



Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club

Newsletter

February 2020

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

- February 9th – PFTK Breakfast and Kickoff Event
- February 10 – Presentation Baffin Island to Greenland
- February 23- March 22 – PFTK weekly outings
- March 28 PPFTK

Be sure to check the website for information on the various courses and activities planned !!!

President's Message

We are already well into another decade. I am looking forward to writing 2020 this year. It seems like a cool number.



For VCKC the January AGM is always very important ,and this year was no exception. Even standing room was hard to find. The new executive will be listed below. Some shuffled positions, some new faces, and heaps of thanks for the service provided by those stepping down. Be sure to thank Sandy for many years responsible for house and grounds and Bon for his leadership with the Marathon program this past year. He has held many responsibilities within the club. I hope after a little rest, we might see him on the executive again. Karen has done an admirable job promoting Kayak this past year and we wish her all the best in her move to Protection Island. (I thought I was living the island life). Ken is stepping back from Safety Director where he was busy at times over the recent years. We appreciated his experience and sound judgment. I am hoping to be on the board in a couple of years and have him return when he is ninety. You deserve the rest, Ken, your endless energy is a real inspiration.

Last year the executive had started a few initiatives that could make significant long term changes to the club. I believe, changes that will better serve the next generation coming into the club. Starting a SUP program is one initiative. Seven boards are on their way. (Make sure you avail yourself of SUP paddling this spring.)

As homeownership becomes financially unattainable, the storage of personal paddling craft becomes an increasing problem. I have started a conversation about how the club provide access to club equipment that will better meet the needs of the membership. There are a variety of opinions, some members are concerned we might make access too difficult and therefore not be very helpful to the membership. Others are concerned the club will make it too easy to use club equipment and it will be damaged, or personal safety put at risk. This conversation should be encouraged. A committee will be struck to bring forward some recommendations, hopefully before next summer.

Cleaning up and decluttering of the club house is phase two of the facilities improvements that were started last year (with the new gate and boat storage changes in the compound). Inside the club house, it is hoped, we can declutter and update the main floor to better meet the needs of the membership and showcase the current activities of the club. (Probably some paint and carpentry to finish a bit of door trim will also be required.) Downstairs, some storage juggling will hopefully make room for seven new SUP boards.

Joe Boyd has been spearheading an effort to improve (make easier) the use of our big boats, primarily OC6s. We were planning on finishing the compound before tackling this, another large project. The design has not been settled and even at the December executive meeting, two new options were presented. The goal is a trouble free, low maintenance storage, with an easy launch for our OC6s and maintain easy access to our Dragon Boats. All this with an affordable price. Presently, we have favor with our neighbors and Landlord to expand our dock footprint. If we ever anticipate improvements here, now is the time. A small group interested in solving this problem will be gathered in the coming weeks with the goal of finalizing the plan by early spring.

This is the direction I have planned for the coming year. It does not even touch on the individual paddling programs. I know each director has their goals to continually better serve our members and those not yet our members. It takes a lot of people to make this club the success that it is. Thank you for the privilege of being your President. I look forward to another year serving VCKC. It is a great club full of opportunities, opportunities to paddle all kinds of boats, and opportunities to meet all kinds of people.

Cheers

~ Tim Marks, President

Big Canoe News

Big Canoes will be getting busy by the end of February when we have our kickoff for PPFTK Peninsula Paddle for the Kids! This will be the 39th year VCKC has been involved with Paddle for the Kids. Started by Don Munroe, this weekly paddle event in big canoes, has raised over \$300,000 over the years for Easter Seals camps, specifically Camp Shawnigan most recently. Details will be going up in the VCKC website calendar next week. A club wide email will go out close to the kickoff date of Sunday, February 23rd at 9:30am. After that emails will go out to members who have checked "voyageur" interest in your online profile. The BIG paddle date of the PPFTK event will be on Saturday, March 28th. Weekly paddles on Sunday's, leaving the clubhouse at 8:30am for cool destinations with fun paddlers and big canoes will happen March 1 to March 22.

Peninsula Paddle For The Kids

Kickoff: February 9, 2020 at 9am

Breakfast: Anna Childress will be heading up our breakfast! Contact Mary if you would like to help out: voyageur@vckc.ca

After breakfast we will head out for a little paddle up to Portage Inlet. When we return to the club the big canoe Stern leads will demonstrate a capsize and rescue. Beginners are welcome to join us. This is a great day for all program participants to come out and join the community of big canoe paddlers!!!



Meet at the clubhouse at 8am for the Sunday's below.

- √ February 23: Sooke Basin
- √ March 1: Sidney to Portland Island
- √ March 8: Ladysmith Harbour
- √ March 15: Race Rocks (put in Esquimalt Lagoon & take out Padder Bay)

√ March 22: Maple Bay to Genoa Bay

!!!! March 28: PPFTK day

Susan Logan is organizing the dinner potluck for the Saturday final event. Please contact secretary@vckc.ca if you are interested in helping out this day.

Contact Mary Marks for information about anything Big Canoe at voyageur@vckc.ca

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

Canoe Program

Canoe Program Forecast for 2020 – Awesome!

January has been a very productive planning month for the Canoe Program. Check out the VCKC calendar for the Canoe Program winter/spring schedule including the suite of Lakewater 1, 2 and 3 courses, a moving water course, the monthly Canoe Program meeting nights and dates for Running of the Cow. This year, club members can hone their paddling skills by taking one or more of the advanced Lakewater courses in time to complete Moving Water 1 and be certified to participate in the super-fun Running of the Cow weekend event; send me a note if you want to know how! If you are interested in a Lakewater 4 course to improve your solo skills, or would like to see other courses, please let me know. A huge thank you to all our volunteer canoe instructors who keep our Canoe Program so active.

The Canoe Program Meetings will continue through the winter, but not as regularly scheduled. Instead, the meetings will accommodate the available dates of our special speakers. Our first meeting on January 30th attracted a full house for “Teen Angst on the Stikine” where Barry Snowden, Peter Constabel and Matt Austin and sons described their amazing paddling and backpacking adventures in the Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness last summer. Thank you to the 6 of them for an excellent presentation and for the acknowledging our VCKC canoe instructors for training them up over several years to prepare for this.

Coming up on Monday, February 10th in a special joint meeting with the Kayak Program, we will host Provincial Ecologist Will McKenzie of



Peter, Barry, Matt, Kai, Matt Noah after their adventure.

Smithers, B.C.

presenting his epic kayak adventure from Baffin Island across ice and open water to Greenland; be prepared for spectacular photos of the arctic, stories of polar bears and blizzards, and unique underwater videos of narwhales! Check the VCKC calendar or future newsletters for more “Paddling Presentations” to come. All are welcome to these presentations.



Club Day Trips will be more frequent this winter/spring and our first 2 trips of the year are described in detail below. Both trips were great fun and a big thank you goes out to Alan and Linda for leading them. Our next trip is scheduled for February 2nd and details will be posted on the VCKC calendar. For those looking for river practice, Eddy

Hoppers have had to take a hiatus as rivers have been too full from all the January rains for safe practice runs; if you

have passed the Moving Water 1 course but are not on the Eddy Hopper list, please contact Dan at Storage@VCKC.ca

As the days get longer and temperatures start to climb, do bundle up and take advantage of those winter days to paddle the beautiful waters around Victoria. Happy paddling!

Contact Louise for information about anything the Canoe Program canoe@vckc.ca
~ Louise de Montigny, Canoe Program Director

CANOE TRIP REPORT – SOMENOS LAKE, January 2020

The Canoe Program ran its first Club trip of the year on January 11th, up to Somenos Lake in Duncan. We have run trips there most Januarys in the last 15 years, taking advantage of the high water levels that let us paddle over the fields at the head of Richards Creek. This year there were fewer than usual paddlers taking part. Could this have been due to the short notice of the trip (sent out only on Thursday), or was it the forecast of snow and wind? Surely it must have been the first: VCKC paddlers scorn wind and rain and even snow – well, excluding some outrigger teams, of course.



4 tandem canoes took part, meeting at the clubhouse at 8.30am in spite of heavy showers of rain in the hour before. But as sometimes happens, once we got going, things improved, and we launched at the ramp before 10am in sunshine and almost no wind. Mts Prevost and Sicker were covered in finely snow-powdered conifers, glinting and shining in the sun against the blue sky. After a check on the water height gauge (6.55m), we headed up to Richards Creek and so up to the fields. I am not sure that the water levels were the highest we've seen them, but I'd driven round the area on the Wednesday and realised that there were flooded fields to the east at the head of the creek, as well as the ones to the west that we usually paddle, and I thought it would be fun to try and reach them.

Which we did, by dint of threading along field edges, crossing barbed wire fences and forcing our way through the brush and grass that often bar our progress. There were plenty wild birds – many skeins of geese, probably over 1000 in successive Vs flying south, wise birds. But also, many ducks and swans. We passed a lone hunter sitting by the flooded fields and later saw another paddling a canoe in a neighbouring field, but not enough to make us turn back. The route took us onto a number of fields we have never reached before – I hadn't realised the possibilities until I saw them from Richards Trail. After circumnavigating these new areas, we stopped for lunch at noon, just as it started to rain. A couple of big cedars gave us a fine sheltered area and allowed us to stretch our legs after 2 hours in the canoes.



close to 15 kms.

After lunch, as we prepared to set off again, the threatening clouds opened with sleet and hail and some quite fierce gusts of wind. We agreed to omit the rest of the flooded fields and head back to the creek and so to the lake. It let up after 10 minutes and we had a pleasant potter back down the creek, picking up bottles, cans and sundry garbage including a rather nice cooler which we used to carry the rest of the haul. By the time we reached the lake, the rain was past, and some blue sky was appearing, but we chose to miss out on the customary circumnavigation of the lake itself: if the wind came up again, paddling north against it back to the ramp would have been quite a struggle. So only 3 ½ hours of paddling, covering probably

Many thanks to Louise for agreeing to run a Club trip at such short notice and for taking part when she and Raoul could easily have done paddling closer to home – in fact, in their home, thanks to Oak Bay’s decaying infrastructure. Thanks also to Mark and Conall for joining us at very short notice, and to David and Dorothea who made up the four boats. A good start to the year, with more to come.



PS. Measured the water level at the bases of the 4 pairs of posts that support the walkway to the dock at the end of the Somenos Lake Ramp and compared this to the water height as shown on the water gauge on the railway trestle around the corner. When the lake water is at the level of the base of the first pillar/post, the gauge height is 6.40m. At the foot of the second post – 5.20 meters. 3rd = 5.05; 4th = 4.20. Flooded fields are best paddled when the water is at least at 6 metres, preferably above 6.50 metres.

~ Alan Thomson

CANOE TRIP REPORT – Shoal Islands Wetlands from Crofton to Chemainus, January 19th, 2020

The Canoe Program ran its second Club trip of the year on January 19th, from Crofton Ferry Terminal to Kinsmen Beach Park, Chemainus through the wetlands on the inside of the Shoal Islands. Although it may seem like an unlikely time of year for a Club paddle like this, the mid-day tide was predicted to be the highest of the year; a high tide at mid-day is critical to be able to paddle over the wetlands and deltas on the inside of the Shoal Islands and up some of the estuaries therein.



This year, 10 hardy souls left the clubhouse at 8.45 a.m. and met again an hour later at the boat ramp beside the Crofton Ferry Terminal to unload the 4 tandem canoes and 2 kayaks. With a forecast for SE winds and afternoon rain, we chose to paddle from south to north to take advantage of a tailwind to push us along. Consequently, as this was a point-to-point paddle and not a return trip, we shuttled some cars to the take-out at Chemainus (Kinsmen Beach Park at the foot of Maple Street) and were back and ready to paddle, leaving Crofton at 11:00 a.m. With calm waters, light winds and rain, we headed north. The pace was relaxed.

Almost immediately, we passed the Crofton Pulp and Paper Mill, an important employer in the area that has two operating paper machines and two pulp machines that produce a range of specialty paper products; they must take their responsibility for environmental sustainability seriously, because as passed, we all commented that the pulp mill smell was not offensive, perhaps even pleasant! Moving on we passed under the lime green causeway that accesses the deep-water port for the mill, rounded the point and made our way to the wetlands.



As anticipated, the high tide of 11.2' (3.4 m) at 11:25 a.m. offered ample water to explore and paddle in this unique wetland area

where ducks and geese abound. This was accentuated by the presence of waterfowl hunters with the occasional shot being fired. The mist and fog, caused by evaporating snow, off the shore provided a surreal atmosphere and made for beautiful photos. Rain at times was heavy and many remarked that a dry-suit was (would have been) the perfect option for the day and, having bailed our canoe out several times, a spray deck would have been a nice option too.

The Chemainus River estuary was a highlight as, by practicing our maneuvering skills around S-bends in the tributaries, we were able to stay in the deeper part of the channels a long way up the estuary. We missed out Bonsall Creek estuary because we didn't want to miss out on high tide at the Chemainus estuary. After stopping for a quick lunch and warm tea, we continued on our way following the rocky shoreline towards Chemainus. We were unable to paddle inside Mainguy Island as the channels were blocked. (In past trips, we've managed to paddle through this channel, but now overgrown.) We noted many errant logs washed up on the rocks and speculated that the recent high winds likely broke-up a log boom making this a beachcomber's paradise. Many of the houses, recently built, were truly lovely.



Too soon, at around 2:30 p.m., we arrived in Chemainus. One brave paddler ably demonstrated why one needs to be wary of slippery boat ramps, which encouraged the rest of us to walk cautiously and avoid wet pants. Getting off the water was chilly, but the boats were soon loaded, and we found ourselves warming up by the fire at the Brass Bell Pub back in Crofton. Despite the rain, this was an enjoyable paddle with much to see. In total, we paddled for 3 ½ hours (including a short lunch) and a distance of approximately 14 kms.

Many thanks to Alan (and Linda) for organizing the trip to take advantage of the high mid-day tides and for leading us into the estuaries. And thanks to those who braved the elements when you could have stayed warm and dry watching football at home: in tandem canoes, David and Joe, Dorothea and Susan, Louise and Raoul; and in kayaks, our two new club members Celeste and David (welcome!). If you missed this trip, keep it in mind for next year!

~Raoul Wiat

Storage Report

Over the next couple of weeks, we'll be rebuilding the basement storage racks. This rebuild will allow us to store more kayaks and marathon canoes on one side of the basement and make room for a new Paddleboard rack on the other side. We'll also be doing a general cleanup and re-org of the basement and under the deck. When the renos are complete and the weather improves, all the storage spots will be labeled, and a full inventory of stored boats will be reported in the Newsletter.

Some very interesting questions and comments came up at the recent AGM. Responses to a couple of these comments are below.

AGM Comments and Responses:

1. **Comment:** VCKC should try expanding storage and opening storage to both members and non-members. **Response:** VCKC proposed expanding storage to Saanich a couple of years ago. This proposal was soundly rejected. VCKC was told to consolidate all storage in the existing compound. This resulted in the installation of the new gate to provide better access for the trailers and the building of the new storage sheds. As it stands now, VCKC cannot expand storage. All the existing storage spots are full, inside and out and there are eight members on the waitlist. There is no room for non-members.
2. **Comment:** VCKC should consider prioritizing storage for members who cannot store their boats where they live, i.e. condo and apartment dwellers. **Response:** Under current VCKC guidelines, private members

storing boats at VCKC must be a) paid up members, b) apply to the Storage Director and if necessary, go on a waitlist and c) be regular users of the boats. It's 'first come-first serve', you can keep your spot as long as you follow the rules and no consideration is given to the availability of storage you have elsewhere. VCKC only has about 40 member boat storage spots available. Many of these are already taken by members who live in apartments and condos. This will be discussed at the next executive meeting.

Further, there's a critical shortage of boat storage in the Victoria area. VCKC is addressing this shortage in two ways, first, with the initiative to expand the use of Club boats for members. This could replace some need for members to own their own boats. Second, VCKC will be working on new boat storage ideas including boat storage on available municipal property and will present these ideas to local municipalities.

~ Dan Walker, VCKC Storage Director

New Program Directors Intro

Hi Everyone,

I'm really excited to take over the helm of the **Marathon Canoe** program from Bon Lee. I hope to do my best to continue to participate in, and represent, a really great program here at the club. I've been a member for almost four years and over that time I have moved from being a complete novice to the marathon canoe to understanding that I'll never stop learning all that the program and the Gorge Waterway has to offer. For someone who's now in their 70's, it's a great way to keep physically and mentally focused! One of the main reasons I look forward to representing the marathon program is that everyone associated with the program has been incredibly generous with their patience, time and knowledge, and frankly, this is one way I can give back. Patience and support is shown to everyone in the program. We welcome anyone who would like to like to try or continue marathon canoeing. We're on the three times every week, so I hope that old faces will reconnect, new ones will introduce themselves, and the regulars will continue to come out.

~ Peter Elson

I'm really excited to take over the helm of the **Kayak** program. A graduate at UBC in engineering, I moved to Victoria to start a career in clean energy. Finding that the city had a sense of community I wanted to become more involved. I found joining the kayak club a good way to give back due to my enthusiasm for the sport and found that becoming a director would give me more influence towards how this club will be shaped for future generations. I plan to create a more inclusive Kayaking department – aimed at getting more families and new paddlers on the water.

~ Sebastian Piper

Why have I have decided I would like to be on the executive? I have been paddling outrigger for some years and thought it was time that I learn what the position of **Outrigger** Director involves. Tony Hopkin has set a high standard and I have no doubt it will be a challenge. I look forward to having everyone's help and learning more about the club. Cheers.

~ Mike Wheatley

VCKC Membership

VCKC is a club for those interested in a variety of paddling sports. It is a place for beginners and advanced paddlers from many disciplines. It offers opportunities to learn, expand your expertise and try new opportunities. In 2020 a new program - Standup Paddle Boarding - will be added to the mixture. That means we have seven program areas.

At the 2020 AGM membership fees were increased. The last fee increase occurred approximately seven years ago. As was outlined at the AGM membership fees are the main income source to support our club. This increase will only impact new members and any who have not renewed prior to the AGM.

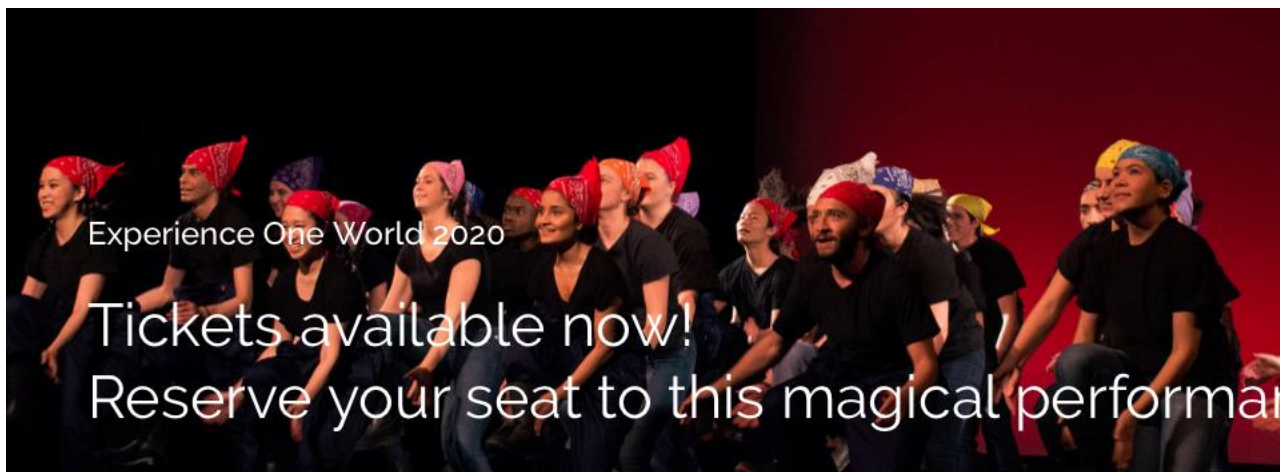
The annual fee of \$70 (just less than \$6 monthly)

Provides you the opportunity

- √ To expand your social circle of like- minded paddlers
- √ Participate in any of the seven programs
- √ Access to club equipment (once necessary qualifications are demonstrated)
- √ Join in the many club excursions
- √ Learn new skills and practice your current skills (courses and clinics)
- √ To share your expertise with others

What does VCKC ask of you

- √ To use all equipment with the same care and attention as if it was your own
- √ To volunteer for the various community service activities undertaken during the year
- √ To assist with maintaining our equipment and clubhouse
- √ To volunteer to lead and manage our organization



Don't miss the amazing stage performance and interactive EXPO showcase featuring the students of Pearson College at the **2020 One World** performance in March. You may have met some of the students at our VCKC paddling and social events - now you have an opportunity to experience their dazzling international dance, storytelling and musical talents at the McPherson Playhouse. Plan on getting your tickets early. Friday, March 20 (rehearsal) \$15.00 or Saturday, March 21 (matinee or evening) \$30.00. This has become one of my annual "must see" events!

Club Contact Information

Officers

President president@vckc.ca
Tim Marks
Vice-president vpresident@vckc.ca
Tony Hopkin
Treasurer treasurer@vckc.ca
Mark Sondheim
Secretary secretary@vckc.ca
Susan Logan
Past President pastpres@vckc.ca
Joe Boyd
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Mary Marks
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Dragonboat Program dragonboat@vckc.ca
Jana Savage Cain
Kayak Program kayak@vckc.ca
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Outrigger Program outrigger@vckc.ca
Mike Wheatley
Marathon Canoe Program marathon@vckc.ca
Peter Elson

Stand Up Paddle Board

Shelby Hart sup@vckc.ca

Other Executive Positions

Education, Standards & Safety safety@vckc.ca
Ryan Ovens
Membership membership@vckc.ca
Debi LaHaise

Clubhouse and Grounds
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Brit Kohn
Boat & Locker Storage storage@vckc.ca
Dan Walker

Director at Large
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