

# The Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club



Hamilton Residence water side view c. 1923  
Kelso Hamilton Reed Collection

The Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club was founded in 1968 and is celebrating its 50th anniversary! The VCKC is a not-for-profit organization that offers multiple paddling sports devoted to promoting safe and skillful paddling on the island and surrounding waters. The club has a diverse paddling community with a long standing history along the Gorge Waterway.



## Migratory Bird Sanctuary

All tidal waters of Victoria Harbour, Gorge Waterway, Portage Inlet, and the Colquitz River have been part of the Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary since 1923. The Sanctuary and Gorge Waterway features many wintering birds, and other wildlife uncommon in cities - like Coho salmon, Pacific herring, sea-run cutthroat trout, Olympic oyster, Pacific harbour seal, mink and northern river otter.

Help protect the animals in the Sanctuary by not disturbing birds and other wildlife you may encounter. Avoid damaging riparian vegetation which is important habitat, and don't enter the Colquitz River during spring nesting and fall spawning season: birds and salmon are most vulnerable to disturbance during these times. Respect wildlife and always keep pets out of the river.



## Paddling & the Environment

Shoreline clean-ups are carried out on the Gorge Waterway each year using voyageur canoes as part of the VCKC commitment to the environment. Happily, with the passing of the years, the amount of litter collected seems to be decreasing.

Since 1994 VCKC has been offering rides in the big boats - usually the voyageur canoes, but sometimes the dragon boats to support other community organization events along the Gorge. This opportunity allows the public to enjoy rides and raise funds to support community groups, even local schools have been regular users of the voyageur canoes. Early each spring Paddle for the Kids event supports Easter Seal Charities.



## Water Safety & Racing

The Club's purpose is to promote safe and responsible paddling with regular training and skill development sessions available. Members of VCKC include qualified instructors in canoe and kayak. This shared knowledge among the members ensure that VCKC events are conducted to current safety standards.

Racing has been part of the VCKC history since inception and continues to be an integral part of its activities. Each year the Club organizes racing events such as Wake Up The Gorge, Switchblade Paddleboat Relay Race, and Guts and Glory Race along the Gorge Waterway, Victoria Harbours and Esquimalt Lagoon Spit.



## History of the Club

In 1982 VCKC took on the lease of Bob's Boat House from the District of Saanich. The ability to provide training and host paddling events on the Gorge Waterway came with the clubhouse and allowed VCKC to become a contributing member to their new community.

