaks are not getting much use. Send an email to vckckayakbooking@gmail.com to book them.

Happy Paddling

Fred Trudell
Kayak Program Director

Outrigger Report

The outriggers had a wonderful summer. One canoe was used extensively in Caddy bay with a lot of the paddlers getting a taste of outside water, currents, and a few big waves thrown in for good measure. The canoe was returned to the gorge in early September. Thanks to the members of Delia's crew for paddling the canoe back. Four of them did the entire trip of about two and one half hours with a partial crew change at Gonzales bay.

There are a lot of new paddlers that have come over from dragon boating. They are looking to maintain fitness as well as gaining new paddling experiences. Welcome to the outrigger program.

It is not too early the start thinking of our annual race 'Wake Up The Gorge' scheduled for next April. There have been some suggestions about changing the format. I am looking forward to some interesting debates over the next few months.

With Christmas just around the corner, we have a few of the Heron sculptures available for a cost of \$50.00. All proceeds going to the program.

Keith Larusson
Outrigger Program Director

Trip Report - Russell Island

I have often wanted to visit Russell Island in the eastern part of the mouth of Fulford Harbour. Back in 1990 we'd met a UVic professor at Scottish Country dancing who told us he lived on the island; then we'd learned from Larry Bell that his ancestor had lived there. But somehow, we'd never got there, in spite of the Club's annual Mother's Day weekend trip to Portland Island. Maybe it was the crossings - over a nautical mile across Satellite Channel - that gave us pause, but Linda and I eventually made the trip in August 2006 on a beautiful sunny day, and decided to take a Club Flat water paddle there.

So when the weather forecast for the Thanksgiving Saturday was good (i.e. no wind warnings), we seized the day and did the trip. There were 6 boats, with a three newcomers (at least to these trips), and the rest made up of the regular participants. We put-in from the beach access that leads starts from Seabreeze Road off Land's End Road. There was a northwest breeze blowing when we launched from the slabby rock shore so we headed straight over to Saltspring under Mt Tuam. It took 25 minutes to cross to the far shore and then we turned east to the Isabella Islets where the shell tombolas connecting the various islets make a lovely stopping point.

From there the passage over to the west end of Russell Island was a further 35 minutes of easy paddling under sunny skies and with only light winds. We landed on Russell at 11:45, less than 2 hours after we had started - better than expected. The island is now part of the Southern Gulf Islands National Park, so there is some signage, but it is not fully developed as yet. There are paths in the western end, along with a pit toilet and some picnic tables. The paths have boardwalk where necessary and are well laid out in the tangles of trees and brambles. The path swerves round the heritage Hawaiian/Kanaka house mid-island and then peters out towards the eastern end which is being kept as an ecological reserve. The south side of the island, facing Portland Island has some low cliffs and is quite rocky; the north side has some slabby rock portions separated by sand and shell beaches. The bay on the north side often has yachts and power boats anchored in it as it is well sheltered from south west winds.

The importance of the island, apart from its geography, is that it has one of the last, maybe the last, house built by Hawaiian settlers in the region. Mary Mahoi was left the island by a fellow Kanaka who had been granted the land in the late 1800s - probably the first Kanaka settler to own land in BC. Mary moved there with her husband and brought up many of her 13 children there. The land was suitable for growing fruit trees and berries which ripened earlier than in neighbouring Saltspring. In addition, Mary made money by digging and preserving shellfish. There is a book about this remarkable lady by Jean Balman that I will read sometime, and another on the Kanaka diaspora in BC which would give a broader picture. We know of Kanaka Point on Portland Island, and another on Newcastle Island; and then there is Kanaka Creek in Fort Langley.

All the above we learned from the caretaker of the house on Russell, who came to the island just as we walked round the garden area. We have invited her to come to the Club some day to talk about the island and the people who lived there, and I hope that Larry Bell or a member of his family can come too to add a direct connection with the Club.

We spent an hour and a half on the island without exploring it all, but thought we might as well take advantage of the perfect conditions to paddle over to Portland Island. This we did, crossing to Chad Island and then round to Shell Beach where we stopped for our last break. From there we crossed Shute Passage to Piers and thence to Seabreeze. We really were very fortunate with the weather - sunny and light, variable winds - wonderful for October. The trip took 6 hours from put-in to take-out and we covered 18 kms or about 9 nautical miles. There was some fall colours on the trees; a couple of eagles and many seals; no dolphins. Everyone had a good trip, and Arthur had a great start to his second year in Canada, reinforcing his view that this is indeed Lotus Land. Thanks to Martin for making up numbers at the last minute.

Participants: Joy Newham and Linda Robson; Martin Davis and Jack Louie; Doug and Cathy Hull (back from their travels in the east); Marilyn and Ken Tomlinson; Linda and Alan Thomson, Pauline Campbell and Arthur Swarbeck.

Submitted by Alan Thomson

In Memoriam

Dick Kirby, a past president of the Club, died suddenly on October 5, 2006. Dick and his wife Mary were early members of the Victoria Canoe Club - as it was originally called. A Captain in the Canadian Navy, Dick was very familiar with the sea and helped develop RCAB C's Coastal/Ocean Paddling course. Along with Ken Gibbard, he taught the course at the Club for many years. Over the years well over a hundred paddlers made the trip from Cedar Ramp to Carlos Island, through the three passages – Gabriola Passage, False Narrows and Dodds Narrows. Dick was also a Lakewater instructor. His knowledge of the sea made him a very safe person to trip with; and his skills as a paddler meant he undertook them in full control of his boat. I remember Dick paddling his aluminum canoe solo on an ocean paddling course; with all his own gear and some group equipment. He lead the flotilla of tandem canoes effortlessly.

Dick and Mary liked to go canoe tripping. In 1974, they made the trip down the Nahanni from the headwaters at the Moose Ponds down to Fort Simpson. This was one of the earlier recreational paddling trips on that river before it became the scene of commercial tripping; a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a Canadian Heritage River. Older Club members will recall the slide show of this trip, including the repairs to the Grumman canoe after it was bent round a rock after capsizing! It was this incident that lead the Kirbys to join the Club, recognizing the need for formal training. They also paddled the Pelly in the Yukon. Other trips involved the use of the Club wood/canvas freighter canoe. In this boat, Dick and Mary along with other stalwarts such as Ken Gibbard and Kurt Frost would paddle the West Coast of BC - trips out to the hut on Flores; to Hot Springs Cove north of Tofino and a cruise in the Queen Charlottes. He also helped organize the Club trip to Ellerslie Inlet in the early 1990s.

Dick and his wife Mary both served on the Club's Executive for years. They did a lot together. The phrase was nearly always 'Dick and Mary' when it came to canoeing. Both became President – Mary being the first lady president. Dick stayed on the Executive, doing whatever role was required – Membership, Safety, Newsletter, House and Grounds and Member-at-Large. He was one of the Club leaders who approached Saanich Council with the proposal that the Club take over the house at 355 Gorge Street West – our present Clubhouse. Through his persuasion and attention to the factors that would count with the Council, the Club was granted a lease of the property that we have maintained to this day. During his time on the Club Executive, it expanded to include first sea-kayakers in the 1980s, then outriggering and dragon-boating. To Dick, provided that the sport was carried out safely, was recreational and open to all, different types of paddlers were welcome

The Paddle to Port Angeles (Timmy's to older members) is made possible because of the generous provision of a safety vessel by the Canadian Navy. It was always Dick, as a VCKC member and a retired member of that organization, who made

the request for this support boat every year. He was also a paddler on the first trip in 1983. He and Mary were the organizing force behind a number of Club activities: the traditional Mother's day weekend trip out to Portland Island – known as the Frost-Free weekend; river trips on the Cowichan and the Fun Day after the Regatta each year. Their provision of the wonderful fruit 'grunt' for dessert on the Saturday evening and the group 'broom bash on the Sunday' were regular features of this trip, which has introduced many paddlers to the joys of canoe tripping and camping. In any Club activity, he and Mary could be relied on to take part and help out. In recognition of his long service, the Club made Dick an honorary member some years ago – one of only two in its history. They also organised many of the Club house clean-ups

I remember Dick's last paddles with the Club – a river trip down the lower Cowichan in the mid 90s; a pre-Yukon camping trip to Ruckle Park, Portland Island and D'Arcy Island; and the last Portland Island trip with the dreaded pair of Kirby chocolate Labradors – good practice for bear hanging your food !

Dick was an important part of the Club for thirty years of its existence. There are few parts of its organization that he was not involved in, bringing to bear experience, common-sense, leadership, yet a willingness to accept what the Club as a whole wanted.

Those of us who were taught by him, worked with him and called him a friend will miss him greatly. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Mary, who was beside him in much of what he did in the Club.

Alan Thomson



Membership Application Form

The VCKC membership form has been revised and will be available in late October/early November on both the web site and in the clubhouse.

The form has been revised for the following reasons:

To make it easier for renewing members to enter information, i.e. information that has not changed need not be entered (again);

To reflect the changes in the fee structure as noted in the October (last) newsletter;

To collect your current certification level and certifying body to facilitate course and trip planning.

To repeat from the October newsletter:

Changes to the fee structure to take effect January 1, 2007:

For new members, partial year fees will apply only for the period September to December. Full year fees will stay as they are.

For renewing members, there will be no partial year fees. Full year fees will stay as they are.



Another photo from the Russell Island Trip
described on Page 3

Boat Storage

Thanks to Volunteers

We would like to express our appreciation to all of those people who came out to help move and repair the boat racks in the outdoor storage compound. Your work has improved accessibility in the compound, and made room for one more boat rack (to be built soon).

We would also like to replace the huge metal lockers with narrower ones that would allow more locker facilities for more members. If anyone has a lead on some inexpensive used metal lockers, we would love to know about it.

End-of-Year Notice

Year's end is fast approaching and so this notice is a reminder that your membership and storage fees are due on January 1. As a routine security measure, all combinations for doors and gates will be changed in the New Year. Members will be given the new combinations when their fees are received.

If you haven't used your boat or locker during the last year, please consider freeing up the facilities for others. We have a growing waiting list, and club storage is intended to promote active involvement in paddling. Your consideration is greatly appreciated.

Security in the Outdoor Compound

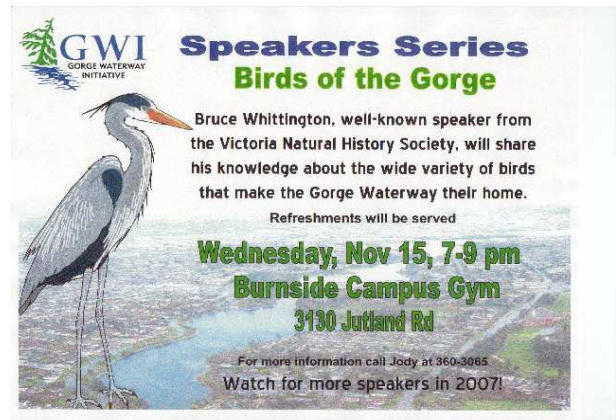
Once again on Thursday October 12, we found the gate near the deck unlocked. This is about the 5th time this summer that this has happened. This may happen when we assume that other members will lock things up - but since there are several exits, it is easy to overlook an open door or gate. Please be sure that you re-lock any gates or doors that you open - even if there are other members still in the clubhouse. Members should be able to re-open a gate or door if necessary. Thanks for your diligence. It protects

your equipment as well as the equipment of other members!

Seeking New Volunteer(s)

The current boat and locker storage coordinators (Lynn and Alex) will not be able to continue in this role in 2007. We will be building a passive solar home on our new property in the Cowichan Valley (yay!). The Coordinator role has been very enjoyable. We have had the pleasure to work with a light-hearted yet effective executive, and have made some rewarding contributions to the club. We recommend this position to anyone who has not had prior experience on the executive. It is a great way to meet people, learn about other programs and the workings of the club, and serve the paddling community. If you are interested, please contact us and we will put your name forward.

Alex Mann & Lynn Sanderson



For more information contact:
Don Munroe @ 385-2268

VCKC TAKES TO THE SLOPES

When: January 18, 19 & 20
(Thursday, Friday & Saturday night)

Where: Mt. Washington

Accommodations are two condos that each have their own sauna, washer and dryer.
The party condo has its own hot tub.

Cost is \$55 p/p for three nights (almost free)

To confirm, phone Don Munroe at 385-2268

The first 16 people to submit their money get to go.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW LAKEWATER-CERTIFIED PADDLERS

The weekend of October 14 & 15 saw eight eager paddlers ready to spend a busy weekend learning the skills of the Lakewater Level 1 & 2 course. Even though the weather prediction sounded like we would probably be rained on for most of the weekend, in fact only on Sunday was there a light drizzle. Since the group all had to demonstrate a canoe-over-canoe rescue, we weren't too concerned with a little rain. Everyone worked very hard and Jean and Joy are pleased to announce the successful paddlers:

Susan Lee
Arthur Swarbrick
Pauline Campbell
Gerry Luton

Bon Lee
Pat Swarbrick
Joanna Crowe
Roy Scully

And don't forget ...

VCKC

Fall Work Party

Coming up November 4 & 5

Details to be posted at the clubhouse

or call Kathleen Gunn @ 384-6436

**And at the next general meeting
on Tuesday, November 7
there will be a presentation titled:**

Exploring the Great Bear Rainforest

**And the Marathon folk invite you to visit the
webpages showing how much fun they had
at their year-end party called
“Wined Up In The Gorge”
Go to vckc.ca and click on
'Marathon' ...
then go to link at bottom left hand
corner of the page.**



You Can't Always Get What You Want

Digital cameras are becoming more paddler-friendly, but is the waterproof camera of my dreams on the market? Not yet.

My first digital camera, a Canon G2, was bulky, expensive (\$1,600), and definitely not waterproof - it failed to survive a dunking in the Rio Grande river. I replaced it with a G5, a pelican case, and a promise to keep the camera stowed. The G5 had more features and was cheaper, since digital camera prices were falling, but that pelican case cramped my style. This year Olympus and Pentax introduced waterproof models that were affordable and packed with features. I chose the Olympus Stylus 720SW, gave the pelican case to a fellow paddler, and took the new camera on a four-month paddling, hiking, and sight-seeing trip.

The 720SW is pocket-sized and lightweight (5.4 oz); I can shoot with one hand. It's waterproof to ten feet, shockproof to five feet, and a lens door closes when the camera is off. Uploading and downloading photos are fool-proof, and the movie-clip feature is fun to use. With 7.1 megapixels, picture quality is very acceptable, even with larger prints.

What's not to love? Shutter lag and lack of a viewfinder are my chief complaints. Between pushing the shutter button and when the picture is actually taken there is a delay of one or two seconds. It sometimes feels like a minute. This can be a challenge when taking action or wildlife shots. During the lag, the camera is adjusting focus and exposure. As a work-around I partially depress the shutter release to pre-focus the lens and hold it there while waiting for the shot.

To keep the camera small, there's no viewfinder, just a large (2.5") LCD. This uses battery power, but that can be solved by buying extra batteries. I have three batteries, enough to last about one month without recharging. Seeing the screen in bright light is a bigger problem; glare and reflections off the shiny LCD surface can totally obscure the image. Does anyone have a solution, other than avoiding the Southwest, the tropics, and other sunny locations? As an old SLR camera user, I prefer a viewfinder to the LCD; it's much more intuitive.

What's the cost? The sticker price for the 720SW is \$449. Batteries are \$50 (cheaper from after-market suppliers). A one gigabyte chip, which will store almost 300 photos at high resolution, costs \$55.

All in all, the 720SW is a rugged and capable little camera. But I'm still watching the ads for the next generation.

Submitted by Doug Hull

Editor's Note: My thanks to Doug for responding to my request for content last month. Does anyone else have a

bit of gear or gadget that makes their paddling experiences even more enjoyable? Why not tell us about it?

As for my note last month about first time paddling experiences, Gary Jacek responded with the following:

My first kayaking experience was about 15 years ago when a group of friends from my office in Richmond decided to paddle down the Harrison River from Harrison Hotsprings to the bridge at Harrison Mills. I bid my wife and infant

son farewell on the lakeshore and began the paddle towards the hot springs and the top of the river where it exits the lake.

Most of our group were in canoes, but our Russian friend Radik had brought along his son's folding Russian kayak. I remember being impressed at how swift and light the kayak was compared to my canoe.

In the bow of my canoe was Glenn, who had never been paddling before. The Harrison River is pretty tame during the summer months, resembling a long lake as opposed to a river for most of its length. On a particularly benign stretch, I asked Radik if I could try his kayak. A quick stop ashore and I was off in Radik's boat while he and Glenn took off in front paddling my canoe.

Some time later the river rounded a bend and picked up some speed. Then a large bolder appeared midstream with Glenn and Radik hurtling toward it. The resulting panic and mayhem were a sure sign that, like Glenn, Radik had never before been in a canoe! Fortunately the river carried them past the rock and onto the calmer water below. We can laugh about it now, but I think Glenn and Radik both know why you bring a change of cloths. It has nothing to do with getting river water on you.

My infant son is now a teen with some kayak experience already. This past summer it was high time that Dad learned how. We booked a kayak lesson and tour out of Telegraph Cove near Port McNeill one fine sunny morning in July. The highlight of the tour for me was the sights, sounds and smells of salt water and ocean wildlife, seen from water level, far from the noise and odour of outboard motors. Working hard against wind, wave and current was a bonus.

I was hooked.

The highlight for the German restaurant patrons at Telegraph Cove was my son and I practicing our wet exits and rescues next to the marina. Yes, the water was cold, even in July!

Back in Victoria I got to meet "Instructor Gary" and complete my CRCA Level 1 with Ocean River. I know this is only the beginning and I have lots to learn.

Submitted by Gary Jacek

VCKC Executive

<p>President Judi Murakami 360-2776</p> <p>Vice President Mile Petrovic 893-1904</p> <p>Treasurer Paul Post 412-4323</p> <p>Secretary Lorna Petrovic 733-2013</p> <p>Past President Paul de la Bastide 598-9611</p> <p>Program Directors:</p> <p>Canoe Program Linda Thomson 592-4170</p> <p>Dragon Boat Program Mike Fox</p> <p>Outrigger Program Keith Larusson 598-7193</p> <p>Sea Kayak Program Fred Trudell 480-0880</p>	<p>Voyageur Program Don Munroe 385-2268</p> <p>Marathon Canoe Program Ron Williams 380-7496</p> <p>Education, Standards & Safety Doug Linton 727-0216</p> <p>Membership Tony Copping 479-1308</p> <p>Clubhouse & Grounds Kathleen Gunn 384-6436</p> <p>Social Coordinator Irena Jazwinski 388-9757</p> <p>Boat Storage Alex Mann & Lynn Sanderson .. 382-7781</p> <p>Newsletter Harold Gillis 598-9488</p> <p>Directors-at-Large Mavis Pillar 384-4390 John Close 384-8077 Joy Newham 385-5876 Fraser Tweedy 380-6952</p>
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VCKC Clubhouse Bookings and Club Activities November 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
			1	2 Dragonboat Meeting 7:30pm	3	4
5	6	7 General Meeting 7:30-9:00	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 VCKC Executive Meeting 7:30pm Judi 360-2776	15 Kayak Program Meeting 7:00pm	16	17	18
19	20 Canoe Program Meeting 7:30pm	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 Outrigger Mtg. 7:30pm	29	30		

The Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club is a member of:

RCABA (bccanoe.com);
CRCA (paddlingcanada.ca);
CORA (canadianoutrigger.com)

General Meetings

First Tuesday of each month (September to June)
December Newsletter deadline: November 18, 2006