

# lifestyles & leisure

## Quatsino Life — Kayakers converge on Kagoagh

Kagoagh Lodge, located at the head of scenic Hecate Cove, hosted kayakers from SSKA; South Island Sea Kayaking Association recently. The group of 13 retirees are mostly from the Victoria area at the south end of Vancouver Island where they paddle regularly. They had ventured to the far north end of the island to explore new waters. This is the third occasion that these kayakers have gone to such lengths for a unique kayaking experience. The spring and the fall of 2019 saw two parties exploring Quatsino Sound and the adjoining waterways. COVID, of course, put a hold on those explorations until this year when the organizers were able to return with a new group. Finding “kayak friendly” accommodations presents an annual challenge for these intrepid outdoors people. Waterfront access must be approachable from the water and from the land. Muddy or steep shorelines pose dif-

ficulties while shallow and gradual profiles prove more accessible. Transporting kayaks to and from destinations is also an exercise involving care taken to secure the boats safely and protect them from wind buffeting and abrasions of strapping. Several members of the team kayaked to the lodge from their departure point in Coal Harbour. A passing local imagined they were in difficulty through the narrows during a surging tide as they made their way closely along the edges to avoid the ripping current and whirl pools, they all laughed as one when told that story! “If you knew how many combined years of kayaking we have amongst us you would be surprised!” said one white haired participant. Calendars are consulted to select travel times as the timing of tides can be more crucial to a successful paddle than even some weather effects. A first quarter moon or third quarter moon



Photo — Susan Mohler

South Island Sea Kayaking Association members form a star in Quatsino.

means a low tide midday and outflowing waters through the morning and inflowing homeward bound waters at the end of the day. The inland waters

of Quatsino Sound are considered sheltered and protected making kayaking ventures more enjoyable, safe and less difficult. Open ocean waters,

such as those found outside the Broken Islands group on the west coast can create more serious wind and wave challenges even for these seasoned kayakers. Different trips are mapped out for each day with the team on the water by 9:30 a.m. and off the water usually by 2:30 or 3 by the time afternoon winds typically rise. A trip to Drake Island and into Pamphlet Cove with a picnic lunch on the old hotel site was taken on day 1. A trip to Atkins Cove is planned for day 2 and a clockwise circumnavigation of Drake Island for the final day.

Past trips have included exploration of the scenic Marble River and a close shoreline paddle along the Quatsino community shoreline to Ildstad Island, site of early settlers' homesteads. When asked why they paddle, the participants enthused about wildlife sightings, healthful and vigorous exercise, fresh air, good company and spectacular scenery. On each trip the paddlers carry

with them food, water, waterproof maps and GPS technology, first aid and communication equipment including VHF radios, and Coast Guard required safety gear. On their first adventure to Quatsino in 2019 the kayakers were travelling light preferring to cater their own food supplies and service but on subsequent trips have taken advantage of Gina Chae; lodge co-owner and chef's excellent cuisine on offer, and have been doing so ever since. After a long workout on the water, the lodge guests relax in the great room, enjoy the bartending services of Tyler Halls, husband and co-owner of the lodge. Tyler is also one of the fishing guides once the season opens. to find out more about Kagoagh Lodge visit <https://www.kagoagh.com> to find out more about SSKA visit <https://siska.ca/prod>

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Photo — Submitted

Mud Bowl Medalists

The first Mud Bowl in three years was held in Port McNeill May 14 and 15 and lived up to its name with nine teams battled in the rainy and cold weather. The well-organized soccer tournament featured about 400 players. 50-50s were held over the course of the weekend that raised over \$400. Winners were: U12 G - Port McNeill, U12 B - Port McNeill, U15 G - Port McNeill 2, U15 B - Port Hardy, U18 - Port McNeill, pictured above.