



## Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club

### **"The Paddling Post"**

**November 2023**

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

### **President's Message**

This year has flown by, I can't believe we're almost into December. I've just returned from some travels to Thailand. Big thanks to all the members who continue to do what needs doing, keeping things running smoothly. I heard Fall Clean-Up Day was a great success as usual, and that I missed an exciting "Knotty Evening"!



Although I did not do any paddling in Thailand, I did tour a floating market (in a monsoon rain storm!) as a passenger in a long boat, powered by a motorized prop on the end of a long steering shaft. It resembled a dragonboat steers blade, so I briefly considered asking for a turn at the back, but then wisely decided to keep my mouth shut!

I'd like to pass on congratulations to previous VCKC Members David Hill and Norman MacDonell (Posthumous) for being inducted into the CORA Hall of Fame recently. What an honour! You can read more about each of them further on in our newsletter.

As we move into the end of this year we are already planning for next year. Paddle for the Kids is just around the corner, our AGM is scheduled for January 23 2024 (formal notification and documents to come out next month), dates for Spring Paddling Courses are being worked on, the list goes on.

There are some Executive Board positions that are currently vacant. We'd welcome chatting to see if volunteering in one of these roles would be a good fit for you, and for you to learn more. Please be in touch with myself, or our Past President, Kim Capson (at [pastpres@vckc.ca](mailto:pastpres@vckc.ca)). Remember, this is YOUR club. We all love to paddle, and many hands make light work of the "stuff" that needs doing to keep it all happening.

*Paddles Up!*

*~ Jana Savage, President*

## Event Updates



The fall cleanup was once again a success, and many new faces turned out to help us get things done. We cleaned everything we could, including all the cupboards, the floors, the basement, the lockers, the grounds, the barbeques, the windows. A big surprise turned out to be the amazing ecosystem on the bottom of the dragon boat! It was a lot of fun to meet some new members, catch up with some old members, and just have fun hanging out at the club.

We are ready for the next get-together!

*Fall Club Clean-Up*

*photo credit: Kim Capson*

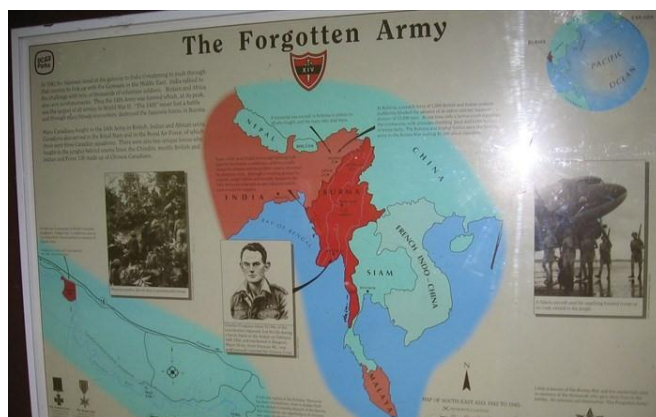


**Easter Seals BC and Yukon** held their first-ever "Lunch with Easter Seals" to celebrate and recognize the importance of the various donors, sponsors, etc. Due to our many, many years of raising funds for Camp Shawnigan VCKC was invited to share in the celebration. Attending the lunch were Past President Kim Capson, longstanding Peninsula Paddle for the Kids organizer Don Munroe, Cheri Houston, and top fundraisers (every year!) Mavis Pillar and Irena Jazwinski. We were privileged to sit at a table with a lovely family whose daughter has attended Camp Shawnigan for many years. It was nice to hear how our efforts have made a difference in her life. Easter Seals representative Shannon Bernnays had mentioned during this year's PPFTK that we are their longest-running support event. Many groups have started a fundraising event and they've faltered after a few years but we are still going strong after 40 years! We're already working on plans for 2024 so keep checking your inbox for updates. We have a lot of fun in those big canoes and the funds we raise make a huge difference in many, many lives.

*Kim Capson, Past President*

## VCKC Memorial Day Paddle

On November 11<sup>th</sup> a group of paddlers from VCKC, South Island Whitewater Paddlers and others from the community met at the Burma Star War Memorial at Stoltz Pool beside the Cowichan River west of Duncan. This Memorial reminds us of the "Forgotten Army" who fought in Burma during WWII. The interpretive sign near the monument tells the story.



*photo credit: Ellie James*

VCKC paddlers have been part of this Memorial Day Service since at least 2014 and have often taken a lead in organizing; especially as the older Legion members are no longer able.

This year there were over thirty people present as Linda Allison read the interpretive sign and Anna Grant told the story of her dad who had fought in Burma. Rick Bryan then read "Flanders Fields" followed by "The Last Post", a minute of silence and then the National Anthem.

It was touching that so many paddlers attended the service even though the official VCKC paddle was canceled due to high water. Some of the experienced paddlers did paddle the river which was fast and "squirrely". Overall it was a very good community event.

*Ellie James, Director at Large*

## Knotty Night



The knotty night was a great success!

Everyone had fun learning a range of useful knots.

Thanks to Ellie, Jay and  
Hélène for putting on  
the evening!

*photo credit: Hannah Griffiths*

~ *Hannah Griffiths, Dragonboat Director*

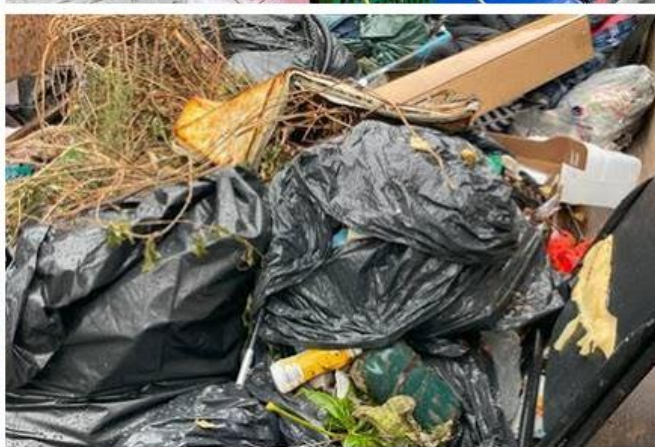
## Shoreline Clean-up Report

The Burnside Gorge Community Association (BGCA) held a shoreline clean up on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September. The Association's shoreline covers the north and east side of the Gorge from Chatham Street to Harriet Street. Some Club members in the SUP program decide to help out and put out the call to other members. A group of 7 paddlers took out the Tillicum big canoe to join in.

As we launched from the ramp, the first drops of rain fell and the morning continued drizzly damp. We met the SUP contingent just below the bridge – hard work on an SUP against the flooding current. Down the Gorge to the Selkirk Trestle where we signed in and picked up some smaller collection buckets to add to the two garbage buckets and industrial plastic bags we had brought with us. We headed down past Rock Bay and started the clean up on the shore where Capital Iron used to operate. Quite a lot of garbage – sports bag, cardboard, plastics, old clothing – along this stretch as it is easily accessible from the road. Landing was tricky with slippery rocks, eel grass and barnacles. We moved up along the shoreline as far as Rock Bay itself, picking up Naloxone kits and contents, some syringes, at least one of which had a needle still attached. By 11.30, our bins were full and two large garbage bags, so we headed back up to the Selkirk to deposit the haul in the large dumpster that Ellis Recycling had provided. The SUP group returned from their section of the shoreline at the same time – impressive how much can be gathered and placed on an SUP. We didn't have time to stay for the BGCA-provided soup, but headed back, current assisted, to the clubhouse.



Thanks to Cindy, David, Elizabeth and Susan, SUP and solo canoe paddlers, and to Jennifer, Malachi, Glenn, Jackie, Susan and Josie for paddling, picking up garbage and moving the big canoe from the compound to the ramp and back onto the rack.



*photo credit: Cindy Dunphy*

*Shoreline clean-up report from Alan Thomson*



## David Hill, VCKC Outrigger and Dragon Boat Pioneer



I met David Hill in 1996 when I was looking for a possible place to coach and train a team of novice dragon boaters in Victoria. I had moved from Vancouver where I had dragon boated for a number of years, and a group from the Hong Kong bank asked me to coach them. I had to find a suitable place to coach them. During that time, Dave was with the Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club (VCKC), had introduced dragon boating at the VCKC in 1995, and was trying to expand dragon boating at the VCKC. Thanks to Dave, 3 dragon boat teams trained out of VCKC in 1996 to compete in the Victoria Dragon Boat Festival (VDBF). I later learned that Dave had started the first dragon boat team in Victoria in 1995, the VCKC Gorging Dragons, to compete against experienced Vancouver teams in Victoria's 1995 VDBF. Dave had the vision that dragon boating could be quite popular in Victoria, and time proved him right.

Dragon boat racing was introduced in 1994 as a demonstration sport as part of the 1994 Commonwealth Games held in Victoria. Officials from Vancouver brought 6 dragon boat teams over to Victoria to demonstrate dragon boat racing in Victoria's Inner harbor. Vancouver officials planned and organized the VDBF in 1995 and 1996. The Victoria Dragon Boat Festival Society was formed in 1997 so that it can plan, organize, and run the VDBF and not rely on Vancouver officials. At that time, thanks to David Hill, dragon boating in Victoria was done only at the VCKC, hence, all the vital experience of dragon boating was at the VCKC. VCKC members such as Dave and others were vital to be part of the Festival Society in the successful operation of bringing about the 1997 VDBF. Since 1997, the VDBF has been an important economic and cultural annual event in Victoria.

Before dragon boating, I learned that Dave had also introduced Outrigger paddling at the VCKC. In 1994, Dave, with perseverance, brought an outrigger, the "Burrard", to the VCKC and started the era of outrigger paddling at the VCKC. Outrigger paddling caught on quickly, and quickly spread to other paddling clubs. Now, virtually all paddling clubs have outrigger paddling as part of their program. Outrigger races sanctioned by the Canadian Outrigger Racing Association (CORA) are now offered year round. By introducing dragon boating and outrigger paddling at the VCKC, Dave not only expanded the paddling experience for paddlers at the VCKC, but also for the entire paddling community. Dave Hill is Victoria's pioneer in both outrigger paddling and dragon boat racing.

David Hill has just been inducted into the Canadian Outrigger Racing Association Hall of Fame. Congratulations Dave!

Jack Louie

VCKC member



I was secretary of the Club executive during the 2 years that Dave Hill served as president in 1994 and 1995 and succeeded him in the president's role in 1998 and 1999, so saw at first hand the work that he did to change the Club from a small-craft paddling Club (barring voyageur canoes) to an organisation offering team paddling opportunities to many more members. Unlike most presidents, Dave did what he felt needed to be done and then stepped down, having faith that the new direction would be maintained. In this, he was quite right as subsequent history shows; but a consequence of this has been that his achievements of nearly thirty years ago are not well known among present members.

<https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/HOF-CORA-David-Hill.pdf> .

The above link and article would help to correct this. The Club would be a very different organisation today had it not been for Dave's efforts and the support of his wife, Delia.

Thanks Alan Thomson VCKC Life Member

*It should be noted that Dave stepped down from the President role to spend more time running and organizing the outrigger section (teaching paddling strokes, rigging and care for the outrigger, racing techniques, developing safety policies, and more). Plus he became a new Dad in 1996 and again in 1997. He is still paddling weekly in the outrigger and always available to help out when needed. Delia*

Message from Dave

On Nov. 11, 2023, I was inducted into the Canadian Outrigger Racing Association's Hall of Fame.

I was recognized for my efforts to bring outrigger canoeing to the Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club and as the catalyst to the formation of other Clubs in Victoria and on Vancouver Island. It was humbling to be included in a long list of great paddlers, who I have known and paddled with for so many years.

I was invited to speak for another VCKC member inductee, Norm MacDonell. Norm was a long time friend and paddling partner. Whether on the river or the ocean, Norm's smile, humour and quest to be the best was infectious. A great friend gone too soon.

You can find I and Norm's write ups at: [Canadian Outrigger Hall Of Fame - Canadian Outrigger Racing Association \(CORA\)](#)

Cheers,

Dave Hill

### **Update on the water quality on the gorge (from Surfrider's Blue Water Task Force)**

Recent water quality results: the last time the upper gorge was sampled (Nov 12th) the result was above the Government's criteria for "High Bacteria". This seems like it could have been a bit of an anomaly so watch this space for future results:

<https://bwtf.surfrider.org/explore/41/473>

~ James Roorda, SUP Director



## VCKC Associate Membership Group UVic Sustainability Project



*Photo credit: Katia Bannister (Clinic Co-Leader)*

VCKC Associate Membership Group UVic Sustainability Project (UVSP) ran a Lakewater Canoe Clinic in October. They had a very enjoyable clinic with excellent weather. Photos shared with permission.

*Katia Bannister (she/her)  
Coordinator | University of Victoria Sustainability Project (UVSP)*



## **Dave Kilshaw's summer paddling pursuits – a story**

Every day is a good day when you can look at the grass instead of the grass's roots. "Life is looking up" they say. If you are looking up at the roots of the grass, things are not so good.

Other than Camping at Gordon Bay, Maple Grove and Cowichan River in May, June and July, I have been very reclusive this year. I did paddle a couple of times. I had an unplanned swim at the Tillicum Bridge when I was trying to show off to a friend. I like riding the back eddy up to the bridge and then entering the main flow. I have done it lots before in my solo and tandem. Even done it in the solo with friends in the tandem and never over achieved on the excitement. This time we did. All VCKC policies and guidelines regarding safety and emergency procedures were on my phone so I reviewed them quickly and complied completely. We were even in compliance before the swim because we met the MOT small boat requirements. VCKC gets a lifetime achievement award for Saved Lives of Unknown Paddlers.

Lots of options when upside down in the main current that calms in 100 or 200 yards. Go with the flow to the calm water and then follow VCKC Lake Water I official Canoe Re-entry procedures. Celebrate with a suitable beverage at 4 mile house.

We swam to the retaining wall, used the ladder and lined the canoe towards kinsmen Beach. When we got to the Big Rhododendrons, I got in alone and paddled the rest of the way to the beach where my friend embarked again. Lovely paddle across the calm waters in the hot sun to the Club House followed by suitable beverages of choice.

I had 4 days of non stop wind at Maple Bay. Contemplated life and worked on my tan. I did paddle early one morning but was off the water as the wind came up. The fish were well schooled and followed Lake Cowichan Survival Protocols to the letter. I had one good fish strike, but the little bugger was able to spit out the hook.

The July visit to Cowichan River Campground was bliss. No paddling, but swimming, and visits to various swimming holes between there and Cowichan Lake Town where we enjoyed an air-conditioned view of the lake and suitable beverages of choice.

In reviewing this report, I see I had the Beverage of Choice more often than I paddled this summer. I must conclude that things are indeed going well, but I do hear my canoe weep as it bakes in the sun on the roof of my car.

This report may be worthy of including in the Newsletter. If I can't blind them with my brilliance, I can baffle them with my Bullshit.

Paddles Up, Banzai, Gang Ho, and Hoo Rah.

Talk later,  
David

## Marathon and Small Boats Update

### Marathon Program

(also see Bridges Race report by Bon Lee)

As profiled by Bon Lee, the marathon program has taken advantage of local races to test their metal. The marathon program is year-round. We meet at 8am up to four times a week, usually Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. Thursday has become an OC6 outing, numbers permitting. Anyone interested in joining or learning more about the marathon or small boat program should email the Marathon and Small Boat Director at [marathon@vckc.ca](mailto:marathon@vckc.ca).

### Small Boats



*Scorpious SX*

*Photo credit: Peter Elson*



*Hurricane OC1*

*Photo credit: Peter Elson*

The Small Boats program has been fortunate to add three more used boats to its fleet. The first is one more Scorpious SX OC1. Once the club code labels have been applied, this olive green and black boat will be ready to use. We now have three Scorpious SX's. The second purchase was a Hurricane OC1. This brings the total number of club Hurricane OC1's to two. As they are quite stable, this is a good pairing with our existing one for those who want to practice with a paddling partner. The third boat is a V1 (OC1 without a rudder). Given its composition, the ama will be fixed and when ready, will be stored near the other OC1's in the compound. These two used OC1 boats are a great addition to the OC1 program and the orientation courses. They will become very useful when the orientation courses start up again in the Spring.

### Bridges Race 2023 by Bon Lee with Mario DeSantis

The marathon program at VCKC consists of a dozen or so regular paddlers and a few drop-ins. We paddle 3-4 times a week. The age of paddlers participating in the program range from mid-40's all the way to 83.





Our 83-year-old paddler (Mario) convinced us to enter a crew for the Bridges OC6 race. Unfortunately, we didn't have 6 paddlers who fell in the same age class. The best we could do was a crew between the age of 53 and 83, so we entered a crew in the mixed 50+ with an average age of 69. With only one practice as a team before the race, our timing as a team was less than desirable.

*VCKC Marathoners OC6 team (from left to right): Mario, Jen, Sue, Jan, Bon, and Darrelle.*

There were a total of 63 teams registered for Bridges, with 2 teams from VCKC. Our heat had 7 boats with 4 teams in the mixed 50+. It was a cool cloudy day and the wind picked up at the start of our race. We had a pretty good start battling side by side with 2 other canoes all the way to the Bay Street Bridge. Past the Bay Street spans we and another canoe managed to pull away. We stayed behind the lead canoe right up to the buoy turn, but as we were coming out of the buoy turn, we got bumped from behind and lost another boat length. From there it was trying to catch the lead canoe. Try as we did, we were unable to make up the distance to the lead boat. We finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in our heat with a time of 31:58. Overall we did well for an older crew racing in the 50+ class. We tied for 37<sup>th</sup> place out of 67 registered crews and came in 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 50+ category. The fastest time at Bridges was from an open class crew finishing with a time of 24:50.



*Marathon crew at Bridges, photo by Peter Elson*

The Bridges small boat race was held the following day, an Inny 5.4km (protected water) and Outty 12km (open water) race. There were 32 registered paddlers for 5.4km Inny race and 31 paddlers for 12km Outty race.



Two tandem marathon canoes entered the Inny (5km on the Gorge Waterway) race.

Jason Doucet & Jordan Chu completed the course in 30:49 placing, 7<sup>th</sup> overall. Mario DeSantis & Darelle Butler finished in 34:23 placing 16<sup>th</sup> overall.

Given this is only Mario's second season paddling a marathon canoe, and the fact that he is 83 years old, this was an excellent finish. It's never too late to try marathon canoeing! The best time for the Inny course was 29:27 from a V1 canoe. Unfortunately, we didn't get any photos for this event.

*Two VCKC Tandem Marathon Teams: Jordon/Jason and Darelle/ Mario*



*Rob Sainsbury OC1 (on the left) , Bridges (photo by Bon Lee)*



*Jan Urban OC1, Bridges Outty Race (photo by Bon Lee)*

We also had two VCKC paddlers racing in the Outty (12km - Including a second in the outer harbour).

Rob Sainsbury (OC1 Open) finished in 1:15:18, placing 21<sup>st</sup> overall.

Jan Urban (OC1 70+ category) was 1st in his class and placed 23<sup>rd</sup> overall with a time of 1:16:04. Jan beat another 70+ paddler in a V1 by 12 minutes.

The best time for the 12km race was 1:03:20 in an open class OC2.

See you on the water,  
Peter Elson, Marathon and Small Boat Director



## Dragonboat Update



Photo credit: Hannah Griffith

Paddles up!

~ *Hannah Griffiths, Dragonboat Director*

We were able, with lots of help from fellow club members to bring the big dragon boat up onto the beach for its biannual clean on the fall clean up day. I was amazed at how much growth had accumulated since we cleaned it last in June!

The dark hasn't deterred us just yet, we have the advantage of having a smaller 10 person boat so we can still get out on the water with less paddlers. I find the moonlit evening paddles to be very special.

The dragon boat is excited to join the club light up winter paddle on December 21st.

## SUP Update

Hello fellow paddlers!

Welcome to winter! I hope you're staying warm! With the colder temperatures and longer nights comes a bit of a change in the regular routines, and paddling is no different. I prefer to think of myself as being more discerning, but some may call it becoming more of a fair weather paddler. In my mind there is nothing wrong with becoming more of a fair weather paddler as long as you don't become a fair-weather paddler (if that makes sense). After all, as is said, there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad gear.

So with that being said, come out and join us for paddle. We're still trying to get out and paddle weekly, but we're also picking our spots (that may not show up on the calendar due to event timings being more last minute than normal). The best thing is to get in touch with the program director to make sure you have what you need to stay warm and have fun.

Quick program update: we have three new hard boards for members to use. Come out and try them! These should offer members a tangible upgrade in performance compared to our older boards.

Lastly: recent water quality results: the last time the upper gorge was sampled (Nov 12th) the result was above the Government's criteria for "High Bacteria". This seems like it could have been a bit of an anomaly so watch this space for future results:

<https://bwtf.surfrider.org/explore/41/473>

Happy paddling! See you on the water!

[sup@vckc.ca](mailto:sup@vckc.ca) .

~ *James Roorda, Director*

## Kayak Update

We continue to host regular Wednesday biweekly sea kayak paddling, skill and social event – see VCKC calendar – all small craft welcome.

If you have questions please email the kayak director for help or inquiries.

~ Wade Martinson, Kayak Director

## Outrigger Update



### [Canadian Outrigger Hall Of Fame - Canadian Outrigger Racing Association \(CORA\)](#)

Following their Annual General Meeting, CORA announced the creation of a new award to acknowledge Athletes, Coaches-Builders, and Pioneers in the sport of outrigger canoeing in Canada. Nominations for selection may be made by any CORA member or club representative of any active CORA club in Canada through the CORA website. Based on nominations submitted [...]

[www.canadianoutrigger.ca](http://www.canadianoutrigger.ca)

See website for more information on the Outrigger Program.

~ Graham Hayes, Director

## Big Canoe Update

We continue to paddle on Wednesdays – see club calendar for more information.

~ Big Canoe Program

## Canoe Update

See website for more information.

~ James McBeath, Director

**Deadline for submissions to December Newsletter:- end of day Saturday December 16<sup>th</sup>**

Please identify as “newsletter submission” in the subject line and send to [newsletter@vckc.ca](mailto:newsletter@vckc.ca).



## Club Contact Information

### **Officers**

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