

# Squallers Hollering 2010

White Squall joins the Quarter Century Club - still paddlin' and chicken wranglin' after all these years!

Twenty five years ago Kathy and I must have sat ourselves down and decided to start White Squall. Can't really remember but I do know it wasn't the result of careful thought or planning - more like, "let's give it a go and see what happens". We gave up teaching careers and guaranteed pensions - no wonder some friends thought we were nuts. I thought we were nuts.

That first winter we drove around the backwoods with a van full of skis teaching cross country skiing. Kathy would cook up a pot of corn chowder in the morning - "Ski lesson first - then Lunch" was our hook. It was heaps of fun and I loved the chowder part, but it wasn't a barn burner in the revenue department. The next spring we introduced the Aquaterra Chinook poly sea kayak to Georgian Bay. Having grown up on the Bay's southern shores, I knew they would be a perfect vessel to explore this coast. Right off the bat we had weekend clinics, daytrips and overnight journeys to the outer islands. Saturday afternoons Kathy would bring a tray of cookies and hot drinks down to the beach and our rolling class would break for a cup of tea. I liked that part the best. Hey, we still break for cookies and hot tea twice every day - some traditions never fade.

This past October a bunch of us headed for Vancouver Island's west side for a week on the ocean. The outer coast of Nootka is a stunning waterscape of waves, beaches and stories that go back thousands of years. It was my old stomping grounds as a sea kayak guide with Strathcona Outdoor Centre and I was keen to show the young 'uns where I got hooked on this crazy sport. We were "wet dropped" by the MV Uchuck - lovingly known as the Upchuck depending on what the waves are doing. A wooden coastal freighter, she's one of two that still ply the outer waters servicing outports and logging camps. This is Rick Mercer country - a world bigger than life itself - a wild place of lightkeepers, lonely cabins and whales. In 1776 when Cook sailed in on a storm completely lost, it was the locals yelling "Nutka" who greeted him. He thought they were just being obliging, calling out their name so he could jot it down in his log - truth was they were waving to what's now known as Friendly Cove saying, "over here you silly bunt" A first attempt at indigenous tourism that didn't work so well. The cove became England's discovery - except they were way late for the party. If you're interested in our adventure, see [whitesquall.com](http://whitesquall.com), the story and photos are there somewhere!

Speaking of our website, there are some quite different downloads you might not know about. Everything from Sarah singing about weather to Gerard Courtin and David Pearson's briefing notes on rocks and trees of Georgian Bay to on-water cheat sheets!

Looking after the Bay isn't rocket science. We've been involved with a variety of efforts over the years with community partners, not because we're saints - just makes sense. On Squall trips, everyone takes time to clean up campsites and tread softly. Carling Township continues to spearhead the Franklin Island Stewardship and we heartily support them along with efforts of other groups. But in the absence of an outer island programme this year we're moving forward with the "SOD" project (Squallions Out Digging). Simply put - we'll use Jesse's motor boat to send two staff out regularly to clean, install and maintain campsite thunderboxes from the southern Cathcarts to Big McCoy Island. We have done this lots in years past and it's time to get dirty again. It goes a long way to ensuring that when you paddle up to a wild Bay island, it will look, smell and feel wild. We can check lot of sites quickly - but need your help. Staffing, gas and gear costs several thousand dollars per season. If you want to help us out - we're not shy. over we go.....

Years ago we stocked the British Valley Kayaks when men were men and chickens were chickens. After a long absence - we're bringing them back! Their signature boat, the Nordkapp is a time-tested sea hull updated and built in poly and composites. When we began it was the hot boat if you were a cool dude. Isn't it fine that designs don't change much from year to year? Two pointy ends and a middle are hard to muck up. Nimbus Kayaks are back - thanks to several staff and customers hounding me incessantly. They're hard to beat as tough, Canadian west-coast sea kayaks with a welcoming cockpit and quick turning. From Quebec we're excited to welcome Maelstrom - leading edge composite sea kayaks in funky colour combos. Who says Canadians can't rock and roll? Musn't forget P&H, Current Designs, Wilderness Systems, Perception, Dagger, Delta, Impex, Boreal, Seaward, Advanced Elements, Bluewater, Scott, Souris River, Mad River, Nova Craft....oh yeah, and the latest in Stand Up Paddle Boards - whew!

Starting the paddling season off is our May Long Weekend Paddle Party with Fred J. Eaglesmith. When he first heard it was our anniversary year, Fred kept May open and promised he would come, whenever it was. We used to be his longest running gig. The Squall was where he learned to roll kayaks! We're honoured to have him come and hope you can join the celebration. Can't wait for our Sweetwater Senior Youth Expedition - an 11 day leadership journey from Parry Sound to Little Current (for grads of our Youth Quest) where participants can try for Paddle Canada skill certification. We've got a full slate of cabin-based and wilderness trips along with the widest selection of clinics and certification courses we've ever had. Gerard Courtin & David Pearson are joining forces in Paddling, Ecology & Ancient Mountains. Thom Morrissey and Doug Elsey are teaming up for Digital Photography, Theresa Gregory is heading up Yoga and Astronomer Doug Cunningham is bringing his telescope for Stars on the Rocks. The depth of talent we have on these trips is quite amazing - these guys are tops in their field, and we feel lucky they want to keep tripping with us. The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Storm Gathering will anchor our fall paddling - and a great way to say goodbye to the season.

There's a very special book that means a great deal to Kathy and me. "On the Loose" was written by two brothers Terry and Renny Russell back in 1967 and became the best selling Sierra Club book of all time - a bible for generations of backcountry wanderers. About two guys being 'out there' - no Risk Management Plan on file, or Goretex shells or SPOT transceivers - just grabbing life as fast and fully as they could - uncertified! They had a way of seeing the world and plonking themselves into it. You can still get this book through a reseller and if enough people ask, I could order a bunch and have them on hand in the shop. Anyhow - I'll leave you with one small excerpt:

*"Adventure is not in the guidebook....beauty is not on the map. Seek and ye shall find."*

Thanks for listening and supporting us these 25 years. We plan to keep truckin' for many more, so look out!

Tim & Kathy

ps - there's a podcast from the east coast called "Doing Stuff Outdoors" by Gary Mittelholtz, a former CBC journalist who interviewed Kathy and me last summer. See <http://doingstuffoutdoors.com/?p=600>

printed on recycled, de-inked, re-inked and oinked, animal-free paper by forest elves who eat only organic soynuts, think good thoughts, do yoga twice a day in the buff and are charter members of the David Suzuki Foundation - and.....don't quite get prorogation. Hey, let's all prorogue!

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