

North American Land Surveyors Canoe (Koo Koo Sint) Team

Robert Allen, BCLS, Sechelt

Mark your calendars for June 1, 2011 to be in Invermere, BC for the start of the last of the David Thompson Columbia River Canoe Brigades. This will be similar to the Brigade in 2008 that Gord and Floss Thompson participated in on the North Saskatchewan River and the one they talked about at the mixed breakfast at the 2010 BCLS AGM. This Brigade will start in Invermere and travel south and upstream along the Columbia River to Canal Flats. From there, a short portage will take the canoes to the Kootenay River for a leisurely paddle downstream with stops in British Columbia along the way in Wasa, Fort Steele, and Kikomun Provincial Park.

At Wardner, a short distance south of Cranbrook, on Highway 3, the Brigade will enter Lake Kooanuska, the first of many lakes on the Kootenay/Columbia River systems. The international boundary will then be crossed on June 7th, with a planned ceremony by the International Boundary Commission. Peter Sullivan, the Surveyor General of Canada and International Boundary Commissioner, has been invited, and has accepted our invitation to join us in our canoe.

The Brigade will continue on to Libby, Montana, arriving there on June 8th. From there, another portage the next day will take us to Thompson Falls, Montana on the Clark Fork River where we will continue downstream to Sandpoint, Idaho, and the start of the trip down the Pend Oreille River to Tiger, Washington.

Another portage will then take us to Kettle Falls, Washington, and the Columbia River again; all the while basically following David Thompson's routes. We leave Kettle Falls on June 18th, 200 years to the day after Thompson arrived there. We continue down the Columbia River, again on a series of Lakes with portages around each of the dams. We will spend July 1st, Canada Day, in our only wilderness camping experience and July 4th, will find us in

Pasco, Washington. On July 15, 2011, our journey ends at Astoria, Oregon, 200 years to the day that David Thompson first arrived there.

It is anticipated that there will be up to 20 canoes in the Brigade, including our own North American Land Surveyors Canoe that we have named Koo Koo Sint, the name meaning Star Gazer, given to David Thompson by some of the indigenous people. All of us in our Canoe will be responsible for our own personal expenses such as food, camping gear, travel costs to Invermere and from Astoria, paddles, etc., but there will be many 'common' expenses to cover on this trip and if anyone wishes to donate to our Canoe Team, please contact me. The 'common' expenses are things like group insurance, registration fees, fuel for the vehicles while on route, etc.

We have already raised some funds, but we will need more, so if you are asked for a donation, please consider supporting us. All donors will have their names published on our website and will also have their names on donor boards to be erected at each camping location each night. We will do what we can to promote your name as well as David Thompson and his wife, Charlotte Small. Any survey office or organization giving a 'significant' donation of \$1000.00 or more will also have their logo placed on our Canoe, the website and the donor boards.

If anyone wishes to join us for all, or even part of the Brigade, please let me know. I am committed to the entire journey and so are a few others; while some are planning on joining us for a week or two. We are also looking for a support team to help out along the route so there are numerous ways one can get involved. For more information, please visit our website: www.skylark.ca/nals.htm or contact me at: robert_allen@dccnet.com.

