



Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club

(www.vckc.ca)

"The Paddling Post" September 2022 Newsletter

The Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club respectfully acknowledges that its activities take place on the traditional territories of the lək'wəṇən peoples, and that the land and waterways' historical relationships with the Songhees and Esquimalt peoples have existed since time immemorial. The club is committed to taking meaningful action to build respectful and reciprocal relations with the Songhees and Esquimalt peoples on whose land and waterways club members have the privilege of living.

President's Message

I hope everyone enjoyed their summer! It has been a strange one for us, hasn't it, having to hold not one but two meetings to deal with club business. I wanted to extend thanks from all of us on the Executive to all the members who took time out of their busy summer to help us take care of club business and get us back on track. The feeling in the clubhouse at both of those meetings was one of total camaraderie. We feel very fortunate to be surrounded by such caring individuals. But then, we should have expected that, it's one of the things we do best, isn't it?

The Facebook Club Chat page has been full of paddling pictures throughout the busy summer. There were a few club trips and the pictures they shared looked amazing! After a scramble to get social events happening again we are back on track for Tuesday evenings. They will be back to the first Tuesday of the month, but because we missed that a couple of weeks ago we have one scheduled for September 27 from 6-8pm. Hope to see you on the 27th!

In paddling news, one of our OC6 teams rescued a stranded motor boat at Cadboro Bay. It was manned by eight young gentlemen who had miscalculated the amount of gas they would need and ran out when they were far from the boat launch at Cattle Point. Our OC6 team threw them a line and paddled them back safely to shore. Thanks go out to OC6 team "The Boat People" Maria Eis, France Gagnon, Dave Brar, Tony Hopkin, Kim Capson, and Dave Hill.

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The Paddling Post

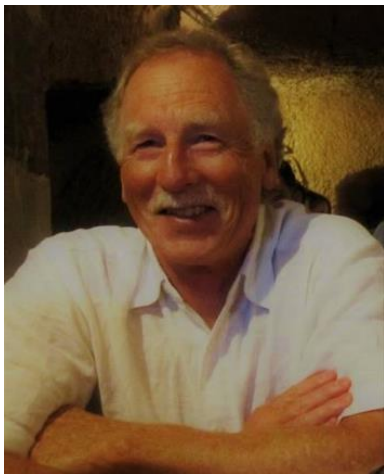
~ Kim Capson, [President](#)

Clubhouse Update: Fall House and Grounds Clean-up November 5th

The annual fall house and grounds cleanup is set for 9:00 am Sat morning Nov 5th. Please bring any house or grounds tools or cleaning material you may have available to help spruce up the club setting. Thanks,

~ Sandy Rattray, [Clubhouse Director](#)

Norm MacDonell, 1954 - 2022



Norm lived happy, paddled fast and loved many. Norm will be greatly missed by his wife Lisa, children Julie (Eddy), Anna (Clay), Greg (Lauretta), siblings Sandy (Karin), Elizabeth-Anne, Mhairi (Paul) his wonderful extended family, friends, neighbours, teammates and members of the various communities he contributed to.

Times Colonist

dedication to detail to every aspect of his paddling endeavours, whether OC6, OC1 or marathon canoe. It is in this latter capacity that the marathon program members VCKC came to know Norm.

It was my privilege to race with Norm this last spring at the Restart the Gorge. While Norm was a veteran racer, this was my first competitive race and it was one I will never forget. I felt like I'd won the lottery, as Norm could have had the pick of any paddling partner he wanted.

VCKC'S Norm MacDonnell passed away in his home after spending a long week racing, surfing and camping among his paddling friends. Norm was a warm, kind man, with a great sense of humour but a fierce competitor in whitewater, outrigger, voyageur and marathon canoe racing for over 40 years. Our paddling community was fortunate to have had him in it and he will be dearly missed.

– Don Munroe

A Celebration of Life was held on August 28 from 2-5pm at Esquimalt Gorge Park Pavilion. At that celebration we learned a lot about Norm that may have been overlooked by the paddling community. A consummate entrepreneur, he started a wide range of businesses from a young age. He was also known by several as "Dr Furniture" a tribute to his skill at furniture repair and finishing carpenter. Moving from the prairies to the Yukon at a young age fueled his sense of adventure, and became the testing ground for a fearless and daredevil approach to paddling.

He took his perfectionistic tendencies, passion for turbulent waters and



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As many will attest, Norm was generous with his time and enthusiasm for paddling. Norm was



unique in that he not only understood what a sound paddling technique looked like, he was well versed in the biomechanics of paddling and was able to tell you not just what to do, but how to do it. I remember the first occasion I was put under Norm's tutelage as I was learning to paddle a marathon canoe. He said "I'm just going to tell you three things. I'm not going to fill your head with too much information." He stuck to his word, and did so every time we paddled together. Norm's sage words of advice echo in my head and will continue to do so for a long time to come.

– Peter Elson

Norm always found a kindly way of giving positive advice to all. Offering little gems of wisdom relating to his many years of canoeing and racing experience. Thank you Norm.

– Ron Williams



The news came as such a shock to me – I was heartbroken to hear about the loss of such a fine individual, exceptional paddler, and generous spirit.

Norm possessed a multitude of gifts that he so naturally shared. He was kind, helpful, funny and just so cool! He was

such an asset to our paddling community, and as a beginning Marathon paddler, he made my experiences on (though never in!) the water positive and fun.

I am saddened to think that I will never have another opportunity to paddle with Norm. But his spirit will live on with his great tips such as, "Don't start your stroke in the air, Catherine".

Thanks, Norm. We were all blessed by your presence.

– Catherine MacKellar



Norm was the quintessential athlete, dedicated to furthering his abilities and performance in paddling as well as in other aspects of his life. At the same time, he was a gracious and humble competitor that never let this dedication get in the way of camaraderie. If I hadn't been out training in a while, Norm would

be the first to call and check in.

My good friend, I will miss your presence on the water and at the start-line. It has been an honour and pleasure knowing you.

– Ryan Mather

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I would like to share that not only he was the example of a guy who gladly shared his



knowledge of the paddling technique but also was ready to go out and teach. I as many others, took advice from him about paddling a marathon canoe. It not everyone can log the claim I can. One evening in late fall quite a few years back I was in the bow and he was stern. He was teaching me how to go into a creek. I was trying as hard as I could. Suddenly we were both in the water and the boat was right beside us empty. How we exited the boat without capsizing it I don't know. We were never able to do it again.

Thank you, Norm, for all your kind coaching.

– Jan Urban

I am so sad Norm left us so early in life. He was a gentle, kind and caring man. He always found time to provide advice and mentorship to me as a new paddler to the marathon program. I will miss his coaching, easy smile and chuckles at our early morning paddles.

– Jennifer Yee

Yes, a very gentle man. I liked to paddle with him as he was a very dedicated paddler; he told me he would always have the same plan: Intensive Interval Training; and he would use the number 1-2-3-2-1 for distinguishing the different intervals.

I paddled a few times with him, and I liked to catch up with him, and I would catch up with him when he had the 'pause' and begin the next interval. I had a race as well with him. The first time I paddled on the Gorge, Norm was there and at the end of the paddle he invited me to have coffee with the marathoners. A very Good Man: Norm.

– Mario deSantis

I will remember all the times paddling with Norm. This includes his interval training and distance practices from the inner harbour to Race Rock and back. My last paddle with Norm was him giving me instructions on downwind paddling an outrigger. Norm and I on my OC2 met Lisa and Garth on theirs' in the inner harbour. It was a perfect day for surfing as the waves and wind (about 26km) was coming off McLoughlin Point and into the harbour. We would paddle out, pass McLoughlin Point turn and then try to catch the incoming waves back into the harbour.

It was exciting getting the canoe up on a wave and then surfing side by side with another canoe racing each other back into the harbour. We did this ½ a dozen times before separating and returning to VCKC. My wife Susan will miss Norm's weekly paddling tips to improve her paddling technique. We all will miss Norm at our weekly practices.

– Bon Lee

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My fondest memories of Norm are of Saturday morning marathon paddles... Norm would often quietly paddle up beside me and offer his wealth of paddling knowledge. One of my best memories is racing against him and Stephanie April in Bellingham. After a grueling battle (Bon and I in one canoe, Steph and Norm in the other), Norm and Steph took the lead across the finish line. It will always be one of my favourite races! Norm's memory will be cherished out on the water.

– Claire Wallace



Gathering at VCKC following a memorial paddle for Norm

Paddling...

With every stroke
You feel your ancestors within you
As you yell the call to move right
It's as if you are one
As you reach to take another stroke
You feel the strength within your veins
And paddle out to the ocean
You see as your past
Sliding behind
As you paddle into the sunset
Your future lies ahead

– [delissa nobriga](#)

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Big Canoe Update

On June 24th we kicked off our summer by joining forces with "the kayakers" for a weekend of Big Canoe camping and tripping at Sidney Island with a large group of 24 paddlers ranging in age from 5 to 76 years old.



(Courtesy of Hannah Griffiths)



(Courtesy of Felix Guertler)

Since we had many new paddlers, and only three sterns, we opted to use a skeleton crew of our



(Courtesy of Saloumeh Pourmalek)

strongest paddlers to shuttle voyageurs loaded with camping gear back and forth to Sidney Island and used wheel barrels to cart it up to the mosquito infested group site. Our youngest paddlers got free wheel barrel rides back to the beach to greet our kayakers, and a pirate. Who invited that guy?

On day 2, Saturday, June 25th, we paddled approximately 21 km from Sidney Island to Rum Island, stopping to check out a few rocky little islands off the tip of Forest Island. While on Rum Island, Dorathea spotted a prickly pear cactus in bloom! Sadly, we did not capture a photo, but now we have an excuse to go back.



(Courtesy of Felix Guertler)

After a sweltering day of paddling in 27 degrees and sunshine, we enjoyed cool beverages, and played on the beach. Despite mosquitoes and

a lot of hard work carrying canoes, the weekend was a great success.



(Courtesy of Felix Guertler)

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In late July, Team Tillicum (Ellie James, Jim Brackett, Pat Brackett, Jim Nygard, Linda Purcell, Wade Martinson) paddled 200 km down the Peace River as part of the Peace River Brigade.



(Courtesy of Ellie James)



(Approximately one hundred paddlers from across Canada came out for this event which included nightly parties, and cultural celebrations in small towns and villages along the river.



Stay tuned for Team Tillicum's presentation on the Peace River, which will take place at the VCKC



Team Tillicum was small, but very strong, often leading the pack.

Our summer of Big Canoe paddling ended on an amazing high with the Big Canoe Rivers Weekend led by Joe Boyd and David Dorosz. On September 7th, 12 paddlers travelled 400 km from Victoria to paddle the epic Thompson River. Was it worth it? Absolutely, 100%!!! Can we do it again tomorrow?



Jim and Pat Brackett enjoy calm water before heading into the next set of rapids.



David Dorosz steers Shawnigan into a calm eddy after, taking his team on a ride through some fast-moving rapids, and cutting across a very powerful eddyline.

On Saturday September 8th, we were joined by 12 paddlers from the Thompson Rivers Interior Paddlers Society (TRIPS) who were keen to test out their brand new clipper canoes. We thoroughly enjoyed the comradery of paddling with old and new friends from TRIPS and look forward to doing it again next year.

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Enjoying the beauty of the Thompson River country



VCKC and TRIPS, smiling and exhausted after 1.5 days of river paddling

Upcoming Events:

Voyageur Thursdays – Weekly Paddle: This weekly paddle practice starts at 5:45 pm every Thursday and runs for just over one hour. All paddlers are welcome and encouraged to bring headlamps and warm clothing as the days get shorter. Experienced stern and bow paddlers are encouraged to come out and help our new paddlers gain experience and develop skills. October 1, 2022 - Circle Route: We will be traveling the circle route from the VCKC Clubhouse, downtown, and back to the Gorge via Esquimalt and Cole Island. Stay tuned, we will be posting this event on the Big Canoe calendar shortly.

See you on the water!

~ Elizabeth Martinson, [Big Canoe Director](#)

Canoe Update

Although summer is traditionally a quiet time for the Canoe Program events, 2022 was surprisingly busy.



The annual Ocean Canoeing Course was held the second week of July with 2 evenings of intensive learning about tides, currents, winds, waves, navigation, and safety. Participants used all this new knowledge to plan and implement a weekend trip from Cowichan Bay to Sansum Narrows taking into consideration the timing of the tides for launching, timing of current changes to navigate the narrows, and estimated time and angle for

major crossings. Jay Crowley led the course with assistance from Ellie James, Wade Martinson and Tony Shaw. Jay received permission to camp on Indian Reserve Lands, a beautiful site close

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to the narrows that was perfect for further discussions about staying safe on the ocean. It was a great training weekend for all!

Families with young children were invited for an early evening paddle on July 27th. Hélène Poulin and Liz Martinson provided excellent instruction and teaching moments for this next generation of canoeists and their parents. With warm air and water temperatures, the kids had a great time and parents enjoyed meeting other young families. We hope to do this again soon.



Due to popular demand, Ellie kindly agreed to take a day off from her many summer adventures to hold a Lakewater 1 course on August 13th. New members who couldn't wait to get on the water were happy to have the opportunity to learn the basics before fall and are now eligible to borrow a canoe for practice on the Gorge. Our series of Lakewater courses are posted on the Canoe Courses webpage for anyone wanting to brush up on, or enhance their skills.

VCKC Canoe Program is looking for canoeists interested in teaching basic lakewater skills. Ellie will be offering an RCABC Lakewater Instructor Course in mid-October. If you are interested, please email Ellie at ejames123@shaw.ca.

Happy September!

Five Days at the Madawaska Kanu Centre

In late August, we spent 5 days at the Madawaska Kanu Center, south of Barry's Bay, Ontario to



brush up on our river skills. The middle Madawaska River is dammed and water levels are controlled by Ontario Hydro; the flow gates are opened at 8:30 am and shut at 3:30 pm. This makes for consistent water levels and a perfect area for teaching river paddling beginner to advanced skills in boats ranging from tandem canoes to tiny canoe and kayak playboats. We picked Senior's Week both for a bit of a discount, but also to meet like-minded retirees enjoying an active lifestyle. The camp was lovingly described by many of the repeat participants as a unique

summer camp for adults. Of the roughly 40 participants, our favourite senior was 79-year-old Robyn from Kelowna, an awesome kayak playboater who I've added to my growing list of amazing role-models for healthy aging! There were just 3 tandem boats in our advanced group led by our instructor Ed, and long-time paddling partner/wife Cindy. Objectives for me were

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perfecting the cross-bow draw, gauging exactly where the eddy line is for more effective eddying in and out, using the current to advantage (a less is more approach), improving my river reading skill to avoid rocks, and keeping the open-side up! This section of the Madawaska has a variety of challenging areas for practicing advanced manoeuvres and my objectives were met . . . except for one tiny capsize, but since my hair didn't get wet, does that count? On the fifth day, we shuttled to the middle Ottawa River for an exciting paddle on a big river with some tricky rapids. It was an excellent week and I look forward to the Remembrance Day Paddle on the Cowichan!

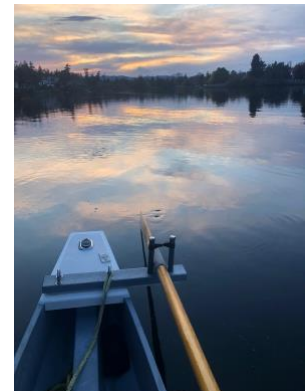
~ Louise de Montigny, [Canoe Director](#)

Dragon Boat Update

Summer 2022 Dragonboat Season has come to a close. Over the



summer we raced at three island festivals (in Nanaimo and two here in Victoria) and had so much fun. We have come so far this



season developing two "newbie" teams, and are already looking forward to racing together



again in 2023. In the meantime, we plan to continue weekly practices over the winter on Saturday Mornings. Technique and endurance training will continue, to have our paddlers well poised to kick off next season in fine form, as we aim to be more competitive next season. If you're interested in joining us please reach out to dragonboat@vckc.ca for more information.

Big thanks to all who made this "return from covid" season possible! From Coaches, to Team Captains, from Team Roster Admins/Treasurers to Party/Social Event Coordinators, from Steers Training & Support to many, many more. But most of all, to the Paddlers. This Group. . . This Group may have been two separate teams but it really felt like just one. I don't think I've seen this level of camaraderie before. It was an amazing season to be a part of.



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If you're interested in Dragon boating please be in touch! See you on the water. Paddles Up!

VCKC Dragonboat Program wants to send out Congratulations to club member Louise Johnston for earning a Gold Medal in Dragonboat Racing with Team U Vixens at the recent 55+ BC Games here in Victoria. Congrats Louise!

~ Jana Savage, [Dragonboat Director](#)

Kayak Update

Here we are at the end of the season but not the end of paddling. Two more classes to go for



sea kayaking. If others want lessons further into the season it can be done, brrr, but I will do it.

Kayaking and other boats are invited every Wednesday for a fun paddle, all winter long. We will wear mitts and bring lights, as per Coast Guard regulations.

Thursday I will also be taking

people out for Big Canoe and training for next years Brigades and River trips with Voyaguer Canoes. Do any of you wish to accept the challenge?

As the kayak director I also have connections to whitewater kayaking on the Cowichan and Chemainus River all winter long. If you are interested please contact me. It is so much fun and we can go easy or hard on the water depending on your preference.



I am here to support you and VCKC. Contact me if you have any ideas for where the club should expand this year or the next and I will support you.

~ Wade Martinson, [Kayak Director](#)

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Marathon and Small Boat Update

Yes, there has been a shift in the focus of the marathon program. The marathon program will now oversee the use of OC1s and OC2s. As small boats are a regular part of co-participation by marathoners already, and as



Patience personified – a long pause before the catch!
(courtesy of Mario DeSantis)

the OC6 program has a lot of work associated with it, the invitation was extended to the marathon program to extend.



We'll see how it goes. It's early days. The first few tasks are to migrate all bookings to the club's online booking system, to put a screening and orientation system in place for the Hurricane OC1, and to make sure all the OC1s are stored in a way that given them maximum protection and care.

Early morning reflections
(courtesy of Mario DeSantis)

Meanwhile the marathon program continues unabated as other programs may start to wind down. The last month has been dedicated to spending off-water time completing mechanical repairs on many of the marathon boats. Next on the list is to tackle exterior repairs to the hulls.

The marathon program recently welcomed two newcomers to Victoria and to VCKC, Kate and Igor, who are eagerly learning the basics of marathon canoeing. Anyone else who is interested in learning more about the marathon program is invited to connect with Director, Peter Elson (marathon@vckc.ca).

See you on the water.

~ Peter Elson, [Marathon Director](#)

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Outrigger Update

Well, summer is almost officially over, and nights are getting longer and cooler. It has been a good summer for paddling the outriggers.



At this point, all three OC6 boats have sound hulls, though the Calmars are still in need of a bit of interior work. Thanks again to those involved in getting the boats prepped, painted, and rigged. There were a number of folks helping out, but special thanks goes to Mike Wheatley, Ron Williams, and Bruce Porter.

The Calmar will remain in the water for the winter. Just a reminder, that the hull does need to be cleaned regularly to prevent buildup of algae and barnacles. As we are a volunteer club, every team has a responsibility here.

For those teams that got to paddle at Cadboro Bay, we were treated to a short but warm and relative calm summer. The requisite hulis were carried out without any issues (Picture) and usually proved to be a lot of fun. One of the more unusual events this summer, involved the towing of a small power boat filled with inebriated young men; certainly one for the books,(picture,). Getting the boat to and from Cadboro Bay requires a good deal of effort and planning. A big thanks to Darcy Graham and Team Wolfpack for taking this on.



In small boat news, we are moving responsibility for the OC 1s to the marathon program. (marathon@vckc.ca) For the use of the yellow plastic boats, this will be transparent, except that all bookings will now be made on the online booking tool (Skedda). To sign up contact Arthur Caldicott (webmaster@vckc.ca). A verification process is in place and will need to be completed before independent bookings are permissible. The hurricane is little more problematic, as it is showing some damage. As this is being written it is out of action, but hopefully it will be back on the water very soon. This boat requires a specific use orientation and special care. It is not to be used without permission. Peter Elson, Marathon Director, will get back to the membership with a policy and protocol for its use.

As we move into the winter, I will be in contact with teams about the schedule and we will try to address concerns and requests raised by several teams.

As always feel free to contact me.

~ Tony Hopkin, [Outrigger Director](#)

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Recipe for the Perfect Paddle

Instructions:

- Book a boat on the VCKC Booking Site.
- Add the boat, paddle, and PFD to water.
- Stir like crazy!
- When done, clean, and return to the designated places.
- Repeat as desired.

Wow — is that easy. And fun!

The VCKC Booking Site - where we are now

We are at vckcbooking.skedda.com (in regular use by the 100 members already registered in the booking system), or at vckc.ca/booking if you are interested and want to get registered.

VCKC has more than 600 members this year, and 100 of them are now registered in the booking system - that's already 17% of our membership.

Canoes and kayaks make up all of the usage to date. The OC1s, the Hurricane, and some SUPs will be added to the booking selection in coming weeks.

With this high level of interest, VCKC relies on members using the booking privileges and the Club equipment responsibly and safely.

- Arrive on time for your reservation;
- Return on time, and make sure all the equipment is cleaned and returned to the designated places;
- Report any damage or deficiencies to the booking coordinator.

To use VCKC watercraft and for self-booking, we require that you have basic skills with canoes or kayaks. With the OC1s, the Hurricane, and SUPs, and optionally with canoes and kayaks, you will need to have the appropriate program director authorize your use of club watercraft.

For more information, go to vckc.ca/booking or email booking@vckc.ca.

~ Arthur Caldicott, [Webmonkey and booking gatekeeper](#)

From the Editor

Thank you to everyone who provided contributions for this issue; any errors in presentation are mine. Please let me know if you have any suggestions for improvement or something new you'd like to see in the newsletter.

Please note the updated land and waterway acknowledgement at the top of the Newsletter.

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Please also note that I will be moving on from my Newsletter Editor role after the December 2022 issue. Please contact Kim (president@vckc.ca) if you are interested — or know someone who might be interested — in taking over the Newsletter beginning with the January 2023 issue.

~ David Johnson, [Newsletter Editor](#)

Club Contact Information

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