



Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club

Newsletter

April 2019

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

Dates to Remember

- April 2nd **General Meeting**, Ellie is presenting "Padding the Lower Stikine"
- April 6th and 7th **Wake Up the Gorge**
- May 4th **Spring Cleanup**

Please check website for details of events and schedule of courses.

President's Message

Well, I hope everyone has enjoyed some sunny days paddling. It usually takes me a few days to sort out my warmer weather paddling outfit. Typically I can't really believe it will be warm and I am ridiculously overdressed. But doesn't it feel great?

By the time you read this, Paddle For The Kids will be just finishing up. The paddling is done but not to late donate. If every member donated \$10 or \$20 we would really be helping Camp Shawnigan on their reopening year.

<https://www.eastersealsbcy.ca/events/paddle-for-the-kids/>

Wake Up The Gorge, our big race weekend, is about ready to kick off. Thank you if you are volunteering. If you're not, drop by and checkout the action. (April 6-7)

Our Dragon Boaters are anxiously awaiting the new Dragon Boat. Maybe this is the year you want to join them. Lots of practice paddling and a few races thrown in to keep you focused. From what I have seen of the race weekends, there seems to be more fun than just racing.

The last general meeting had a great presentation where we could imagine what SUPs at VCKC would look like. I think it might look pretty cool. We have a couple of keen instructors offering to donate their time to offer courses. We will be pursuing this idea further in the next couple of months. You can send me an email if you have any thoughts on the subject (or maybe you just want to register for our first course).

Looks like it might be a short spring paddling season on the local rivers. But who really wants to pray for rain? There is usually enough to have a great weekend running the Cowichan River from Lake To Bay. (May 4-5) If you are interested be sure to check out the canoe program calendar. There is still time to take the required skill building courses.

This month's general meeting is a presentation by our very own "Super Star Tripper" Ellie James. She will be presenting a canoe trip on the Lower Stikine. This is a spectacular river and usually not particularly hard paddling.

Hope to see ya all soon, holding a paddle.

Cheers to All

~Tim Marks, President VCKC

VCKC Day Trip Project

Late last year, Chairman-elect Tim suggested to me that a collection of information about paddling day trips in the Victoria area would be a good thing for the Club to have. He noted that there had not been many Club-organised flatwater paddle trips over the past few years and providing written guides to some of the more popular ones might help potential trip leaders to take the plunge (not literally, of course) and lead trips. It is intended for use by canoeists, kayakers and voyageurs.

The project is starting up. Its scope is to document trips that can be paddled in a day anywhere in the South Island between Port Renfrew and Nanaimo, including some of the Gulf Islands that can be reached by ferry. It will cover only flatwater trips, whether on lakes or the ocean, not moving water/ river trips. A list of trips has been drawn up – over 100 to date – and the intent is to collect information on each trip over the next few years. Some of the basic information can be found in programs such as Google Maps and Google Earth, as well as the personal experience and knowledge of members, but important details cannot, for example how easy the put-in and take-out points are for our small boats (sand, rock, pebbles or boulders, etc.) and at what tide levels, whether there is plenty parking, if there are toilets nearby and such like. For this information, it is hoped that Club members will undertake the trip themselves, either as part of a Club trip or as a small group and collect the needed data.

A form has been developed to collect the information consistently and this, plus a list of some 20 local trips, will be sent out to all canoe and kayak program members asking for volunteers to collect the data. A short description of each trip – put in, take out, distance, possible current and tide factors as well as wind directions to look out for – has been written for each of the 20 trips, so paddlers can approach the task with more confidence. Once the information has come in and improvements made to the data collection form, the plan is to put the full list of possible trips on the website, along with the data collection form. Then members can collect the information for undocumented trips at any time that suits them, and these can be added to the list.

How much of the data reporting can be automated remains to be seen, and the work needed to make the trip information available to members indexed in different ways – by place, by distance from Victoria, by suitable and unsuitable wind directions, etc. – has yet to be worked out. It is also recognised that there are many access points along the coastline and members can design their own trips rather than sticking to those described in the Day Trip Project lists. To make this easier, a list of canoe/kayak accessible launch/take-out points is being gathered and will be available through the website.

If any Club member has a favourite trip, please tell me or your program director and we'll try to include it in the lists. And please volunteer to collect information on trips. This is best done by paddling the route, but information about put-ins and take-outs – access points – can almost always be gathered from land, so if you can't paddle the suggested trip, drive out to the shore and collect information about places you think could be used for putting a boat in the water.

Alan Thomson

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Big Canoe News

As this goes to print we will have almost wrapped up our 38th Paddle for the Kids and this being a Peninsula Paddle for the Kids if smaller numbers but hardly just the same as years before! We have had about 25 enthusiastic paddlers involved this year with three big canoes out consistently each week. We have put out our efforts to raise money for Easter Seals Camp Shawnigan! Our lunch for March 30th will be provided by BC Lions Central Saanich. Our boat escort will be several Search & Rescue groups, SARS. A huge thanks to all these organizations that lend their support to VCKC PPFTK! It is not too late to donate! Check this link for details: <https://www.eastersealsbcy.ca/events/paddle-for-the-kids/>

Here is an example of what we've been up to. Enjoy!!

March 17, 2019 - PPFTK - Race Rocks



Who is that man in black who traded his guitar for a paddle?

The shore seemed to be sliding by nicely as we paddled over the occasional whitecap but too my dismay, that little black and white tower in the distance just kept drifting out the Strait of Juan de Fuca. After an extended effort to catch up to the Runaway Race Rocks we were rewarded with a break, drifting past Eagles, Cormorants, Sea Lions, and even a Sea otter. I find the Table 1Tillicum with Tin in stern remote wildness of the area brings a special reward each time I am out there. The winter snows on Mt Baker and the Olympics only heightened the experience.

Our usual three canoes took off from Esquimalt lagoon about 10:15 after setting up a shuttle. Race Rocks has been a brutally long day in the past so the shuttle and takeout at Pedder Bay seemed like a good idea. We took a meandering shoreline to Witty's Lagoon. Our senior steers person, Ken, found a few more small passages along the foreshore to add to his long list of experiences. Witty's Lagoon was appreciated as one of the few available stops along the way, for a rest and snacks, and... From there we headed for Race Rocks.



Tillicum - Tim in stern, Phil B., Sandy, Andrew, Chark, France and Jayne.



*Munroe – Phil in stern, Barb, Dorothea, Cheri, Wayne and Shawnigan _
Maek in stern, Ken, Linda, Dominique, Deb and Joe*

To make this day even better, I will see if I can find some young athletes in training to help us load the Tillicum and Shawnigan. We will handle the Munroe.

~ Tim Marks



~ Mary Marks, Big Canoe Director
voyageur@vckc.ca

Canoe Program Update

Not long ago, I read a newspaper article that asked, “How privileged are you?” and provided a 12-point test to find out. Surprisingly (to me anyway), point number 11 of 12 was “You can paddle a canoe.” I can imagine, this being a Toronto newspaper, that paddling a canoe went hand in hand with summers spent at expensive camps or at the family cottage. How fortunate we are in Victoria, to belong to VCKC where dedicated volunteers teach canoeing skills for such a low cost and provide free practice opportunities to build skill and confidence with day trips in the area.

Our March Canoe Course schedule has been busy. The extra-early Lakewater 1 (Basic Tandem) course in February, was followed by Lakewater 2 (Basic Solo) and Lakewater 3 (Advanced Tandem) in March. The Lakewater course schedule repeats starting April 27th and with luck, the temperature should be much warmer than in February! Coming up is Moving Water 1 on April 14th and 28th for those who want to take their paddling skills to the river and in preparation for the super-fun, 2-day “Running of the Cow(ichan)” event on the first weekend of May. Also, just listed, is the Ocean Canoeing course where you can learn to manage typical sea conditions such as currents, tides

and weather on coastal waters; this course will prepare you to plan and paddle your own marine adventures. Be sure to sign up early for courses to avoid disappointment.



The first Eddy Hopper of the year was well attended, with 16 of us from VCKC and UVic ready to paddle the Cowichan River from Stolz down to Vimy. Despite residual snow on the riverbanks, the sun provided some much-appreciated warmth. At one point, Mother Nature had “changed the channel”, splitting the water volume into 2 channels and requiring a short portage over the resulting low water levels. Evidence of those strong winds we all experienced this winter was seen where a massive old tree lay across the river, requiring yet another short portage. The experience taught us that whatever your expectations may be, it is wise to always use caution when paddling rivers. Thanks to Rick Bryan and Dan Walker for their invaluable expertise!"

Our monthly Canoe Program Meeting, held the 3rd Tuesday of the month, was well attended. Alan Thomson provided more detail about the club's ambitious Day Trip Project (read Alan's update in this newsletter). Tim Marks presented stunning photos of the Brooks Peninsula trip as a teaser for this summer's Big Canoe trip and as incentive for others to try this one for themselves. For those who like to read, the club has a selection of paddle-friendly books available to borrow; this one, titled "Idleness, Water and a Canoe – Reflections on Paddling for Pleasure" by Jamie Benidickson starts '...the ingredients of a holiday in Canada...are idleness, water and a canoe' and goes on to discuss, among other topics, why apparently normal people paddle canoes and kayaks for pleasure!

With winter a distant memory, I hope you all get a chance to take advantage of the many wonderful opportunities VCKC has to offer – happy paddling!

~ Louise de Montigny, Canoe Director



Dragon Boat Program Update

VCKC Dragon Boat Program is excited to get underway in April. We have strung new pulley line back up at the dock and currently have our old boat and an outrigger on the line. Big thank you to Ryan Ovens for his assistance in getting that all set up, and to the helping hands that were able to come out to help us get the boat in the water. Learn to Paddle Sessions are underway, and our Women's Dragon Boat Team is currently in discussion about a Team Name for this Season. Practices will be Monday and Wednesday evenings with warm-up starting at 5:30pm. We're still accepting new team members, so please be in touch if you or someone you know is interested! We accept all paddling abilities from beginner to experienced, and we're a super fun social group. Look forward to more information about our team and activities as the season gets underway in future newsletters. Paddles Up!

~ Jana Savage, Dragon Boat Director



Kayak Program Update

A meeting of the kayak instructors and trip leaders occurred in February. The following are the results of that It is absolutely amazing how much work was done while I was away. For those who took over the reigns during my much-needed two-week vacation in the sun I am forever grateful that you kept the boat afloat over the next couple weeks while I recovered with the flu. Special thank you to Linda to hold the pen on all the communication, to Mike, Garth, Brian and Alan for delivering outstanding sessions as well as everyone else in the kayak program for your patience and dedication during my absence!

Wow! What a busy month it was. Where do I begin...

There has been a lot of interest in the Kayak Basic and Level 1 course. The next Basic course April 13th is full and there is currently a waitlist. The Level 1 courses scheduled in May and June are also both full, with a waitlist.

There was not a lot of uptake for the cold-water wet exits in the Gorge, not sure why?!? Why wouldn't you want to dump from your perfectly cozy cockpit into the freezing waters of the Gorge waterway? Well one brave soul did take Brian Mallory up on his offer to practice his wet exit and re-entry in cold water. Mike Teachman had this to say about it: "At the end of the paddle yesterday I practiced a cold water exit and re-entry. Brian was the rescuing kayaker. I wore paddle clothes that I would wear on a nice day (wetsuit bottom, polyester top, and wind shell). Overall, it wasn't too bad. I was likely only in the water for 5 minutes, tops. It helped a ton that Brian was quick with the assisted rescue. It reminded me that I need to ask any paddle partner if they are up-to-speed on assisting a re-entry!"

So really, why do you want to practice cold water exits in safe conditions? Because you want to know what to expect and the best way to experience it is in calm and controlled conditions. During the March 16th kayak meeting, Alan Thompson talked about cold water survival and recommended that everyone watch the Cold Water Bootcamp video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J1xohl3B4Uc>) and learn and understand the 1-10-1 principle (<http://www.coldwaterbootcamp.com>).



Alan was the guest speaker at the March 16th kayak meeting. It was attended by 12 to 15 participants. Alan presented on the trip inventory project - lots of interest and suggestions. April/May will be pilot months for volunteers to vet out select day trips and Beta test the data gathering form. A couple of people who took the Pearson Basic course talked about the day (great experience, pool session was appreciated, Garth and Travis were highly spoken of...more to come on this subject below). In the afternoon, a group of 8 kayakers joined Brian Mallory on a paddle in the Gorge. They paddled to the portage spot just after Admirals bridge and discussed how it would be described in a trip write-up.

Saving the best for last and a first for VCKC. In 2019 we have collaborated with member Garth Irwin who is a teacher and kayak instructor at Pearson College to deliver the VCKC Basic Kayak course. Kudos to Garth and Travis for delivery a hit program. Here is what a few of the class participants had to say about their experience:

"the course was a great introduction to kayaking. Garth and Travis really put on an excellent course, and the two students who helped them out were friendly, knowledgeable and helpful. It was great to have the pool to practice in all morning and get comfortable with wet exits and rescues. We also very much appreciated having use of the shower room, and the cafeteria for warming up, eating lunch and having our classroom session. After practicing paddle strokes in the inlet in the afternoon, I think all of us felt very confident by the end of a perfect learning day!"
Dorothea

"I was very fortunate to have happened to be a student, on a somewhat chilly morning at Pearson College to participate in a VCKC 'Basic Skills' course. An important note, this was so much more than a 'basic' experience, which all of us soon realized as most of us were already skilled with a kayak in various ways. Of course, we would all pass ... this was not the point! I suspect there are many VCKC long term members that would have greatly benefitted from Garth's EXCELLENT instruction.

He is a teacher at heart, and at every moment, he gave the smallest of practical detail of handling a kayak to life lessons of safety and sense, with a kayak on and off the water. Both Garth and Travis gave practical wet exits in the pool before we paired up to practice as they assisted and instructed us individually.

The brunch in the cafeteria was yummy, yet more filling, was the continued information sharing. Garth showed the various weather apps and uses (discussing winds, currents and tides) including sensible decisions to embark on a day's paddle. Allan's session last Saturday covered some of what Garth had covered.

The afternoon saw us transporting kayakers from the pool to the dock (most likely the biggest challenge of the day) and setting up with emergency gear and our warm clothing in a water sealed bag. Before entering the water, we all gathered around a nautical map of the area and discussed our afternoon paddle; possible stops along the way

(considering the tide), the wind, points of land references and a good estimate of time (nautical mile = kms = hours). Entering the kayak from the dock we exercised our lessons from the morning session.

As we kayaked to our destination beach stop, we practiced our posture doing the forward and backward strokes with individual attention and advice from both instructors. The points of reference on the map we discussed as we paddled. Arriving at our beach destination, we hung back in the bay as Garth demonstrated two exits from a kayak. We all then practiced these techniques. While in the bay we learned turning, sculling and edging, practicing for a while. Returning to the College we 'played' follow the leader, who maneuvered in, out, along the coast line using the strokes we had learned.

After exiting the kayaks from the dock and storing them we proceeded to get changed and meet Garth in the Cafe for coffee, muffins and the classroom portion of the day. This was a terrific session as most of the 'required' information had already been talked about during the day. So, Garth expanded the field to anything that was on our wish list. We could have been there for hours!!

My experience comes from fresh water kayaking and I want to gain knowledge and practical experience on seawater. There is so much to learn, and I would not hesitate to take another course from Garth, even if the title is Basic. I soaked up as much as I could, only wishing the day wouldn't end. It did and we all reluctantly left sometime after 5pm. Thank you." *Jane*

~ *Karen Thrussell*, Kayak Director

Marathon Update



Within our marathon program are some very talented paddlers. Here is a profile of one of the many, paddler/racer, Norm Macdonell.

Norm has been a VCKC club member on and off for 30+ years. He has paddled and raced in many parts of the world. Every few years he gets serious about racing and starts a regimented training schedule. 2019 is one of those years. His typical training week consist of 2-3

days of 3 hours of interval training and another 1-2 days of 4-5 hours distance training.

His focus this year is on 2 races.

His 1st will be the General Clinton "70 Miler (112.6 km)" endurance flat-water canoe race, now in its 56th year. The "70 Miler" follows the Susquehanna River, starting at Brookwood Point NY, north of Cooperstown on Otsego Lake and finishing in General Clinton Park in Bainbridge NY. This event is one of the "Triple Crown of Canoe Racing." May 26th is a Sprint Race. The sprint race is a warm up for the 70 miler that happens the next day and follows the last 11 miles of the 70 miler. May 27 is the main race, the 70 Miler with 3 portages. The elite paddlers will finish in just over 6:36 hour and recreational paddlers can sometimes expect a 12 to 13 hour paddle depending on river conditions.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38ghMgRkmUk> go to the 12 minute mark of the video for the exciting start of the race.

In August, Norm will be at the IVF Va'a World Distance Championship 2019 in Mooloolaba, Sunshine Coast Australia. IVF World Distance events are held every 2 years, offsetting years of the IVF World Sprints race. Norm went through a selection process in 2018 and is one of 20 paddlers representing Canada at this event. He will be racing in both OC6 and V1 canoes. V1 canoes are much like OC1 canoes, but longer (approx. 23') and without a rudder. Norm will be racing OC6 with the Master 50 crew – in Kamanu Canoes (25-30km race). His V1 race will be in the Master 60 – in Zulu Canoes (15-18km race).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2a-OU9a7Xjk>

Wish him luck if you see him on the water training.

~ Bon Lee, Marathon Director

Outrigger Update

A reminder that the dock area is to be left open for boat launching. Outriggers are not to be attached to the dock itself

At present we still have three boats on the water. One is tethered to the Dragon boat (DB) and will remain so until Wake Up the Gorge on April 6 (see photo above). This is courtesy of the work of Ryan Ovens, so thank him if you see him. It will likely be taken out of service after the race, as it needs repair. It needs some glass work, rigging, cleaning and refurbished iako's. I will be gathering people sometime in April for a work party and hope we can get a few folks out beyond the normal volunteers. After that we will likely maintain two boats at the club on the landing, and one at Caddy Bay, or vice versa.

I am looking into a third cart at the moment. It is also possible to maintain a boat tethered to the DB, but that might not prove convenient, and will require that the boat is removed and cleaned periodically to remove summer algae.

There will be a general outrigger meeting later in the spring to discuss paddling at Caddy Bay and other outrigger issues.

As always feel free to contact me, but please remember that we are a volunteer organization, so come to me with a potential solution to your request.

~ Anthony Hopkin, Outrigger Director

Reminder of VCKC Spring Habitat Policy

At this time of year when the bird wildlife is making nests and sitting on eggs, be vigilant about not disturbing the shores of the water where nests may be located. If there is sufficient water to paddle without disturbing the bottom, paddle slowly, quietly and stealthily to ensure the wildlife does not become startled by your passing. Below is the club habitat policy.

E. Procedures to be observed by the Paddling Programs

1. Habitat and Wildlife- Every effort shall be made at all times to avoid disturbing wildlife during club trips or when using club boats, especially in the upper Gorge waterways from November through December (salmon spawning season) and from March through June inclusive when herons are nesting in Cuthbert Holmes Park.

Avoid entering the waterways during these times.

2. Do not feed the wildlife.

3. Habitat should be left as found. When paddling the Gorge, enter the creeks and rivers only when water is deep enough to prevent boats and paddles from hitting the bottom. Do not turn boats longer than 20 feet around in the mudflats of Colquitz River. These boats are required to back out.

~ Jean Chandler

Clubhouse and Gorge Waterway Cleanup

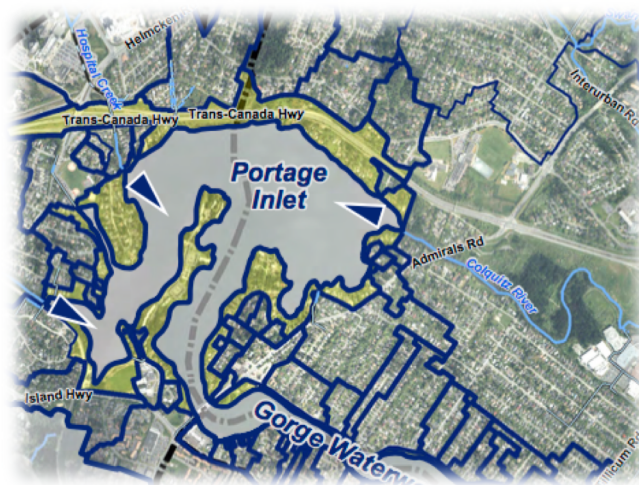
When: Sat, May 4

Time: 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Please come on out and help to clean up the clubhouse and the Gorge Waterway. For the club cleanup please bring whatever garden tools or house cleaning stuff that you are able to.

The paddling group will be out in the voyageur canoes – it's a messy job so wear appropriate clothing. We are so fortunate to have such a lovely location for our club so please try to spare an hour or two to help keep it looking good.

~ Sand



Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	Apr 1	2 7:30 PM General Meeting	3	4 6:30 PM Gorge Community Association AGM	5 BC Canoe Festival (Hope, BC) 9:00 AM Big Canoe Program - Shoreline Middle School	6 2019 Wake Up the Gorge
7 BC Canoe Festival (Hope, BC) 2019 Wake Up the Gorge	8	9	10	11	12	13 8:00 AM Sea Kayak Basic Skills Course
14 8:00 AM Canoe Moving Water 1 - Tandem	15 9:00 AM Big Canoe Program - Shoreline Middle School	16 7:30 PM Canoe Program Meeting	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 8:30 AM Canoe Lakewater 1 - Basic Tandem
28 8:00 AM Canoe Moving Water 1 - Tandem	29 9:00 AM Big Canoe Program - Shoreline Middle School	30	May 1	2	3	4 VCKC clubhouse and grounds cleanup

Club Contact Information

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