



# CANADIAN OUTRIGGER HALL OF FAME

## Grace Morissette



### Summary

Grace Morissette has a 30+ year legacy of selfless volunteer effort to paddling sports in general and outrigger canoe racing in particular. Grace has made contributions to support Canadian paddlers at the international, national, provincial, and club levels. Grace has been part of Lotus Sports Club that has organized the popular Lotus Iron [01], Lotus Ice Breaker [02], Lotus Poker Paddle [03], Lotus Fall Classic Sprints [04], and Bill Alley Memorial Lotus Dragon Boat Regatta [05] for many years. Grace has given freely of her time as Juniors coach at Lotus. Grace has served on the Lotus Executive as well as the CORA Board.

### Early Career

Isamu (Sam) and Masako Hori had 3 daughters (Nancy Berke; Kathy Hori; Grace Morissette). [06] Sam Hori owned and operated Douglas Auto Service for 35 years with his brother and dad. [07] Nancy Berke and Grace Morissette collaborated on an article published in the National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Centre Newsletter in Winter 2005 entitled "*Creating an Awareness of Traditional Japanese Art Forms*" on behalf of Masako Hori. A career in excellence with traditional Japanese arts of e-sumi painting, ceramics, and lantern making, led to Masako being nominated for a Living Heritage Award at the 2002 Explorasion Canadian Heritage Award Ceremony. [08] In 1981, Grace would graduate with a Bachelors of Education with a Major in Geography and a Minor in Environmental Education from Simon Fraser University (SFU) in Burnaby. [09] In 2005, Grace would graduate with a Masters in Environmental Education from SFU in Burnaby. [10] Part of her degree included a 300KM paddle down the Yukon River plus research into ways to increase youth involvement in outrigger canoeing.

### Outrigger Canoeing Achievements

Grace does not have an extensive IVF Sprints / Distance, Catalina, Molokai Na Wahine portfolio. What Grace does have is an impressive history as a steersperson and a subtle role in the growth of outrigger canoeing events now attended by many Canadian paddlers. At 1992 Sacramento IVF World Sprints, the 1st year that Canada would attend IVF World Sprints, Team Canada Women with Grace would take Bronze in V6 1000M Masters Women. [11] Lotus would send a crew for the first time to the 1987 Queen Liliuokalani Race, [12] when the changes race was introduced and then every other year for decades. Grace would do the Queen Liliuokalani Race 12 times, including when it was a 9 women changes race, and 11 of those times were as a steersperson for a womens or youth crew. [13] At the Queen Liliuokalani pre-race briefings, it is often mentioned that in 2006, Lotus was the first mixed crew allowed to race with the mens crews (as an unofficial crew). [14] Now there is an official Queen Liliuokalani Race mixed division. [15] Grace was in charge of changes for a Lotus mens crew doing the Catalina Crossing in 1998, after having done the womens race the previous day. Grace is quite often steering for a Lotus crew at CORA races or The Gorge or Pacific Northwest Outrigger Challenge (PNWOC) and countless other races. Grace brings confidence to the crews she steers and demonstrates caution, sportsmanship. and etiquette at crowded turns.

### Coach-Builder Achievements

Grace has been an integral and continuous presence in dragon boating and outrigger canoeing with Lotus since the 1980s. Grace acquired National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) credentials from the Coaching Association of Canada (CCA) early in her career. [09] Grace has been with Lotus from the outset in the mid-1980s, during which time Lotus has hosted Lotus Iron since 1989, [16] Lotus Ice Breaker since 1993, [17] Lotus Poker Paddle since 2012, and Lotus Fall Classic Sprints from 2000-2008. Grace has been with the Lotus Executive in some capacity continuously. Grace has been Lotus Juniors coach as well as Race Coordinator for Lotus Ice Breaker and Lotus Iron and Lotus Poker Paddle for many years. [18] Grace was nominated to the CORA Board in 2018 and took responsibility for liaising with the Membership Director. Grace brought her vast experience as a Race Coordinator to assist with the new Membership Database that has received rave reviews from CORA

Sanctioned Event Race Directors seeking to reduce volunteer workload for Race Registration. [19] Grace has contributed to several significant paddlesports publications. Doug Mancell and Grace collaborated on the CORA Website Juniors Safety manual highlighting that Youth development programs must be well planned and safe. [20] Lotus and Grace published a revised Lotus Sports Club Handbook in 2021 with definitive historical and safety details on the dragon boat, outrigger canoe and SUP programs offered by Lotus. [21] Lotus has sent crews to each Vancouver Dragon Boat Festival since 1986, founded the Lotus Iron as the first outrigger canoe race in 1989, and decided in the spring of 1989 to start a youth development program. [21] Since then, the program has grown to include 7 schools in the Tri-Cities and Burnaby area and over 2000 young paddlers have been in the program. These youth teams have done very well in both local and international meets and have many championships to their credit. The Lotus youth teams have competed annually in Vancouver's Dragon Boat Festival as well as in many local and international outrigger races, including competitions in the Pacific Northwest and Hawaii. Grace as a Counsellor with Centennial Secondary School in Coquitlam, has been part of this youth development program from the outset. The Bill Alley Memorial Lotus Dragon Boat Regatta (originally "Golden Spike Dragon Boat Regatta") was worked on and introduced by the Lotus Executive and Grace, with monies raised going to the "Bill Alley Memorial Scholarship Fund" for the young members of the Lotus event, to commemorate another memorable paddler who made exemplary contributions to paddling sports. [22] There are many online references going back as far as 1993, [23] with mentions of paddlers acknowledging Grace for lifetime friendships formed over many years from their time with Grace as their dragon boat coach for Gung Haggis and other teams. [24] Lotus and Grace have supported IVF World Sprints initiatives by hosting Lotus Fall Classic Sprints events (2000, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2008) and providing OC6s for the 2013 CORA Sprint Championships at Burnaby Lake prior to IVF Rio World Sprints 2014. [25] During the 12-year run of the Big Chop, [26] Grace would travel with a trailer of small-boats from Burnaby to Burrard Marina for as many as possible of the 10 Summer Series Races to race OC2 with other small-boat paddlers to boost their confidence level in small-boat racing. [27] Grace would take the time to write a Testimonial in recognition of Kai Bartlett and Keone Miyake for their coaching expertise at the 2018 Kauai Summer OC1 Clinic following participation by Lotus and Grace in the 2018 Na Pali Challenge. [28] The unplanned effort to collect CORA outrigger canoeing history was a spin-off from the CORA Canoe Registry initiative. [29] Grace was one of a small number of volunteers who took it upon herself to do research to confirm events / dates / places / individuals (including her joining David Boulding for a drive across the border in Autumn 1986 to pick up some paddling gear and meet with Canada Customs to import the California Malia mould into Canada), that are the threads of history, and diligently proof-read / spell-check / grammar-check several drafts until the content was factually / politically correct. The end result of this ongoing research has been a set of complete reference documents including a detailed history of outrigger canoes from the original Hawaiian Malia to the various Unlimited OC6s, [30] detailed background on history / distributors / owners of all of the various Unlimited OC6s across Canada, [31] detailed history of the first outrigger canoes in Canada [32] The Lotus Legacy (1986-2019), [33] The False Creek Legacy (1982-2000), [34] and The Jericho Legacy (1993-2020). [35] As if being Race Coordinator for 3 hugely popular outrigger canoe events, and Lotus Executive member, and Lotus Juniors coach, and CORA Board member was not enough, Grace has also played a part in the resurgence of Lotus in the competitive racing arena. Many clubs go through up and down cycles where membership climbs with an increase in competitiveness, and membership drops with a decrease in competitiveness. Lotus has consistently fielded strong youth and adult crews in recent years. The increased competitiveness from Lotus small-boat racers has been very noticeable. Ken Asano and Tony Hodanic consistently travelled the miles from BC to Oregon to place in the Top 3 in their divisions in the PNWORCA Winter Series for several years. The main goals of Grace throughout 3 decades of coaching, has been to promote outrigger canoeing, to spread the love of paddlesports and connections between clubs, and to introduce paddlesports to young people. Grace participated in the 12 Queen Liliuokalani races in an effort to introduce Lotus paddlers to tropical waters, to experience Hawaiian outrigger canoe culture, and to foster our great relationship with the Hawaiian paddlers. Many former Lotus Juniors are now assisting with coaching of adult and youth dragon boat programs throughout the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island. Former Lotus Junior, Kris Castle, started a dragon boat program in Prince Rupert which grew into the Prince Rupert Outrigger Association. There are currently former Lotus Juniors paddling in Australia, Japan, Germany, and other international clubs.

## **Exemplary Achievements**

Grace has made a commitment to postsecondary education as a Counsellor with Centennial Secondary School in Coquitlam for several decades. [36] Grace has made numerous contributions to the Centennial Secondary School Financial Aid FAQ, detailing what types of financial aid are available for postsecondary education. [37] Grace organized the Centennial School Scholarship Committee for many years coordinating criteria for scholarships, awards, and bursaries for eligible students and also served on the Coquitlam Teachers Association Scholarship Committee. [38] Established in 2012 by businessman and philanthropist Seymour Schulich, the Schulich Leader Scholarships are awarded to high school graduates enrolling in a science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) undergraduate program at 20 partner universities across Canada. To date,

over 500 students have received Schulich scholarships. [39] In 2020, Schulich Leader Scholarships doubled to 100 annual awards. [40] Grace has nominated 1 or 2 Centennial students every year (~12 students) since the Schulich Leader Award was introduced in 2012, including Kelsey Lee, [41] Cindy Wei, [42] [43] and Jessica Wang. [44]. Grace has also nominated Centennial students for other awards more significant than the Schulich Leader Award and there have been many award winners at Centennial. Receiving the inaugural Hugh Town Memorial Builder Award could be considered a Coach-Builder, Pioneering, or Exemplary Achievement. CORA has opted to designate this an Exemplary Achievement. The "*Policy And Procedure Relating To Selection And Awarding*" the Hugh Town Memorial Builder Award was finally formalized at the 2019 CORA Pre-AGM after many years of discussion. The purpose of the Hugh Town Memorial Builder Award is to recognize volunteers who have made significant and exemplary contributions to the Outrigger Canoe Racing Discipline of Canadian Outrigger Racing Association (CORA) within Canada in the Builder Category. CORA wished to bestow this Award in the inaugural year upon an individual who epitomized a lifetime commitment to the Coach-Builder principles exemplified by Hugh Town. [46] The CORA Board reviewed nominations received and recognized Grace Morissette of Lotus as the 2019 recipient of the Hugh Town Memorial Builder Award for a 30+ year legacy of selfless volunteer effort to paddling sports in general and outrigger canoe racing in particular. [47]

## References

Note	Article	Link
[01]	Lotus Iron OC6 Event (1989)	<a href="https://lotussports.com/races/race-results/">https://lotussports.com/races/race-results/</a>
[02]	Lotus Ice Breaker Double-Hull Event (1993)	<a href="https://lotussports.com/races/race-results/">https://lotussports.com/races/race-results/</a>
[03]	Lotus Poker Paddle OC6 Event (2012)	<a href="https://lotussports.com/races/race-results/">https://lotussports.com/races/race-results/</a>
[04]	2006 Lotus Fall Classic Sprints (2000)	<a href="http://www.jerichooutrigger.com/races2006.html">http://www.jerichooutrigger.com/races2006.html</a>
[05]	Bill Alley Memorial Lotus Dragon Boat Regatta (1998)	<a href="https://canoekayakbc.sportical.com/system/files/340/original/2011_Lotus_DB_Regatta_-_Race_Package.pdf?1303834919">https://canoekayakbc.sportical.com/system/files/340/original/2011_Lotus_DB_Regatta_-_Race_Package.pdf?1303834919</a>
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[10]	2005 SFU Graduate Student Supervision	<a href="https://www.sfu.ca/education/faculty-profiles/dzandvliet/teach-supervision/supervision.html">https://www.sfu.ca/education/faculty-profiles/dzandvliet/teach-supervision/supervision.html</a>
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[13]	2016 Queen Liliuokalani Womens Results	<a href="https://www.qlcanoerace.com/publicdocs/OVL-F-2016.pdf">https://www.qlcanoerace.com/publicdocs/OVL-F-2016.pdf</a>
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