



# Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club

## Newsletter

February 2019

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

### Dates to Remember

- February 5<sup>th</sup> General meeting – Garth Irwin presenter
- February 6<sup>th</sup> – Making a Greenland Paddle with Brian Mallory
- February 9<sup>th</sup> Kayak Meeting & paddle
- February 10<sup>th</sup> Demo Day for PFTK
- February 19<sup>th</sup> Canoe Meeting
- February 23<sup>rd</sup> Lakewater 1 Course
- February 24<sup>th</sup> PFTK Kick Off Breakfast
- March 30<sup>th</sup> **Peninsula Paddle for the Kids**
- April 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> **Wake Up the Gorge**

*Please check website for details of events*

### President's Message



The new executive is settling into their roles, many new faces. I would like to thank the outgoing members for their service. It is these volunteers that keep the club operating so we can enjoy our paddling. Thank you, **David Dorosz** for serving the canoe program, **Paula Gough** and **Kim Capson** for serving the dragon boat program, **Linda Hall** and **Roy Scully** for serving the kayak program, **Ryan Mader** for serving the marathon program, **Muriel Johnson** for looking after registration and membership files for these so many years, and **Arthur Caldecott** looking after our storage issues.

Not to worry, the club is still in capable hands. We thank those stepping up to continue the good service the club has enjoyed for its members for over fifty years.

Welcome **Louise de Montigny**, as canoe program director, **Jana Savage**, as dragon boat program director, **Karen Thrussel**, as kayak program director, **Bon Lee**, as marathon program director, **Debi LaHaise** (Membership Director) looking after registration and membership, **Ellie James** as director at large to share her expertise in all things paddling, and last in line but dearly loved, **Dan Walker** (Storage Director), heads up supervision of our storage issues. Be sure to greet the new crew with a welcoming smile and those that have served, a smile of appreciation.

At our first executive meeting we also reappointed **Susan Logan** as newsletter editor and **Arthur Caldecott** as web master. Thank you both for continuing to help us in these areas.

Daffodils are starting to poke up. I am starting to think of the new paddling season and so are many others. Be sure to check the calendar to see the dates of coming club activities. Canoe courses are currently being planned, races on the Gorge are being set, the Big Canoe fund raising for Easter Seals, is getting ready to start very shortly. All this to say, don't get left behind or miss some fun. Check the calendar and if something is of interest be sure and contact the program director for more information.

I am excited to see the presentation at **our February 5<sup>th</sup> meeting from Garth Irwin**. Garth is currently an Instructor at Pearson College. He began his paddling at VCKC. He went on to do some amazing trips such as to Alaska and back. Working at Pearson College, he makes time to share his love of paddling with students from around the world. Pearson College students have been seen around the club house more in the last year. Come out and see how VCKC and Pearson College are working together to raise up younger paddling enthusiasts.

2019 looks to be a great year. More news next month.

PS if you have some great news the club needs to hear about, contact Susan at [newsletter@vckc.ca](mailto:newsletter@vckc.ca)

Keep Paddling

~Tim Marks, President VCKC

## Big Canoe News



The start of Paddle for the Kids (PFTK) is coming up next month. This event has been going strong and is in its 38th year!

Shannon Bernays from Easter Seals, Lions Society for Children with Disabilities will speak to our group in February at one of our PFTK dates. PFTK is a major fundraiser for Easter Seals. Thank you to everyone for all of your fundraising efforts in the past. We hope to raise money for this worthy cause again this year. Please consider ways of raising money for this cause. There will be details on how to give funds to this charity in the February newsletter.

PFTK is also a weekly paddle in big canoes open to all paddlers to enjoy some pre-season paddling fitness and opportunity to enjoy each other's company. We hope to see you out for this VCKC community event!

Tentative plan depending on weather:

- Feb 10 - **9:30am start:** demo day - non club members welcome
- No paddle for Family Day weekend holiday

### All following dates meet at VCKC 8:15am

- Feb 24 - Victoria Harbour/capsize Demo/kick off Breakfast
- Mar 3 - Sooke Basin
- Mar 10 - Sidney/Portland Island
- Mar 17 - Maple Bay/Genoa Bay
- Mar 24 - Esquimalt Lagoon/Pedder Bay
- All day starting around 6am with potluck at the end of the paddle the big event!
- Mar 30 - Peninsula Paddle for the Kids

### **Volunteers are needed to assist with the Kickoff event Sunday February 24**

Any questions contact Mary Marks, Voyageur Program Director [voyageur@vckc.ca](mailto:voyageur@vckc.ca)

~ Mary Marks, Big Canoe Director  
[voyageur@vckc.ca](mailto:voyageur@vckc.ca)

## Canoe Program Update

I begin my tenure as the new Canoe Program Director by giving a huge thank you to David Dorosz for his outstanding directorship of the Canoe Program for the past 3 years that has contributed so much to making VCKC such a great club!

By the time you read this newsletter, I will have retired from my 28-year career as a Forest Research Scientist with the Provincial Government. As a researcher, I have seen the importance, need for and value of knowledge transfer and extension of information to younger staff. In a similar way, the continued success of VCKC, requires that younger members be encouraged to build their skills and confidence in paddling the sometimes challenging lakes, rivers and oceans around Victoria and to take on a leadership role for the next generation of paddlers. This transfer of knowledge from our master paddlers is a goal of my new year on the VCKC executive.

This spring, our excellent canoe instructors will provide a full slate of courses starting with

- Lakewater 1 on Saturday, February 23 (sign-up is now available on-line).
- Moving Water 1 course will be scheduled sometime before the annual 'Running of the Cow', the weekend paddle down the Cowichan River that promises to be great fun.

Check the calendar in the coming weeks and be sure to sign up early to secure your spot for your next course.

As well, we will be starting a regular canoe meeting on the third Tuesdays of the month, starting February 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm, where we can hear about and learn how to paddle the waters locally, provincially, and across our great country. Come out and get to know your fellow paddling-enthusiasts!

I look forward to an exciting and fun-filled year and hope that you take advantage of all that our wonderful club has to offer.

~ Louise de Montigny, Canoe Director

## Dragon Boat Program Update

VCKC Dragon Boat Program eagerly awaits the arrival of our exciting new purchase, a new Millenium Dragon Boat! The order has been placed, and the boat will arrive just in time for the start of our 2019 Season.



For those interested in competing on our dragon boat team this year please send a note to [dragonboat@vckc.ca](mailto:dragonboat@vckc.ca) so you're on our contact list for this season. Stay tuned for the announcement of "Kick-off" Meeting (February) and "Learn to Paddle" sessions (March) dates soon. No experience? No Problem! You just need a positive attitude, willingness to learn and desire to compete (race) and have fun with a great team!

Experienced coaching and/or steering, or interested in learning? We want to hear from you too!

Typically we practice twice weekly and will participate in an estimated 4-5 festivals (racing events) throughout the season (most local, one in Nanaimo).

~ Jana Savage, Dragon Boat Director

## Kayak Program Update

I am your new Kayak Program Director for 2019, Karen Thrussell. Though I am a fairly new member of the club and Victoria resident (since July 2017), I am very excited to be representing the VCKC kayak program over the next year. Last year I joined the [BC Marine Trails](#) and recently became a member of their executive accepting the role of Volunteer Coordinator. I view my roles with both VCKC and BC Marine Trails as intertwined, giving me not only an incredible opportunity to become more involved in the paddling community on a personal level but hopefully to bring the VCKC kayaking program along for the ride.



Saturday, January 12<sup>th</sup> we held the first kayak program meeting of the year to discuss those ideas and more. Thanks to all who attended the meeting. We had a beautiful day for a paddle in the Gorge following the meeting where I had the opportunity to get to better know some of our members.

Over the past few weeks I've been making connections and trying move forward with implementing some of the many great ideas that were generated last fall. Check your email next week. I will be sending a questionnaire about your training needs. Please let me know what courses you are interested in so we can make sure we have enough trainers to deliver.

### **Don't forget to mark these dates on your calendar!**

- **Saturday practice sessions 12pm to 2pm** will be added to the VCKC calendar as an ongoing event through February and March. These sessions are intended to give club members a chance to get to know one another but also to practice the skills they have learned through training in a safe group setting. **Note** there will not always be a "leader" or trained instructor present however we are planning to use these session times occasionally to hold skills clinics as well.
- **Wednesday February 6<sup>th</sup> 7pm to 9pm** – Brian Mallory has offered to share his knowledge and expertise on how to make a Greenland Paddle. Come out and learn about that skinny wooden stick that some claim is the best way to get from point A to point B in a kayak. Brian has kindly offered post clinic coaching sessions to those who are interested in making their own.
- **Saturday February 9<sup>th</sup> 11am** will be the next kayak program meeting followed by a group paddle for anyone interested. Come out and hear more about the plans for the rest of the year.
- **Saturday March 9<sup>th</sup> 12:00PM to 2PM** following a kayak program meeting, Instructors Brian Mallory and Linda Hall will hold a kayak clinic to practice wet exits and re-entry in cold water. This may not be one anyone's top 5 bucket list activities, but it is an important experience for all those who paddle the chilly waters on the BC coast. Better to do it in protected waters than get caught unprepared in open water.

If you plan to borrow a club kayak for these in the water sessions, you need reserve one through Linda Hall at [kayakbooking@vckc.ca](mailto:kayakbooking@vckc.ca). You also need to make sure you have a partner to practice (find someone using the Paddle Partners list – an updated version will be sent out this week. If you would like your name included in the list, please send a quick email to [kayak@vckc.ca](mailto:kayak@vckc.ca)

For those wanting paddle experiences off the Gorge, we will be planning some day trip and possibly multi-day trips in the warmer months. As well, the canoe program has welcomed kayakers to their Flatwater Paddles.



Don't forget, you are welcome to send in photos and stories for the newsletter as well. You can send them directly to the Susan our Newsletter editor at [newsletter@vckc.ca](mailto:newsletter@vckc.ca) . The deadline for submissions each month is normally the third weekend of the month.

Other fun events and opportunities are in the planning stages. Be sure to attend the monthly meetings to learn more and to become involved in a great paddling year ahead!

~ Karen Thrussell, Kayak Director

## Outrigger Update

**Wake Up The Gorge** is scheduled for April 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. Further details to come in the next newsletter. If you are interested in volunteering contact Tony [here](#)

~ Tony Hopkin

## Safety at VCKC

I shot myself in the foot so to speak at the Annual Meeting when I moved the Directors' Reports be received as printed to save time as the meeting was running late. I had hoped to introduce members to the Incident reporting process. Last year I revised the Incident Reporting process. Yes, we have in our Policies and Procedures an Incident Report section. Please look at it. Although it is buried in the Policies and Procedures you can go to it directly as follows. Log in on our VCKC website, go to the Documents page and click on Report Incident. [\(click here\)](#) If we know what went wrong we have a chance of changing procedures or alerting members to a possible problem. Please take a look.

~ Ken Gibbard, Education, Standards & Safety Director

## Tim Trip 2019 (The Big Canoe Summer Adventure) Update



**The VCKC Big Canoe group heading to Brooks Peninsula** has really come together quickly. The trip is oversubscribed and has a wait list. I find the enthusiastic response to this year's trip very exciting, but also, telling people the trip is full is very hard. If there is any movement on the wait list, I will be quick to let the people interested know immediately.

Going over the charts and planning camp spots for such a large group has me stressing a little but it is bringing back so many great memories of the place.

A great place for anyone interested in getting involved with Big Canoes is the upcoming **Paddle For The Kids**.

Look for more information elsewhere in this newsletter and contact Mary for details.

Cheers

~ Tim

## Somenos Lake Trip January 2019



A new year and some people wanted to get out on a paddling trip. January is a good time to paddle Somenos Lake and Richards Creek – high water levels, no crossings, interesting bird life and generally sheltered waters. The Club has been running trips on Somenos Lake for at least 15 years now, maybe more. Around New Year in 2003 or 4, Tom Staebell, Dan Walker and Alan Thomson paddled and poled up the Cowichan River to the mouth of Somenos Creek and then up the creek to the lake. We went no further that day but knowing the creek could be safely paddled by flatwater canoeists led to the first trip. That group paddled up Richards Creek to the fields below Richards Trail, back to the lake and down Somenos Creek to the Cowichan River and return. Since then,

we have paddled this trip every year, usually in January, when the water levels are high and offer the best chance of getting far across the fields. The trip down to the creek to the Cowichan River has not been possible for the last 5 years, due to the spread of *Elodea Canadensis*, a freshwater weed. It forms mats that can't be penetrated by paddles.

This year's trip had 15 paddlers in 6 canoes and 3 kayaks. We were on the water by 10.10 and headed directly up Richards Creek because of forecast stronger northerly winds after noon. Conditions were very good – the lake level was 6.3 metres, there was no wind and the mist that we'd seen on the approach had burned off. The route up Richards Creek went easily, everyone paddling at an easy pace and mixing and matching as topics for discussion came up.

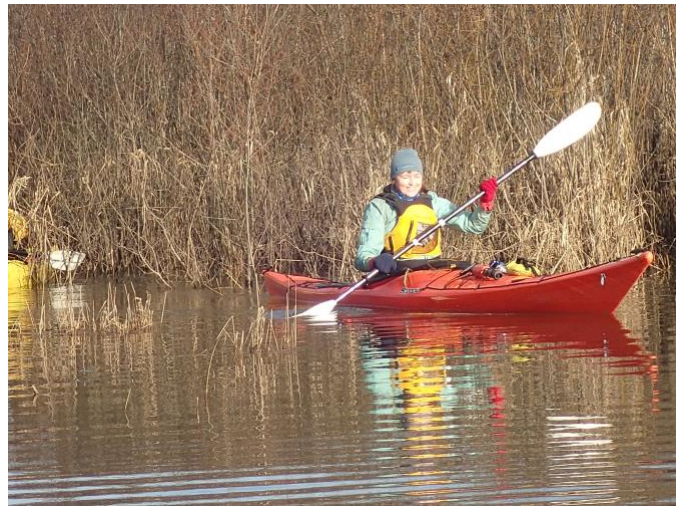
The water level was lower than last year's trip, but high enough to let us get onto the fields to the west side of the hollow below Mount Richards. We reached the furthest point in a little over 1 hour, taking side trips to check where there might be leads into further fields. We turned back about 11.30 as the north wind started to strengthen and it helped us back down to the lake in a little over half an hour. [I looked at the municipality's map of the area when I got home and see that there is an eastern branch of Richards Creek that leads round to Crofton Lake. I doubt that this will ever be paddle-able, but it might be worth exploring from the Crofton Lake end on foot if not by boat.]



Lunch was taken in the woods on the east side of the lake, opposite the launch ramp. Our usual landing spot had been usurped by a fallen conifer, but there was space for the 9 boats nearby. The wind was cooler and there were small waves appearing on the surface of the lake, but by the time we'd eaten, it had settled down to a quite manageable level, better than the forecast. Louise and Raoul headed back to the ramp "important Club work to do" was the proffered reason, and the 8 remaining boats headed down to Somenos Creek. We found the weed had spread right up to the lake and progress even 100 feet downstream was impossible. Let's hope it doesn't get up into Richards Creek in years to come. So we turned back and continued to follow the lake shore in a clockwise direction, back towards the launch point.

About half way back to the vehicles, Linda and Dorothea turned sharp left into the marshy morass of brush and reeds that separate the lake from the highway and disappeared into the woods. Sounds of their progress were heard, but no cries of encouragement or despair. After waiting 5 minutes, Mike and Reyna, Jim and Pat and I decided to follow them; the other paddlers elected to head directly back – wise people.

Following the lead boat's path – broken branches, debris of twigs – we found our way to the viewing platform near Averill Creek and from there followed open stretches of water south and east, trying to find our way to the head of Somenos Creek or the lake itself again. Well, after about an hour of thrashing through bushes, following false leads, learning to paddle backwards through the brush and different boats exploring in different directions, we admitted defeat and headed back the way we'd come in – or at least tried to. It is surprising how similar one clump of bushes is to another and how quickly the clear path you thought you'd beaten on the way disappears without trace. We finally reached the vehicles at 3.45pm, a little over 5½ hours and 17kms of paddling since we had set out. The afternoon had been sunny and the wind had died down – perfect paddling weather again.



We saw swans, mallards, Canada geese and doubtless some other water fowl I didn't recognise. Some bald-headed eagles, a humming bird and many small birds in the brush. No signs of beaver at all – no gnawed twigs, no sign of a lodge or a dam. Maybe they have left the area for the time being. Pity they don't like the weed; it would be handy to have a natural control species.

All in all, a very good start to the flatwater paddling for 2019. Thanks to all those who turned out, some for the first time – Sandy, Carolyn, Dan, Karen, Louise, Raoul, Colin, Aubrey, Reyna, Mike, Pat, Jim, Dorothea and, of course, Linda.

~ Alan Thomson



The [BC Marine Trails \(BCMT\)](#) is a non-profit organization with a vision to have the entire B.C. coastline linked through marine routes and land sites for sustainable water-based public recreation. Check out the trail maps on their website.

VCKC's new Kayak Director, Karen Thrussell is the club's representative for BC Marine Trails. BC Marine Trails need your

help! Please review their short slide presentation here [SCR 5 min.pptx](#)

BCMT held their [Annual General Meeting](#) in Nanaimo on November 24, 2018 during which they presented their [Strategic Plan for 2019-2022](#). The meeting was followed by a great speaker, Rebecca Grim along with paddling partner Leonie Mahlke by Skype from Germany. These inspiring young paddlers who refer to their team as 'Paddling North – Voice of the Inside Passage', did a wonderful job of presenting their 2018 kayak trip from Salt Spring Island to Glacier Bay National Park in Alaska. Check out their incredible [story here](#).

~ Karen Thrussell



## Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	Feb 1	2
3	4	5 7:30 PM VCKC General Meeting	6 7:00 PM Making A Greenland Paddle	7	8	9 11:00 AM Kayak Meeting & Paddle
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 09 Feb 2019, 11:00 AM VCKC
Big Canoe Program - PFTK						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Big Canoe Program - PFTK						
		7:30 PM Canoe Meeting				Lakewater 1 Course
24	25	26	27	28	Mar 1	2
Big Canoe Program - PFTK						
8:00 AM PFTK Kickoff Event						

## Club Contact Information

### **Officers**

President	<a href="mailto:president@vckc.ca">president@vckc.ca</a>
Tim Marks	
Vice-president	<a href="mailto:vpresident@vckc.ca">vpresident@vckc.ca</a>
Kim Capson	
Treasurer	<a href="mailto:treasurer@vckc.ca">treasurer@vckc.ca</a>
Mark Sondheim	
Secretary	<a href="mailto:secretary@vckc.ca">secretary@vckc.ca</a>
Jean Chandler	
Past President	<a href="mailto:pastpres@vckc.ca">pastpres@vckc.ca</a>
Joe Boyd	

### **Program Directors**

Big Canoe Program	<a href="mailto:voyageur@vckc.ca">voyageur@vckc.ca</a>
Mary Marks	
Canoe Program	<a href="mailto:canoe@vckc.ca">canoe@vckc.ca</a>
Louise de Montigny	
Dragonboat Program	<a href="mailto:dragonboat@vckc.ca">dragonboat@vckc.ca</a>
Jana Savage Cain	
Kayak Program	<a href="mailto:kayak@vckc.ca">kayak@vckc.ca</a>
Karen Thrussell	
Outrigger Program	<a href="mailto:outrigger@vckc.ca">outrigger@vckc.ca</a>
Tony Hopkin	
Marathon Canoe Program	<a href="mailto:marathon@vckc.ca">marathon@vckc.ca</a>
Bon Lee	

### **Other Executive Positions**

Education, Standards & Safety	<a href="mailto:safety@vckc.ca">safety@vckc.ca</a>
Ken Gibbard	
Membership	<a href="mailto:membership@vckc.ca">membership@vckc.ca</a>
Debi LaHaise	
Clubhouse and Grounds	
(maintenance)	<a href="mailto:clubhouse@vckc.ca">clubhouse@vckc.ca</a>
Sandy Rattray	
Boat & Locker Storage	<a href="mailto:storage@vckc.ca">storage@vckc.ca</a>
Dan Walker	
Director at Large	
Susan Logan	<a href="mailto:director1@vckc.ca">director1@vckc.ca</a>
Ellie James	<a href="mailto:director2@vckc.ca">director2@vckc.ca</a>

### **Executive Appointed Positions**

Newsletter Editor	<a href="mailto:newsletter@vckc.ca">newsletter@vckc.ca</a>
Susan Logan	
Webmaster	<a href="mailto:webmaster@vckc.ca">webmaster@vckc.ca</a>
Arthur Caldicott	