

Chesapeake Paddler



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CPA Annual Meeting and Paddle

CPA Coordinator **Ralph Heimlich** opened the CPA's Annual Meeting and introduced and thanked current Officers and Steering Committee members for their work. **Catriona Miller**, who is stepping down, was recognized for serving two years on the Steering Committee, along with assisting with the webpage and CPA Facebook activities.

Financial Report 2013 Treasurer **Rich Stevens** distributed the year-to-date Annual Financial Report (through 10/15/2013). He presented details of income and expenses for major events, training classes, winter pool rolling sessions, logo gear supplies, membership dues, piracy expenditures, planning meetings, bank expenses, meeting supplies, club appreciation gifts, and newsletter printing and postage expenses. Current balance is \$26,150. There will be additional expenses in December, including the annual Club insurance renewal premium, various Piracy annual stipends, annual Holiday Party, and 2014 event reservation costs. We usually run all activities at a break even cost to the club. However, the 2013 winter pool rolling session costs at UMCP were 50% more than the collected fees. Dues collection in 2013 is higher –with a total of \$6,013. One year (\$10) membership dues were added into the SK102 registration fee, to facilitate online registration. Rich reported that the club is in good financial shape due to our cash on hand. However, we are now spending a bit more than we are taking in. We have a financial cushion at this point, and the Steering Committee will monitor income and expenditures in the future. Rich indicated that CPA is current and in compliance with state and federal tax filing requirements. He handles the preparation of the IRS annual 501(c) 4 tax reports and processes all income received via from Paypal, receipts, and outgoing expenses.

Membership Report 2013 Secretary **Sue Stevens** reported we have 683 members, down 4% from 2012, but higher than 668 in 2011. More than 90 % of members join and renew using Paypal for dues payments.

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Petroglyphs of Lake Aldred by David Wilson



Petroglyphs located along Lake Aldred, a portion of the Susquehanna River near Holtwood, Pa. photograph by David Wilson

In mid-October, 20 paddlers from the Pirates of Baltimore (PoB), Pirates of the North (PoN), and Pirates of the Lakes (PoL) met to paddle to the Indian petroglyphs of Lake Aldred. The literal translation of "petroglyph" is "carvings in rock." Petroglyphs are the symbolized tales of people, animals, and events of ancient times, forever preserved in nature's most enduring tablet. The Lake Aldred petroglyphs are among the last to be found in eastern North America.

Our guide for this paddle was Wendy Baker-Davis, a local CPA paddler. The paddle was organized by Bob Shakeshaft and Marla Aron. PoB and PoN paddlers launched from Conestoga Creek. Like all creeks, water flow in the Conestoga is highly dependent on recent rainfall. A recent rain had generated concern about whether or not paddlers would be able to return to the launch site after the viewing due to the creek's heavy flow. These concerns were alleviated when PoL pirates, who had launched from a site downstream, paddled upstream to our launch site. The currents were strong, but doable.

Within Lake Aldred there are two major rock outcroppings that contain petroglyphs. One of these, Big Indian Rock, has a large ledge that, on the day of our visit, lay just beneath the waterline. It provided a perfect landing site for kayaks. To the untrained eye, the petroglyphs on Big Indian Rock are not immediately evident. It took our group 10 minutes of intense searching to locate but a few carvings. Little Indian Rock, on the other hand, is littered with carvings, but is a bit more challenging to climb onto. The docking ledge is only a foot wide and the exit immediately begins with a step out onto steeply sloped rocks which must be climbed to get to a large, flat surface. Bob Shakeshaft and Scott Bekker assisted those who took up the challenge. After exiting, kayaks were corded and

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Petroglyphs along Lake Aldred photograph by David Wilson

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passed to persons on Little Indian Rock who then tethered them to a tree growing from a rock fissure.

The carvings on Little Indian Rock have been cataloged and are easily identifiable using a [key](#) available on the Internet. We copied and distributed copies of the key to each paddler before launching. The angle of the sun is important for viewing the petroglyphs, because the carvings are only 3/8ths of an inch deep. Constant exposure to weather and flowing water has blurred their once sharp edges. Light shone on the petroglyphs at an angle shadows the deeper portions of the carving, making them stand out visually. On the day of our visit, skies were overcast and cloudy. To highlight the petroglyphs, we rubbed a moistened sponge over the rock surface. This caused the area around the carving to turn a dark gray. As we wet the rock surfaces, we began to see images of men walking, four-legged creatures, bird tracks, snakes, and a strange, swallow tailed bird that Wendy identified as a "Thunderbird."

On the edge of the grouping lay a carving that looked like it may be a comet. However, Wendy pointed out that the Indians knew comets to have straight tails, not curved ones. Strangely, this fishlike creature also appears to have antlers. This, Wendy explained, is a Manitou. In between thousand year old carvings lay a few new ones. One read "B. Weaver." Below it was scribed "Co B." Could this be a carving of Civil War era? "What is a Manitou?" someone asked. A Manitou is a spiritual being. The Algonquin believed all animals, plants, and humans contain a spirit. All spirits are connected to one another through a Great Spirit, or Great Manitou. The importance of the spirit in Indian culture is emphasized by the fact that many words were used to characterize the various types of Manitou that exist. The spirits of small animals were called "manidoowag." Insects spirits were called "manidoons." "Manitow" were the spirits of underwater creatures. Humans could have many types of spirits. Which spirit inhabited an individual was determined by observing his personality and his actions. Sometimes individuals took their names from the spirit that defined their personalities.

Wendy also told us about "Thunderbirds." The Algonquian believed thunder and lightning came from great birds that inhabited storms. These birds took their name from the sound made by their beating wings – thunder. The next time you are paddling and hear Thunderbirds, paddle harder, for lightning is not far behind.



Pirates of the Lakes (left to right): Jack Clark, Mark Rizzuto, Sandy Bixler, Dave Bronson, Fran Arnott, Deb Metzger and Tom Hunt (behind the camera).

Photograph by Tom Hunt



Back row (left to right): Mark Rizzuto, Shriver Foster, Scott Bekker, Bob Shakeshaft, Wendy Baker-Davis, Mike Thomas, Lynn Davis, Gerald Sweet, Gail Addis, and Rich Stevens. Front row: Linda Wilson, Marla Aron, Sue Stevens, and Joan Sweet

photograph by David Wilson

We spent the afternoon photographing and identifying carvings and wondering about the many different meanings of the symbols found on these rocks. Who were these people? What were the stories told here? Was there a meaning to the arrangement of the petroglyphs? On Little Indian Rock, two snakes point to the location where the sun rises during the Equinox. Another snake points to the position of sunrise during the Winter Solstice and sunset during the Summer Solstice. I found myself wondering if, during one of these celestial events, I would see the same sunrise these ancient astronomers saw were I to look down these serpentine guides.

At day's end we returned to our launch site, changed clothing, and loaded our gear aboard our vehicles. The after-paddle dinner commenced at The John Wright Store and Restaurant, a restaurant located in an old, newly remodeled brick warehouse located in the outskirts of York, Pennsylvania. We spent the evening discussing this little known piece of American history, accessible only by kayak, canoe, or other small craft. It was a day enjoyed by all.

Authors note: The petroglyphs of Lake Aldred lie on ground sacred to Algonquin Indian tribes. Please respect their beliefs if you choose to visit.

Web link: http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/petroglyphs/3892/little_indian_rock_petroglyph/428688.

David Wilson is a member of the Chesapeake Paddlers Association, Inc. and one of the Captains of the Pirates of Baltimore. A club member since 2009, he resides in Nottingham, Maryland, and creates handcrafted Greenland Paddles. Dave's blog is <http://www.theweatheredpaddle.com/the-weathered-paddle-blog.html>.