

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

February 2009

General Meeting Tuesday February 3, 2009 7:30 pm

Professional paddling guide and instructor, Laurel Archer presents a 45 minute slideshow about the rivers featured in her new guidebook "Northern British Columbia Canoe Trips: Volume One". This book has just been published by Rocky Mountain Books.

Laurel Archer was born in the suburban wilds of Regina, Saskatchewan, a mythical place with mythical beasts and very little water. Her first canoeing expeditions at the tender age of seven took in the wind and waves of Crooked Lake in the Qu'Appelle Valley. The mighty Wascana kept her paddling during high school. But it was during her university years that she finally committed to the path of adventure, heading north to the big water of the Churchill River.

Since then, she has paddled waterways from the Arctic to Honduras, Costa Rica, Belize, Thailand, Malaysia, India, Myanmar, Chile, Argentina, and Hawaii.



Laurel Archer on the Stikene Photo copyright: George Prevost (2006)

There was more VCKC news than there was room for in the printed version of this newsletter. See the on-line version at vckc.ca for photos from the New Year's Day paddle and a new VCKC member's take on his first kayak course.

Clubhouse News

The January Executive Meeting marked the changeover of the 2008 and 2009 Executive. We welcome Bon Lee, Jack Louie, Carolyn and Sandy Rattray and Mavis Pillar as new members on the VCKC executive and Joy Newham, Mike Fox, Keith Larusson, Sharron Larusson, Ron Williams, Don Monroe, Doug Linton, Diane Nishimura, Muriel Johnson, Maris Ratel, Harold Gillis and Mile Petrovic as returning members although not all in the same positions as last year. Many thanks to retiring members Marianne West and Marie-Eve Tessier.

One position remains vacant, that of Kayak Program Director. I'm sure someone will step forward soon. Meanwhile the kayak courses and paddles will continue as mentioned in the January newsletter and on the calendar.

The next Executive Meeting is as usual on the second Tuesday of the month at 7pm. The main topic for this meeting is the final discussion and acceptance of the budget for 2009. So if you are interested, come and listen!

Linda Thomson President, VCKC



Kayak Program Report

The next Kayak Program meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 17, 7:00 to 9:30 pm. Brian Henry of Ocean River Sports will be the guest speaker. Brian Henry founded Ocean River Sports in 1981. His passion for paddling and boat designing ability led him to establish Current Designs, one of the world's foremost manufacturers of kayaks.

VCKC has boats that are available to members for club courses and paddles at no charge. All kayaks come with a PFD, paddle, pump and throw line. When not scheduled for club event use, these boats are also available to members for personal use on the Gorge Waterway on the club side of the Tillicum Bridge. Members must have qualified skills and must paddle with a buddy.

The following is a list of volunteers for the Kayak Program:

Who's Who:

Program Director - Vacant

Meetings: Bon Lee - bonlee@shaw.ca

Email & other enquiries: Doug Linton

dlinton@shaw.ca

Communications (email) - Fred Trudell fredinvictoria@yahoo.ca

Communications (paddlers' list) - VCKCpaddlinglist@gmail.com

Courses & Workshops - Patti Stevens - pattilou_333@yahoo.com

Kayak Bookings - Susan Zedel - szedel@shaw.ca

Library - Vic Turkington - victurkington@yahoo.com

Day Paddles and Expeditions - Marianne West - mariannejwest@gmail.com and Dorothea Hoffmann - polkadottie44@shaw.ca

Instructors - Tom Hukari, Patti Stevens, Yves Aquin, Dennis MacMillan, Dorothea Hoffman, Doug Linton, Marianne West, Michel Guerard.

Canoe Program Report

The year is off to a good start with weekend and midweek paddles continuing and people already signing up for our spring courses. Our "flatwater" paddle to the Chemainus estuary on January 10 was anything but flat for the latter part of the trip but it was still delightful. We looked like drowned rats by the end, after paddling through the rain, wind and waves. Thanks Alan, for another adventure!

Check out canoe events for February: flatwater and moving water day trips and a very interesting presentation by Vanessa Elton for our monthly canoe program meeting.

Spring courses are on the website calendar: check March, April and May.

Happy paddling!

Canoe Program Meeting: Monday, February 16 @7:30 p.m.

Vanessa Elton is a co-owner and canoe guide with <u>Gumboot Guiding</u> Canoe Tours in Cowichan Bay. Join us for a slide show on her experiences paddling the Gulf Islands in a voyageur canoe. Since Vanessa is also a naturalist, you can expect a lot of natural history of the area as well as details on canoe tripping on the ocean.

Joy Newham Program Director



Wednesday Morning Canoeing

I am a novice canoeist. I've taken two tandem courses and learned a great deal from both. The instructors were patient, understanding and encouraging, but after the courses were finished I knew that I needed - wanted - more. I wanted to be able to feel comfortable, and in control paddling a canoe. I also

wanted my time in a canoe to be fun. Sound familiar?

If what you want from canoeing is the same as what I want, then I have a secret to share with you - Wednesday morning canoe sessions.

To be honest, paddling on Wednesday mornings - particularly solo paddling - has been a humbling experience. My "J" stroke is more of a "go and stop" stroke, my circles around any buoy are anything but circles, and of course if there is a rock nearby I'll probably hit it, not withstanding Jean Chandler telling me exactly where the rock is.

Jean organizes the Wednesday morning sessions. She checks on the tides and weather, sends out e-mails, and asks what we would like to work on that day. On the water and on the dock Jean gently and patiently moves everyone to a higher level of confidence and ability.

And that's what Wednesday morning paddles are all about. Wednesday mornings are a time not only to perfect your "J" stroke but every stroke you've been introduced to but haven't had time to practice. And you can do it without feeling any pressure to keep up with others. Wednesday mornings are three hours of tremendous opportunity for anyone who wants to become more comfortable and confident in a canoe.

I know many of you are busy during the week but perhaps with a little bit of creative scheduling you can find a way to come out at nine on Wednesday mornings. If you want to participate, contact Jean at 250 727-6923.

I know of no more convenient, effective and enjoyable way to practice and improve your technique.

Graham Lloyd



Jean Chandler (right) and new VCKC member, Leanna Derringer (Photo: H. Gillis)

Thanks!

I would like to offer a huge "thank you" to Linda Thomson for the extraordinary work she took on last year at VCKC.

We had a big house painting project on the go. Linda took on the task of making arrangements with the painting company and after many, many meetings and phone calls and with help from other club members like Doug Linton, Linda brought the project to a successful conclusion.

In addition, our secretary stepped down from the position in June. As no one was appointed to take over that position, Linda ensured all mail was attended to and being only one of two people readily available to sign cheques, needed to be well-organized to ensure all payments were taken care of.

In between all her presidential duties and additional roles, she managed to find time to come on most flatwater paddles, instruct, and have a very active family life. WOW!

Joy Newham

Book Review Northern British Columbia Canoe Trips - Vol. 1 By Laurel Archer Published by Rocky Mountain Books \$29.95

This new guidebook by Laurel Archer is a valuable addition to the existing literature. In it, she provides a detailed set of trip notes for eight northern BC rivers: the Omenica, Kispiox, Taku, Jennings, Dease, Gataga/Kechika, Netson Creek/Rabbit River and Fort Nelson/Liard. These rivers vary considerably in difficulty, and most do not appear in any other guidebook, certainly not in those currently available. The only one for which I have a previous guide is the Dease which was one of the rivers covered in Richard and Rochelle Wright's "Canoe Routes British Columbia" (1980). None of them are in the guidebook "Canoeing + Kayaking BC's Central Interior" (Northwest Brigade Paddling Club) or the two volumes of "Canada's Best Canoe Routes" edited by Alister Thomas. Having paddled none of the rivers myself, I cannot vouch for the accuracy of Laurel's descriptions but I liked the layout, beginning with the general environment of Northern BC and with the usual wilderness canoeing advice and caveats. The language is direct and flows well - no hyperbole or dramatics. Each trip has an introduction, followed by sections on: length; maps needed; water flows (a valuable help); access and

how to get there and back; and advice on when to go. Each trip is graded by difficulty; level of solitude; wildlife, fishing and camping; hiking; and other activities using a one to 4-star system. The sections on history are, for me, the right balance between too long and too short and, from my knowledge of the area gleaned from other travel books (Patterson, Walker, Hoagland, etc), the content is accurate.

The Trip Reports are well laid out with detailed feature by feature information, each with a grid reference (useful for maps or GPS) and a detailed description. My only criticism of this section is the absence of sequential mileage/distance so one can know the distance between features and hence the probable time from point to point. Granted, these are rivers where the current's speed may vary considerably and where features such as log jams may cause delays. But I have found this type of information useful on other rivers I have paddled.

Laurel Archer has spoken at the Club on at least two occasions and will be making a presentation at our next General Meeting on February 3. She has paddled hard, far and wide, and certainly knows her material. We have also had the pleasure of having her mother - who accompanied her on some of the exploratory trips to collect the materials for this book - as a club member who took some of the courses we run. Finally, the Introduction to the book is by Tony Shaw, a past resident of the north (Iskut), paddling trip outfitter, long time VCKC member and past president of the Recreational Canoeing Association of BC. So if you plan to paddle in the north, buy this book.

I can recommend this book to anyone planning to travel the northern rivers, and I look forward to Volume 2.

Alan Thomson

VCKC Boat Storage.

Just a reminder that all boat and locker fees for 2009 are now overdue. Combinations to locks on the boat storage area will be changed at the end of January. Folks who have paid their '09 rental fees will receive the new combination; folks who have not paid their dues will be asked to remove their boats so these spaces can be opened up for those on the waiting list.

Kayak Course Report Kindred Spirit Kayak Course

On January 17 and 18, four intrepid (or perhaps crazed) VCKC kayakers took the plunge and headed for the Cowichan River. Craig and Jason of Kindred Spirit Kayaks led Tom Hukari, Marianne West, Michelle Swanson and John Phillips like ducklings through pretty riverscapes decorated with frozen waterfalls and boiling rapids that really got our adrenaline pumping.

Of course, the VCKC moving water canoeists have been doing this all season but it was new to us in our little plastic boats that spin on a dime. The sun came out and shafted beautifully through the mist. River otters played, eagles watched from their treetop perches and the fisherman got out of our way with general good humour. One of them even turned out to be a previous Kindred Spirit student. He was invited to join us on the next run, which he did, as the fishing wasn't working out for him. Craig had extra gear in the van.



The instruction and rescue services that Craig and Jason provided were top notch. We were taught various skills, such as how to cross eddylines and how to ferry. One of the most basic things is to be loose at the hips, letting the upper and lower body move independently. Craig reminded us of this in the rapids by yelling, "bobblehead!" They briefed us constantly on upcoming features and how to handle them. When we fell in, they were on us in seconds. We sang songs and told jokes. They tried to train some of my sea kayaking behaviors out of me, specifically any kind of backing strokes. It seems river kayakers do best with forward strokes.

Certainly, I found my high brace tended to be flung in off the forward end of the boat, as in "I'm falling into a hole behind me but that water is really, really cold and I'm determined not to go in!" It was like reaching for the water on the upside to pull up on. Strangely, it worked every time. But wow was I tired at the end! And yeah, you've figured out I don't have a "combat roll"!

Jason went ahead at the S-bend to take photos of us bouncing through the high waves in there. Because I was last, I didn't get a picture, but that's OK. There were two swimmers in by that time and Jason and Craig were hustling to gather them up. The day before, we had all made it though upright, which was really something.

We discovered a few new uses for gear. For example those towing pigtails with carabiners that some of us have on our PFDs work great for towing a plastic kayak over snow. Sure beats carrying the thing! And plastic river kayaks make good toboggans, especially when there is water at the bottom of the hill!



All in all, it was a beautifully sunny weekend with good times had by all. We thawed and re-hydrated at Craig's Brewpub (different Craig J) afterwards, and were invited to come along on any future Kindred Spirit river runs at no charge. Craig calls it "auditing."

Another river course could be held this season if there are club members interested in signing up. Check out Kindred Spirit on Facebook, or at kindredspiritkayak.com.

Marianne West

Chemainus Delta Exploration - Mark III

Some 15 years ago, I took my first trip down to the Chemainus River delta. It was one of my first flatwater paddles with the Club, and I knew very little about paddling apart from flatwater. The trip leaders at the time didn't seem to think this was a problem and we put in at the last bridge over the river, which wasn't running too rapidly. We nosed up a wee stretch while others were launching, came to a riffle and promptly capsized. Back to that car to change clothes and off we went, considerably more carefully. Not an auspicious start but the delta area with its rock ridges interspersed with swampy fields and creeks and the logjams where the arms of the delta split stayed in my mind.

The next time I went to the delta, I was leading the trip and thought I'd follow the same route. This time the river was a lot higher and faster, and in retrospect, it was probably a bit risky. But we got down without mishap and had time to explore some of the winding creeks at the foot of the delta. A very wet day as I recall. The third trip, I decided to avoid the river approach and to paddle down from Chemainus, going up one arm of the delta behind Mainguy Island and down one of the others. This worked well although there were some interesting moments heading upstream against a strong current, and the final stretch into Crofton was testing with a SE wind making waves in Osborne Bay.

This time, the tide tables showed high water almost all day on Saturday, January 10 so we wouldn't have to worry about being left high and dry. On the other hand, the forecast was for 20-knot SE winds which would make paddling challenging. And this is trip with no good intermediate take-out spots. But nothing ventured, nothing gained, and the five tandems set off from the Crofton ferry ramp. It was damp but not raining as we set off, with little wind round the Crofton Timber West mill site and into the bay between the delta and Shoal Islands. This bay is very shallow. At low tide it is all mud, and even with a tide height over 3 metres, we were touching bottom at many points.

We found a tongue of water leading inland with some current so followed it up. It turned out to be Bonsall Creek, which I'd often seen from the road, but did not appear to offer much in the way of paddling. But with the high tide, we paddled up almost to the road, passed some dead salmon, houses on the Indian Reserve land and some quite attractive fields. A return trip down the creek by another arm took us past a big oak with three eagles perched on its

branches and, after a couple of dead ends, down to the bay again. A short portage over grass saved us 15 minutes of paddling and lead us to the nearest branch of the Chemainus River. Again, a short carry over 10 metres of grass took us into the channel and we headed upstream. Thanks to the recent rains and melting snow, the river was moving guite fast, and not all of the group were comfortable in moving water, especially as the snags and sweepers began to appear. We got to within sight of the main channel, from whence the route to Mainguy Island started, but the mouth of our arm was blocked by logs. The alternative of bushwhacking a portage trail was not attractive and the weather was darkening. So we decided to turn back and leave the delta to the swans, ducks and mergansers - and a few hunters, no doubt. We'd seen some dilapidated hides and heard some gun shots but nothing near at hand. Dan and Karen, with bright orange toques, were elected as lead boat should hunters appear to be near.

The paddle back was in steady rain and increasing wind. The last section, from the mill bridge to the ferry dock was lumpy and disturbed, with irregular waves reflected from big barges and the shore. The presence of a moving tug boat and the loud whistle from a container vessel moored by the mill did not add to our sense of comfort. But we all made it after 40+ minutes of hard paddling, some boats shipping water when a particularly large or irregular wave hit the bow. On shore, the Brass Bell pub called its siren song of hot chocolate, tea, coffee, and for some, beer! We'd been on the go about five hours. I keep hoping for a dry and sunny trip to the delta but given the need for high tides and the occurrence of such only in December/January and May/June, when other courses tend to eat up the weekends, I guess I'll have to accept the rain and wind as likely companions.

Thanks to Susan and Bon, Karen and Dan, Joy and Andre, Laurie and Dave, and my stalwart bowman, Dwight for a friendly and entertaining trip.

Alan Thomson

For Sale

President single, 13 foot fiberglass kayak. Includes sprayskirt and paddle.

> Contact Kelly Quinn at kellyqui4@yahoo.com or (250)382-5035

> > Asking \$500.00

27th YEAR VCKC PADDLE FOR THE KIDS LIVES ON!!

This special voyageur canoe event is our club's big fundraiser on behalf of the Lions Society of B.C. The event raises money to assist in the funding of programs for kids with disabilities. Its special aim is to support Easter Seals Camp Shawnigan where the children can safely experience the fun of camping and water sports.

In the last 26 years, the membership of VCKC have raised over \$200,000 which has contributed hugely to our clubs very high standing in our community.

In past years, club members have paddled voyageur canoes to Port Angeles, Washington and back. Unless an escort boat or boats can be found to take us safely to Port Angeles, this year's paddle will go from Victoria to Sidney and back on Saturday, March 28 (weather permitting). We'll set off at 6:30 am and finish around 5:00 pm back at our club house.

It's a fun day and you do not have to paddle the whole distance as we paddle in shifts of approximately 1.5 hours. The Victoria Marine and Rescue Society are still willing to support us with an 18 person Zodiac for safety and crew changes. The Lions Society will provide a bus to pick up and drop off crews. The Sidney Lion's may provide refreshments in Sidney and a Pot Luck Feast will be a waiting at the clubhouse to celebrate the return.

This is a wonderful cause and the club needs everyone's support to encourage family and friends to make a pledge on the behalf of VCKC to the Lion's Society of B.C. for Kids with Disabilities. Donations over \$25.00 are tax deductible.

Training begins on Sunday, February 1, from VCKC at 8:30 am with a welcome and briefing followed

by a "getting to know you paddle" to and around the outer harbor to get rid of a few toxins before stopping at Spinnakers for lunch and refreshments.

For the remainder of the Sunday training practices meet at 9:00 am at VCKC and car pooling will be organized.

This is the schedule of training paddles:

Feb. 8	Sooke (Bring lunch)
Feb.15	Brentwood Bay - Todd Inlet (Bring lunch)
Feb.22	Maple Bay - Cowichan River (Bring Lunch)
March 1	Pat Bay to Sidney (Bring Lunch)
March 8	Nanaimo - Nanaimo River - Pipers Lagoon (Bring Lunch)
March 15	Sidney - Portland Island - Rum Island (Bring Lunch)
March 22	Thetis - Kuper Islands (Lunch at

Thetis Island Pub)

March 28 Victoria to Sidney Return

Note:

- * You don't have to make every practice but you should try and make at least two, depending on your experience and physical condition.
- * Don't forget to bring: rubber or water friendly boots, paddle, life jacket, rain gear, water and a change of clothes in a water tight container (dry bag).
- * Clothes consisting of different weights of fleece or wool covered by a Gore Tex Jacket is a good combination. NO COTTON PLEASE!!

For further information or to sign up contact, Don Munroe voyageurguy@shaw.ca or 250-385-2268



Trips - Kayaking

Kayak trips for February are under construction. Emails will be sent to the kayak membership at a later date.

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

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

Practice Time at Crystal Pool

Date: Sat, Feb 7

Location + Time: Crystal Pool - 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm.

Cost: \$15

Come out and practice your skills at Crystal Pool with fellow VCKC members. Space is limited to 18 members. Pre-registration is required by Sunday February 1.

Crystal Pool is located at 2275 Quadra Street. Entrance is from the East side by Central Park (Queens Ave).

Paddle Canada Flatwater (Introduction to Kayaking)

Dates: February 21 + 22

Location + Time: Crystal Pool - Sat 3:30 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

Space is limited to 6 members, so don't delay! Please register for these courses or workshops with Patti Stevens at pattilou_333@yahoo.com.

Canoeing Flatwater Trips

Saturday, February 7 Sunday, February 22

Destinations will depend on wind, but options include Maple Bay to Cowichan Bay or Vesuvius (Saltspring); Shawnigan Lake; and the Somenos Lake/Richards Creek paddle if there is enough water. Suggestions of other trips you'd like to do are welcome.

E-mail notices will be sent out to all canoe program paddlers roughly a week prior to the trip as a reminder. Sign-up is expected by the Thursday before the paddling day.

Participants should have taken and passed the <u>RCABC</u> Lakewater Level I tandem course. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the trip leader but will depend on the strength of the group and on the location of the planned trip.

Unless otherwise specified, all trips start by meeting at the Clubhouse parking lot at 9 am. The aim is always to have all participants back at the parking lot by 5 pm at the latest. At this time of year, return time is likely to be earlier.

Participants should be dressed appropriately for the forecast weather (call 250-363-6717 or look up the Environment Canada forecast on the web) and, if the trip is to be on the ocean, check the time of the tides and currents. It is helpful to bring your own charts or maps so that you can be self-sufficient if necessary.

Alan Thomson

Moving Water Trips

Saturday, February 14 Friday, February 27 Saturday, March 14 Sunday, March 22 Saturday, April 11 Friday, April 24 Sat. & Sun. May 2 & 3

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 8:30 am 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.

May 2 & 3 Lake to Bay VIII (Our annual Cowichan River run with Friday and Saturday evening camping at the Stoltz group site.)

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

To the President, Directors and all members of VCKC

Thank you Linda for your kind remarks in the December newsletter and to all who gave me such a flood of compliments at the more recent Annual General Meeting. It really has been our privilege to maintain fitness objectives for as long as possible through membership in the VCKC. The boating opportunities were exceptional for the price and we soon discovered that the social opportunities were priceless too.

While our time was engaged mostly by outrigger, and dragonboat events, I personally will have fond memories of two years of Voyageur training and one almost complete trip to Port Angeles and return. Thank you Don Munroe! But I found that there were many aspects of Club activities, other than paddling, where I could contribute in a variety of ways from wielding a paint brush, to recruiting new dragonboaters and creating a few photographic essays and albums for club programs. My rewards for the latter have been many but none more pleasant than the compliments received from you all along the way and, in particular, to have been awarded the coveted Ron Williams "Grey Heron" brass sculpture by the Outrigger Program members

Thank you. May you all have a great boating year in 2009. We will continue to be interested spectators at your events!

Lloyd Skaalen and Francoise Brunet



New Year's Day Paddle (Photos: Wendy Clapp)













Course Report Flatwater Kayaking I

Dorothea asked for volunteers to write about their impressions on their experience in the flat water kayak course offered January 10 and 11. Several times in my life I have been told that I shouldn't go to meetings because I keep volunteering and I have enough to do! Well I volunteered again!

I went into the course with my eyes on a third hand Perception kayak with all the bells and whistles (nearly) thinking that I would buy it once I had the taken the course.

Hmmm..... Some of us gathered at the clubhouse about an hour before the course started to obtain kayaks for the course. I actually arrived a little early (I am normally early for everything) and spent a little time gathering myself into the energy and spirit required for the course. I found my little time there was very generative and peaceful. Then Michel arrived and showed me the ropes for signing out equipment and ensuring there was a good fit for equipment. It turns out that it was a good thing that I brought my own - canoeing - PFD as the ones at the clubhouse were all too small. The first item goes on the shopping list - one PFD for kayaking.

We loaded the kayaks on the cars and then headed off to Crystal Pool and met up at the back door. There were six of us in the course - all excited. A few of us "connected" quite early in the course and I remember thinking that this is a good way to meet like minded people. We carried the kayaks in, got changed and the lessons began. Mike went over the basic kayak anatomy and then started on the road to getting us in the water. As a canoer (is there such a word?) I was not used to being so low in the water but eventually I was getting the hang of the rolls, exits and rescues. It's amazing how much one can recall from swimming lessons oh so long ago - talk to the rescuee, tell them what you are doing, etc. At some point during the lesson, Michel was asked about wetsuits - or more specifically - the lack thereof. Layers, layers and more layers. Okay, I got the hint - one wetsuit on the shopping list - with booties.

One thought that I had was: "This is okay in the pool water - what happens when we get to the Gorge?" I was going to find out.

The next day was a little damp but not really raining. We met at the clubhouse to gather at 0930 hours and then went through the mandatories for outings on the water - PFD, Bailing device, rope,

whistle (or some sort of reliable hailing device) - more goes on the shopping list - different paddle types and how to hold the paddle.

Then we got into the kayaks - after another anatomy course - more explicit this time though. Hmm ... this wasn't so bad. The worst part was walking into the water with my long underwear, fleece, rain pants, wool socks and sandals. Once in the water, we worked through several different techniques and then followed the duck. This was a challenge for me as I was not used to working the hips but I tried to get there. Then we followed Dorothea by paddling backwards down the newly opened channel in the Kinsmen Gorge Park.

A couple of us were getting tired then and we decided to head back to the clubhouse for lunch. When I attempted to get out of the Kayak, I reversed my holding hands and feet - the paddle was out to the left and I moved my right leg out of the kayak first. In I went - okay, the wetsuit and booties definitely go on the list. It wasn't as bad as it could be but it was still cold.

After lunch, we finished off by getting back in and practicing our moves a little more while Michel worked with individuals practicing a low brace. I know I got wet again but for the life of me I can't remember how. At the end of the day, one of the last thoughts I had at the session was: "Okay, I know I have a lot to learn about kayaking. Don't rush, there will be many other second and third hand kayaks out there in the market. Get your warm gear first. This is much more important!"

I also made a connection with one of the other students and we agreed that we would get together once the weather started warming up to practice the skills we'd learned. I'm looking forward to it.

Thanks to Michel and Dorothea for a course well taught!

Ted Weick New VCKC member



VCKC Executive

President		Voyageur Program	
Linda Thomson	592-4170	Don Munroe	385-2268
Vice President		Marathon Canoe Program	
_Bon Lee	477-1381	Ron Williams	380-7496
Treasurer		Education, Safety &	
Sharron Larusson	478-2981	Standards	
Secretary		Doug Linton	727-0216
Diane Nishimura	383-3080	Membership	
		Carolyn Rattray	386-9144
Past President		Clubhouse & Grounds	
Mile Petrovic	733-2013	Sandy Rattray	386-9144
		Directors-at-Large	
Program Directors		Jack Louie	598-1569
Canoe Program		Maris Ratel	592-7082
Joy Newham	385-5876	Muriel Johnson	391-0560
Sea Kayak Program		Mavis Pilar	857-9564
Vacant		Executive Volunteer	
Dragon Boat Program		Positions	
Mike Fox	391-0160	Mavis Pilar (Soc.Coord.)	857-9564
Outrigger Program		Harold Gillis (Newsletter)	598-9488
Keith Larusson	478-2981	Dave Whitehead (Boat &	507-0271
		Locker Storage)	

VCKC Calendar of Events <u>Click Here</u>

