



CANADIAN OUTRIGGER HALL OF FAME

Jan Chavarie



Summary

Jan Chavarie has a 25+ year legacy of selfless volunteer effort to paddlesports in general and outrigger canoe racing in particular. She has made contributions to support Canadian paddlers at the international/national/provincial/club level. Jan and web designer/developer Colleen McCarthy collaborated to build the Jericho Paddling Club (JPC) Website as well as the 1st and 2nd generations of the Canadian Outrigger Racing Association (CORA) Website. She has been part of the Jericho Paddling Club that has hosted the popular PNWORCA Jericho Small-Boat Racing Winter Series event and Jericho Classic Iron, as well as volunteered to assist with the Jericho Oceanman and the JSCA Wavechaser Paddle Series for many years. She has served continuously since 1999 on both the Jericho Executive and the CORA Executive including a 2-year stint as CORA Chairman (2005-2006). Jan is 1 of only 6 recipients of the prestigious Hugh Town Memorial Builder Award. [01]

Early Career

There is ample information available on the early career of Jan that led to her involvement with outrigger canoeing. During the 1st year of the COVID Pandemic in 2020, Jan as part of the CORA Historical Committee, shared a treasure trove of scanned newspaper articles on dragon boating and outrigger canoeing in Vancouver from the early 1990s. These newspaper articles provided valuable material to build the 1st 3 CORA Club Legacy documents – FCRCC, Lotus, Jericho. This collection of newspaper articles provided insights that Jan was with the Dragon Canoe Club (DCC) Executive at Burrard Civic Marina in the early 1990s when DCC was offering dragon boat rental services to the booming dragon boat community. DCC would acquire 2 Calmar Canadian Class Racer (CCR) OC6s by 1995 for DCC members to cross-train in outrigger canoes. [11] When DCC disbanded in 1999, 1 of the final accomplishments of Jan as a member of the DCC Executive, before joining Jericho, was to facilitate the sale of the 2 DCC Calmars to Lotus Sports Club, which assisted greatly with Lotus being able to provide canoes for the Lotus Ice Breaker. Jan has had an extensive career in the Information Technology industry that has contributed to her ability to provide Website Admin support for 25+ years to the Jericho Paddling Centre and the CORA Websites. Jan worked in Vancouver BC as Project Manager (1994-2004) with KE Software, and then as Technical Writer (2004-2011) with Syscon Justice Systems, and then as Head of Applications Support (2011-Present) with St. George's School. [12]

Coach-Builder Achievements

Jan has been on the Jericho Executive and the CORA Executive simultaneously in several roles since 1999. Jan stepped down from her role on the Jericho Executive in 2021 after 22 years of service. Carole Fullerton assumed the role of Jericho Club CORA Rep and Jan has gone to great lengths to ensure a smooth transition to new leadership. Jan has contributed to the ongoing success of CORA by serving on the CORA Executive in several roles since 1999. Jan has been Membership Officer and Signing Officer continuously through-out her time with the CORA Executive. Jan assumed the role of CORA Chairman in 2005 and served for 2 years when Alan Carlsson stepped down after 2004. [21] It is worth noting that through the efforts of Jan, the CORA AGM was held at the Jericho Sailing Centre for the 1st time in 2005 and had continued to be held at the Jericho Sailing Centre every year through 2019. Jan has continued to assist with CORA Website maintenance and memberships and as Signing Officer on Financials as of 2020. As Jan had done for so many years since CORA opened a PO Box on West 4th Avenue in Vancouver in the early 2000s for receipt of CORA correspondence, she continued to collect mail on a weekly basis and ensured the annual rent was paid promptly each August, until CORA closed the PO Box in early 2025.

There had never been a PNWORCA Small-Boat Racing Winter Series event in Canada prior to 2004. Jericho had the honour of being the 1st Canadian club to host a PNWORCA Small-Boat Racing Winter Series event in 2004 with Jan serving as Race Director that year and every year through 2025. [23] As the Canadian PNWORCA Small-Boat Racing Winter Series events require co-sanctioning by both PNWORCA and CORA, Jan has been responsible for ensuring scheduling and safety planning for the Jericho event in accordance with guidance from both outrigger associations. The COVID Pandemic of 2020/2021/2022 prompted cancellation of sports activities worldwide. Yet Jan was still able to serve as Race Director for the 17th Annual PNWORCA Jericho Small-Boat Racing Winter Series event in 2020 just 1 month before international/provincial/regional travel restrictions were imposed. The Jericho Iron Classic inaugural event took place in 1993. Jan served as Race Director for the Jericho Iron Classic event for the 1st time in 2000 and every year through 2019. [25] Jan has a long history of volunteer effort as Race Director and registrar and timer not only for Jericho events, but also for events hosted by other clubs. Jan has supported the CORA IVF initiatives as 1 of several timers for the CORA Burnaby Lake Time Trials for 2012 Calgary IVF World Sprints, as well as a timer at the 2012 Calgary IVF World Sprints themselves. You will quite often find Jan at CORA events working the registrar desk to collect CORA memberships, event registrations, and assisting with timing at the start/finish line. The Jericho Wavechaser Race Series is not a CORA sanctioned event and has been hosted by Jericho Sailing Centre Sailing Association (JSCA) with the assistance of volunteers from Jericho. Jan and a handful of Jericho volunteers were able to host a 13-event Summer Paddle Series in 2020/2021/2022 that adhered to BC Provincial health authority regulations and provided a model for hosting safe and successful small-boat races. [27]

Jan has served as an intermediary in expanding access to canoes to other CORA member clubs. One of her final accomplishments as a member of the DCC Executive in 1999 before joining Jericho was to arrange the sale of 2 DCC Calmars to Lotus Sports Club to increase their OC6 fleet. As Jericho

upgraded their OC6 fleet from Calmars to Mirages, Jan arranged the sale of 3 of the Jericho Calmars to Dragon Zone Paddling Club in 2003/2004. After several years of evaluating the pros/cons of their recently acquired Bradley Lightning versus their Mirages, Jan arranged the sale of the Bradley Lightning to Fort Langley Canoe Club in 2017. When Jericho upgraded their OC1 fleet from the 1st-generation C-Lion to the 2nd-generation C-Lion ST, Jan arranged the sale of 3 of the 1st-generation C-Lions to Penticton Racing Canoe Club in 2006. Although it is common practice among Washington, Oregon, California, Hawaii, and Polynesia outrigger clubs to name their canoes and provide a page on their websites dedicated to the history of their canoes, this is a tradition followed by very few Canadian clubs. Many outrigger clubs give their canoes names associated with the land and waters surrounding their location or names of departed club members. There is also a tradition of a blessing ceremony by the paddling community to instill goodwill upon the canoe. Jan has played a part in ensuring this cultural tradition is ingrained at Jericho with every OC6 given a meaningful name and a blessing ceremony. Hence the names for the 4 Calmars (Kaniela, Makana, No Ka Oi, Sally Brown), the 2 Mirages (Nalu Hahai, Imua Makai), the Lightning (Kaula Uila), and the Malolo (Makani). [29]

The unplanned effort that began in 2020 to collect CORA outrigger canoeing history was a spin-off from the CORA Canoe Registry initiative. Jan agreed to sit for interviews in 2020/2021 that resulted in a vast set of material on Jericho Paddling Centre (JPC). Jan has continued to provide 1st-hand knowledge of people/places/events from the 1990s through the 2020s that have shaped the history of Canadian outrigger canoeing. Jan provided a wealth of photos/names/dates that has become the "*The Jericho Legacy*" (1993-2020). Jan then took it upon herself to conduct research to confirm events/dates/places/individuals and diligently proof-read several drafts until the content was factually/politically correct. [31]

When Jericho became the 1st Canadians to attend the Vaka Eiva event in the Cook Islands in 2011, it had been through the combined efforts of all 15 Jericho members who made the trip. However, it was Jan who took the time to post thanks from all of the Jericho attendees on multiple media sites including the Cook Island News. Jan has always been committed to spreading the history of outrigger canoeing experiences to other paddlers. There are *Paddler Stories* about the trip to the Cook Islands, and Race Director Interviews to "talk story" on the CORA Website, as well as contributions to the Cook Island News, and countless articles on the Jericho Website with 1st-hand accounts and timeless photos of travels to the La Ruta Maya Challenge and Catalina Channel Crossing race and the Molokai mens/womens races. [35] [36] [37] [38] [39]

The Hana Hou Community Outrigger Foundation was formed in 2025, to provide support to First Nation and rural communities, to paddling clubs, and to youth groups, to encourage development of junior and novice outrigger and va'a programs. Through introductory clinics and coach education, the foundation helps to increase opportunities for communities throughout BC to discover and build outrigger and va'a programs close to home. Jan has been with the Board of Directors from the outset as Secretary. [41]

Pioneering Achievements

It can be easy to take for granted the ability to search online resources for historical events. Jan was with the now defunct DCC Executive until 1999 when she moved to Jericho Paddling Club. Neither Jericho Paddling Club nor the CORA had websites at that time back in 1999. When Jan joined Jericho Paddling Club in 1999, 1 of her 1st accomplishments with Jericho was to collaborate with fellow Jericho member and web designer/developer Colleen McCarthy to build the Jericho Paddling Club Website. The Jericho Paddling Club Website has had several makeovers since the 1st release, but this website continues to be 1 of the best sources for reference material on events and photos and race results in Canada and around the world, going back as far as 2000. Much of the Canadian Outrigger online history that is currently available has been sourced from websites originated by Jericho members Colleen McCarthy and Jan. [51] [52]

CORA was founded in 1992, but did not have an online presence for many years. When Jan joined the CORA Executive in 1999 as Membership Director, 1 of her 1st accomplishments with CORA was to collaborate with fellow Jericho member and web designer/developer Colleen McCarthy to build the CORA 1st generation website using the commercial rapid web-application development computing platform ColdFusion, with a very basic Membership database. The CORA 2nd generation website based on simple WordPress would be deployed in 2002. Colleen McCarthy would stay on as web designer/developer for the CORA Website through many upgrades until the migration of the legacy CORA Website to a sophisticated WordPress platform in 2019. [54]

Jan was instrumental in bringing the 1st PNWORCA Small-Boat Racing Winter Series event to Canada in 2004. She has served as Race Director for every PNWORCA Jericho Small-Boat Racing Winter Series event 2004-2025. False Creek soon followed upon the success of this event by introducing a 2nd PNWORCA Small-Boat Racing Winter Series event to Canada a few years later.

Exemplary Achievements

Following the 2019 AGM, CORA announced the creation of a new award to acknowledge Builders in the sport of outrigger canoeing in Canada. This award is named in honor the late Hugh Allen Town, a long-time paddler, coach and builder of outrigger clubs in Vancouver, BC and Maui HI. Hugh passed away in January 2016. The annual award acknowledges individuals who have made outstanding and extraordinary contribution to outrigger canoeing in Canada, other than as a competitor - demonstrating exemplary values and personal characteristics in their contribution. At the 2022 AGM, CORA announced that Jan Chavarie (Jericho Paddling Club) was the recipient of the Hugh Town Memorial Builder Award for 2022, joining Don Mulhall in 2021 (Penticton Racing Canoe Club), Drew Mitchell in 2020 (False Creek Racing Canoe Club), and Grace Morissette in 2019 (Lotus Sports Club), as recipients of this award. [61] [62]

References

Note	Article	Link
[01]	Hugh Town Memorial Builder Award	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/community-2/the-hugh-a-town-memorial-builder-award/
[11]	Burrard Marina Dragon Canoe Club (DCC)	https://parkboardmeetings.vancouver.ca/2009/plan090303/burrardmarina092.pdf
[12]	Jan Chavarie About	https://www.linkedin.com/in/jan-chavarie-6485a91/?originalSubdomain=ca
[21]	2006 CORA AGM Minutes	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2006coraagm.pdf
[23]	2004 PNWORCA Small-Boat Racing Winter Series	http://www.jerichopaddling.com/races2004/races2004.html
[25]	2019 Jericho Iron Classic	http://www.jerichopaddling.com/races2012/iron2012.html
[27]	2019-2021 Jericho Wavechaser	https://wavechaser.jsca.bc.ca/
[29]	2018 Jericho Hawaiian Canoe Blessing	https://jsca.bc.ca/2018/03/01/hawaiian-canoe-blessing-ceremony-blessed-pineapple/
[31]	The Jericho Legacy	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/The-Jericho-Legacy-Latest.pdf
[35]	2011 Cook Islands Vaka Eiva	http://www.cookislandsnews.com/item/35710-thank-you-rarotonga-for-an-amazing-vaka-eiva/35710-thank-you-rarotonga-for-an-amazing-vaka-eiva
[36]	2011 Cook Islands Vaka Eiva	http://www.cookislandsnews.com/national/item/37847-the-year-that-was-letters
[37]	Paddlers Stories	https://canadianoutrigger.ca/category/paddlers-stories/page/3/
[38]	Race Director Interviews	https://canadianoutrigger.ca/race-director-interviews/
[39]	La Ruta Maya Challenge	https://canadianoutrigger.ca/la-ruta-maya-hi-from-caye-caulker/
[41]	Hana Hou Community Outrigger Foundation	https://www.outriggerzone.com/org/ocpi/about/
[51]	2000 Jericho Paddling Club Website	http://jerichopaddling.com/races.html
[52]	Ocean Colleen Professional Websites to Build Community and Cultivate Relationships	https://oceancolleen.com/
[54]	2019 CORA Website	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/
[61]	Hugh Town Memorial Builder Award Jan Chavarie	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Hugh-Town-CORA-2022-Nomination-Bio-For-Jan-Chavarie.pdf
[62]	Hugh Town Memorial Builder Award 2022	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/hugh-town-memorial-builder-award-2022/