



THE QUESNEL BLACKWATER PADDLERS

CLUB NEWSLETTER.....FEBRUARY 2013

THE BLACKWATER PADDLERS....A LITTLE HISTORY

Our paddling club first saw the light of day in 1990....that's 23 years ago. There was some excited anticipation regarding the fact that a group of Lakehead University students were slowly making their way in the direction of Quesnel as they marked the bicentennial of Alexander Mackenzie's four year [1790 – 1793] odyssey across North America to the Pacific Ocean, by recreating his journey almost to the day....only 200 years later. Our club, known officially as the Dene Voyageur Heritage Society was formed and our group plunged head long into the excitement of the Bicentennial celebrations. Since that time we have continued to promote paddling in all of its forms in our community and area. Along the way our club assumed the "handle" Blackwater Paddlers [although we are still officially the DVHS]. The club is a community organization through which paddling trips, canoeing lessons and social events are co-ordinated. Informal evening paddles, along with weekend events, are scheduled throughout the summer months. A Sunday paddle in late September - in observance of BC Rivers Day - is normally the final event of the season. Two major social gatherings are held each year. A spring get-together held in April, welcomes the public to a video presentation and informational evening, along with an invitation to take part in paddling events and consider joining the club. The club's Annual General Meeting in late October is combined with a social gathering, usually featuring a slideshow or equivalent presentation.

CLUB EXECUTIVE 2012 – 2013

The current club executive members, as elected at our AGM in October 2012 are:

Ron Watteyne	President
Jerry McFetridge	Treasurer
Linda Moon	Secretary
John Marien	Director
John Havens	Director
Jeffrey Dinsdale	Director
Doug Nelson	Director
Carolyn Draginov	Director

A sixth Director, Tim Landon has had to step down for personal reasons and while the constitution does not state that there should be a set number of Directors, there could be room to appoint a replacement to Tim for the remainder of the term. Feel free to contact any member of the executive with any questions, suggestions, commendations and concerns. The executive wants to see the club flourish, executive meetings are held monthly.

CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Memberships are due in October, the fee is \$25.00 for individuals and \$35.00 for families. At this time, membership fees are the club's main source of income. Approximately \$10.00 from each membership is forwarded to the Recreational Canoeing Association of British Columbia to cover the club's portion of the liability coverage that is made available to all member clubs of the RCABC. A membership form may be downloaded from the club website www.quesnel paddlers.com or picked up at Rocky Peak Adventure Gear on Reid Street. and may be mailed to the club mailbox [Box 4092, Quesnel B.C., V2J 3J2] or dropped off at Rocky Peak. During the 2011-2012 year, club membership approached 100 individuals.

CLUB FINANCES

No "official" financial report is available for this issue of the newsletter...but treasurer Jerry McFetridge assures us that the club is definitely solvent and operating in the black. A fund which was established to "self insure" the club's voyageur canoe the Blackwater Dancer consists of investments in the form of term deposits. Ongoing operating costs are covered from the club's chequing account.



RIVER'S DAY 2012 [Ron Watteyne]

OUR CLUB'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE RECREATIONAL CANOEING ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA [RCABC]

British Columbia is fortunate to have a provincial canoeing association of which our club is a member. The RCABC is the body through which our club obtains club liability coverage. We are fortunate in that one of our club executive members, John Marien is also a member of the RCABC Board of Directors [Zone Director] and while not exclusively our club representative on that body, he does share lots of valuable information about RCABC activities.

The purposes of the Recreational Canoeing Association of British Columbia (RCABC) are:

1. to coordinate, promote, and encourage all types of recreational paddling;
2. to develop safe canoeing practices and activities for canoes;
3. to involve the society in appropriate conservation and environmental issues around the province.

What does RCABC provide?

- teaching and course standards for recreational canoeing
- official instructor and paddler certification programs
- information for paddlers who are interesting in canoeing in BC
- significant benefits for active members of the association
- environmental activism in the best interest in BC's rivers

EXECUTIVE PLANS FOR THE UPCOMING PADDLING SEASON

The club executive has taken a look at those areas where they would like to focus the club's energies during the 2012 – 2013 season. First of all it is important to note that the Blackwater Paddlers is a paddling club and that membership and participation in club events is open to paddlers of all kinds, including canoeists, kayakers, stand up paddlers and big boat paddlers interested in recreational paddling. However paddling instruction provided by the club focuses exclusively on recreational canoeing.

The areas for club focus with possible related activities will be:

Flat Water: weekly paddles, evenings, day trips, mentoring

Moving Water: weekly paddles, evenings, day trips, mentoring

Education/Lessons: flat water, moving water, canoeing/voyageur paddling, youth, safety

Tripping: education/trip leader training, short introductory trips, extended trip

Voyageur Canoeing: training/skill building, practice sessions, brigade participation, organizing a brigade event, voyageur history

Advocacy: ecological issues, facilities, access issues, stewardship issues, collaboration with other groups

History/Education/Adventure: presentations, movies/videos, on line, speakers, Voyageur Rock

Equipment/Facilities: club equipment maintenance, personal equipment upkeep, preventative maintenance, repairs, construction, storage, education

Communications: website, facebook, email fanout, phone chain, newsletter

Socializing/AGM: annual wind up, movie/video nights, pot luck socials, other.....

Administration: dues, memberships, insurance, liability issues, RCABC, AGM, society paperwork, correspondence, meeting minutes, etc. etc.....everything to make the club happen

Some executive members have indicated their interest in devoting energy to one or more of these areas...we are also looking for other members of the club to come forward and to indicate their interest in working on one or more of these areas. The annual Schedule of Events is under consideration at this time and hopefully it will contain activities from each of these identified areas of interest, the Schedule of Events will be available at the Spring Get-Together to take place on April 18th.

AN IMPROVED WEBSITE

The club website www.quesnelpaddlers.com has been up and running for about 4 years....but it is time for a facelift. Look for an improved website within the next few weeks. The executive would welcome suggestions as to the type of information that you would like to see posted on the club website. The club also has a Facebook presence at Blackwater Paddlers. For those who are on Facebook, this is a great place to post photos of your paddling trips and also to interact with other local paddlers regarding your paddling experiences and upcoming plans.

THE BOWRON LAKE VOLUNTEER WARDEN PROGRAM

Over the past year, BC Parks has invested a great deal of effort promoting what has been termed the BC Parks Volunteer Strategy. A series of public workshops took place throughout the province leading up to the production of the Provincial Public Engagement Report. This information is available on line at www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks click on the heading **volunteers**. Our club wants to take advantage of this new opportunity for club members to become closely involved as volunteers with the Bowron Lake Provincial Park. The executive has prepared a proposal to reactivate the Bowron Lake Park Volunteer Warden Program. The proposal is to implement a conservation and recreation partnership between BC Parks and the Quesnel Blackwater Paddlers. Those who would become Volunteer Wardens would offer their time out of a sincere desire to safeguard and promote a place that is very special to all of us. This proposal has only just been submitted to BC Parks for their consideration. Look for reports regarding the progress of this proposal. For detailed information contact any member of the club executive.

MARK THIS DATE ON YOUR CALENDAR....

THURSDAY APRIL 18TH

BLACKWATER PADDLERS....SPRING GET-TOGETHER

SHIRAOI HOUSE.....7:00 P.M.

DISCUSS PLANS FOR THE PADDLING SEASON.....GREAT VIDEO PRESENTATION

DETAILED INFORMATION TO FOLLOW IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS



Quesnel River 2012 [Ron Watteyne]

RCABC INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMENT GRANT 2013

Purpose:

- To provide assistance for club members or individuals to become certified as Canoe Instructors by the Recreational Canoeing Association of BC (RCABC).
- To promote canoeing and canoeing safety by training RCABC instructors with a focus on areas of BC which are in need of qualified instructors.

Grant Details:

- Each year a total of maximum \$2000 is available to a limited number of RCABC member clubs or individuals in the province of British Columbia.
- The maximum or minimum number of people receiving grants is not fixed. The money will be divided based on need and value to the sport of recreational canoeing as determined by the executive or committee in charge of the grant.
- The grant money will fund bringing an instructor to the region or bringing a club member to an instructor level course in BC.
- In regions where no club exists, an application by any individual will still be considered if an opportunity to develop a canoeing community is demonstrated.
- The grant is valid for a course within one year after notification of successful application by RCABC.
- In the event that no instructor level applications are submitted, paddler level course applications may be considered. Instructor level and paddler level courses may be blended to boost enrolment.
- Preference is given to club members or individuals in remote regions or regions with few or no local RCABC instructors, however all clubs are eligible.
- Grants will not be awarded to the same club member or individual 2 years in a row unless there are no other applications.
- Grants must be received by Mar 1, 2013 and successful applicants will be notified by Apr. 1, 2013.

Application Details:

- Minimum age of 16 years
- Two references from people involved in outdoor recreation or community involvement must be included.
- The executive of RCABC reserves the right to determine the criteria used in judging successful grant applications. RCABC will contact applicants to confirm of a grant application and to notify applicants whether their application is successful or not.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS AND A SECOND GRANT FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A VOYAGEUR CANOEING INSTRUCTOR GO TO www.bccanoe.com THERE YOU WILL ALSO FIND APPLICATION FORMS. FOR EVEN MORE INFORMATION CONTACT JOHN MARIEN

A NEW PADDLING CLUB IN TOWN...THE QUESNEL CANOE CLUB

The above heading is a bit misleading, it might be more appropriate to talk about a familiar paddling group with a new name. We are all familiar with the Quesnel dragon boaters who were more formally known as the Dragon Lake Paddlers. This amazing group of [mostly] women brought dragon boating to our community and has overseen the growth of dragon boating from one to two boats with the active participation of over 60 individuals. With their quite remarkable growth has come a need for larger facilities, and this group has initiated very exciting plans to construct a permanent boathouse at Pioneer Park on Dragon Lake.

Up until this point, all members of the Dragon Lake Paddlers have been paid up members of the Blackwater Paddlers, this arrangement extended the RCABC liability insurance coverage to include all of the dragon boating activities. However, with the ambitious plans to construct the boathouse, it was only realistic for the dragon boaters to form their own non profit society. Being a registered society in their own right will allow them to apply for and obtain various available grants that would help make their plans to construct a boathouse a reality. This new society is officially known and registered as the Quesnel Canoe Club, it is understood that this group will affiliate directly with the RCABC and so will have liability insurance coverage in their own name. All dragon boaters will no longer be members of the Blackwater Paddlers [unless they want to be] but rather will be members of the Quesnel Canoe Club.

The plans outlined by the Quesnel Canoe Club are exciting and will be great for dragon boating in Quesnel. The Quesnel Canoe Club is planning a fund raising Pub Night to be held in April at Murphy's Pub....attendance at this event will be a great opportunity for all paddlers in our community to come together in support of this new club, to help ensure that their plans do come to fruition. Contact a club member for details and to purchase a ticket....space will be limited.

VOYAGEUR CANOEING BRIGADES...SUMMER OF 2013

There are two Brigades planned for the summer of 2013. The dates are August 5 to 16 for the Rideau Canal System near Ottawa and August 25 to 30 for the Harrison-Fraser Waterways near Vancouver. Read below for a brief outline of these two brigades. There are links to both of these brigades on the voyageurbrigade.org website.

Fraser River Brigade....August 25-30, 2013

What better way to experience a big river than in a big canoe? The Fort Langley Canoe Club is hosting a week long voyageur canoe brigade spanning the Fraser's many faces: wilderness river, working river, heritage river. Starting at the resort town of Harrison, we will paddle the Harrison River and then move into the mighty, storied, Fraser River. Crews and their boats will experience rivers sacred to the first nations, and to salmon. The Fraser is the life blood for the province of British Columbia. Organizers expect ten to fifteen teams. Each crew will be self-sufficient, providing vehicle support for their canoe and their paddlers and ground crew. The FLCC is organizing the camping—no small feat in an urban area, and will provide some historical vignettes and background information on the river and its denizens. The trip will culminate with a feast near our finish line close to the Salish Sea.

Further information for crews and individuals will be posted on: http://fortlangleycanooclub.ca/voy_fraser_brigade_2013.html

for info, contact Katie Stein Sather, ksather@shaw.ca

2013 Rideau Canal Voyageur Canoe Brigade

Winter has arrived early across much of the country, and also ahead of schedule is much of the planning for the 2013 Rideau Canal Voyageur Canoe Brigade. Full information about this brigade can be found through the front page link on the Voyageur Brigade Society (<http://www.voyageurbrigade.org>). This brigade is planned for August 5 to 16, 2013. Up to ten crews will paddle replica fur trade canoes from Kingston to Ottawa, on the Rideau Canal. The brigade schedule allows for plenty of time to explore the many historic sites along our 210 km route. The canal itself was completed in 1832, includes some 45 locks, and is the oldest continuously maintained canal system in North America. As in past big canoe brigades (the 2008 & 2011 David Thompson Brigades) this brigade will be organized by crews. The brigade organizers are responsible for the scheduling, booking campgrounds and events, and coordinating with local officials. Crews are responsible for their paddler pick-up arrangements, road travel during the brigade, crew meals, and shared paddling and camping gear. At present brigade organizers are continuing to scour eastern Ontario for additional, available big canoes with the goal of providing rental craft for crews traveling across the country for this event. Paddlers may register as a complete crew, an incomplete crew, and individual paddlers will be assisted in joining or forming a crew. We already have one volunteer coordinating our first crew of unattached paddlers. And we have our first support crew volunteer! If you are interested in the brigade please peruse the posted brigade information, and if further questions need to be addressed please Contact Mark Lund (Co- Brigade Chief) marklund@shaw.ca We look forward to paddling with folks from all across Canada next summer!

There are links to both of these brigades on the www.voyageurbrigade.org website.

HIDDEN TREASURE

Slow down, you might just miss this jewel of a lake if you are unfamiliar with the area. It is a treasure worth finding. Boya Lake, located just short of the British Columbia/Yukon border on the Cassiar highway (Hwy 37), is a kayaker's heaven. Excellent camping facilities, easy access to lakeshore and beautiful weather made us extend our overnight stay into a two day visit.

The impossibly blue, crystal clear water and white sand is reminiscent of Mexico until you notice spruce trees or you dip your toe into the icy water. With its interesting shoreline, multiple islands, vibrant birdlife, occasional beaver or muskrat, Boya Lake is also a photographer's paradise.



The brilliant red of the kayak's bow emphasizes the impossibly blue water.

A big thank you to Lin Weich for sending this information and photo along!!

Well that's it for this issue, there seems to be lots of paddling news to share. This is going out to all club members/supporters for whom we have an email address...eventually it will also end up on the club website...but if you know of someone interested in paddling who may be interested in this information, please share it with them.....until the next issue remember....open side up!

Jeff Dinsdale