



*Newsletter of the*  
**BURLEY GRIFFIN CANOE CLUB**

Volume 31 Issue 9, Oct 2021

**Your Committee:**

**President:** Bob Collins

**Vice President:** Patricia Ashton

**Secretary:** Gabrielle Hurley

**Treasurer:** Tammy van Dange

**Boat Captain:** Jeremy Cook

**Membership Secretary:** Patricia Ashton

**Safety Officer:** John Lockie



- President and safety officer report
- No canoe polo update on this occasion
- No marathon news, photos and results also
- There are contributions from club members and some drivel from the publisher
- Club news
- Marketplace



The ACT Government assists this organisation through the Sport & Recreation Grants Program

**Position**

**Person**



Membership Secretary	Patricia Ashton
Public Officer	Bob Collins
Editor ('Blazing Paddles')	Robert Bruce*
Coaches rep	Margi Bohm
Webmaster	Geoff Collett
Assistant Boat Captain	Scott MacWilliam/David Abela
Canoe Polo	Laura Kleinrahm
Time Trials	Lachlan Parker*& Matilda Stevenson* (Jointly)
Marathon	Richard Fox
Event Co-ordinator	Bob Collins
Sprint	Vacant
Bay Area Kayakers	Alan Newhouse
Slalom - ww	Peter Strazdins*
Social Convener	Vacant
Publicity and Sponsorship	Vacant
Recreational paddling	Vacant



***A happy spring to all PB readers.***

We here at the new bureau of Blazing Paddles inc. wish to thank the parting editor, Sue Powell for the sterling effort over the past difficult year, where faced with little activity on the water, managed to find sufficient news to keep the magazine buzzing along.

The new team here at BP have learned from her experience, that to fill the pages we will follow the lead of all major news and magazines organizations and just make stuff up. Our hard working team will make a story out of any old crap you send us. We accept no responsibility for any hurt feelings or disingenuous articles. We have no money so don't bother suing.

To get the new PB off to a good start we have been unauthorised to give away a full year's subscription of Blazing Paddles to the first ten members who hit the like button



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## Coming Events:

- *Marathon.....*
  - *24 hour marathon in December 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>*
- *Canoe Polo*
  - 6-7 November: Canberra invitational competition*
  - 9-11 December 2021: Oceania Champs – Hawkes Bay, NZ*

## Clean-up Lake Burley Griffin Day – Sunday, 14 November 2021 from 0900-1200

Save the date! We are cautiously optimistic (pending Covid restrictions) that we can participate in the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Clean-up Lake Burley Griffin Day during National Recycling Week. This is a great way to enjoy our playground while giving the Molonglo River a good clean.

BGCC Member Carolyn Atkinson will be at the rego tent set-up near the shed. We'd love to have more members participate this year even if just for a half hour.

**When:** Sunday, 14 November 2021 – anytime between 0900 to 1200



**Regos:** Register at the booth near the BGCC shed on the day of the event

**How:** Clean-up is by land and water (BYO boats); Covid restrictions and rules will apply.

More information will be on the event Facebook page as it becomes available: <https://www.facebook.com/CleanUpLBG>

## **President's report: Bob Collins**

While, our shed is closed to large numbers of paddlers until further notice, we are starting to be given a bit of leeway with our paddling. In this issue of BP you will find details of the latest Covid19 restrictions on paddling activity from our shed and around Canberra in general.

Our AGM, conducted by email, yielded some good results regarding the composition of our new Committee and convenors. All details of our AGM and the new Committee are in this issue. Briefly however, I am pleased to welcome Tammy Ven Dange (Treasurer), Gabrielle Hurley (Secretary), John Lockie (Safety Officer) and Barry Marshall (Committee member). Each has valuable experience that will benefit our Club, Tammy has served as President of a Dragon Boat Club and was CEO of the RSPCA, Gabrielle has a legal background and with Barry, is a long standing member of BGCC. John Lockie has a background in Sports Medicine and spent many years serving junior Aussie rules and Triathlon clubs in the ACT.

### **See Addendum 1**

Lachlan Parker and Matilda Stevenson will be organising our time trials and Peter Strazdins will be re-introducing slalom. Richard Fox and Laura Kleinrahm will continue as convenors.

I would be remiss if I did not welcome our new Blazing Paddles Editor, Robert Bruce. Robert is an accomplished artist (get him to show you photos of some of his oil paintings sometime) and has a background in graphics. If his quirky observations during his Hawkesbury Classic paddles are anything to go by, there will be some surprises in future BP's. A little bird also told me that Robert turns 80 on 27 September! Happy Birthday, to a man who still competes in Marathon races and the occasional Ultra-marathon race.

Those of us who remain on the Committee would like to thank outgoing Committee members, Rachel Muldoon, Margi Bohm, Dom Hides, Shadi Samir and Sue Powell for their dedication and efforts during a particularly difficult 2 year period.

Unfortunately, the ACT Covid19 restrictions are still hampering our planned improvements around the Club, however, we are making some progress:

- Sport & Recreation Grant applications will open by the end of September;
- As mentioned in the last issue, we have approvals for our replacement pontoon and are only awaiting the result of a Grant application;
- Plans for our pergola have now been completed and while it appears we do not need TCCS Development or Building approval, a detailed proposal has been sent to TCCS for their information. Once a reply is received an application will be forwarded to the NCA. Huge thanks goes to our architect, Bruce Fisher, who again has not charged us for his services.

More to come as things develop.

**Stay safe**

*Bob*

**Addendum 1:** Having run an experienced critical eye over the elected committee members, one could draw parallels with a consortium of pirates and scallywags. First off we have a **President** that seems to have the wood on all the members of the current government. A little pressure here, a toe nail clipped there and the money seems to flow, regulations surmounted. Next a **Vice President** that has all the names and phone numbers that are important. Not only knows in which cupboards the skeletons are but, also knows who has the keys. **Treasurer:** There is a plaque on the wall at the RSPCA respecting the abilities of 'The enforcer' the only person ever able to herd cats. **Secretary:** The person said to have a legal background, could be helpful in sticky situations. **Boat Captain:** Started as a deck hand and rose up through the ranks quite quickly, surprisingly quickly, some say. **First Ordinary member:** Nothing ordinary about this shady character. Knows how to get a favour done, nudge, nudge, wink wink. **Second Ordinary member:** Has worldwide connections. Able to corrupt communications with the flick of a switch. And finally **Safety Officer:** Able to rescue paddlers for the right remuneration and is able to make you paddle faster with the right sports medicines.

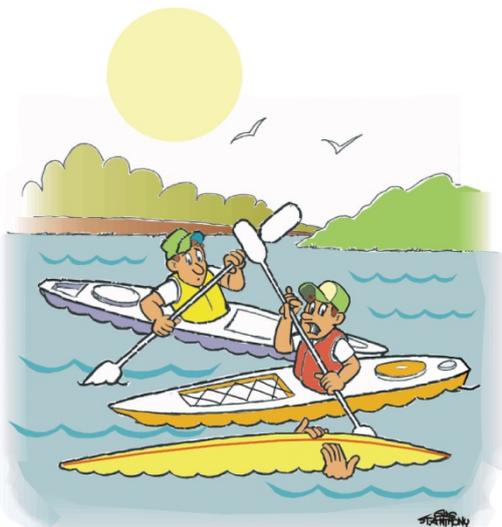
So there you have it, a disreputable gang if ever I have seen one. We're in safe hands

## A note from the outgoing Safety Officer

Thank you so much for your support and cooperation during what has been a tumultuous 2 years of ongoing safety issues. It started a couple of weeks after I took on the position of Safety Officer with the fires and it seems like every month since then we have had to deal with fires, floods or covid. Goodness me. What a ride this has been. I could not have done it without the support of you and our tireless committee. Thank-you so much.

I have handed the reins to John Lockie. Please support and help him as much as you can. The next few months are going to be intriguing as the ACT and NSW emerge from lockdown and as Australia forges a path into a future that is hard to predict at the moment. Hopefully, we will get this virus under control and will be able to enjoy our freedoms again for many a year before the next exciting installation of challenges.

So I raise a glass to you all. Thank-you for being kind, helpful and constructive during these difficult times and above all, for having empathy for others in the club. This is what makes BGCC special – the bestest club I have ever been a member of.



I CAN'T RECALL HIS NAME, BUT, THE BOTTOM OF THAT BOAT IS FAMILIAR.

*Margi*

## Coach's Corner: Margi Bohm

It has been an interesting few months since the last Blazing Paddles. BGCC has pretty much lost the club point score in the Winter Marathon Series, but it is good to see our regulars out there giving the Sydneysiders a run for their money across most divisions. Matilda continues to dominate as the fastest

female in the competition and Michael is slowly but surely closing in the same crown for the men.

Unfortunately, covid lockdowns and health advice caused the Moruya weekend to be cancelled. We will try and run it later in the year.

The wet weather continues and there is still a lot of debris in the water so please be careful when out there, especially during poor light. Given that Googong Dam is over full at the moment and any rain in the catchment puts excess water into the Queanbeyan River, we won't put out the buoys quite yet. As a result, if you are at the shed, please carry a brick or two into the shed as we should clear the pile outside the door until we are ready to reset the course.

Remember to **PUT A LIGHT ON YOUR BOAT** if you are out on the river or lake before sunrise and after sunset. Technically the light has to have 360 degree visibility, but our greatest risk is being run down from behind so a bright light on the back of your boat is the bare minimum

*Marqi*



# PLAY CANOE POLO

First, I recommend you find out what the hell it is...



# CANOE POLO

**Tuesday nights at Lakeside Leisure Centre**

**FREE FIRST SESSION AND GEAR HIRE**

**Canoe Polo is a fast paced paddle sport played in teams of five. It encompasses throwing, catching and kayaking skills, and is played globally.**

**NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY!**

7.45pm every Tuesday

Contact Laura on 0412096084 to register your interest!



## Club news

### A New Season on the way

Well, it's been a fairly quiet start to the spring season, but we're on track to ease out of restrictions in a couple of weeks. There is a lot to look forward to within the Club.

We have had a few members join just before and during lockdown, they will be looking forward to their inductions to the club and getting on the water, as will many of our members who don't have a shed key. Hopefully this will happen on the 17<sup>th</sup> October. With 'daylight saving' starting this weekend, our Thursday evening training paddles will also start later in October. Anyone is welcome to come along, 6pm on the water. A bit of technique and hopefully a paddle out onto the lake, usually, we're not in a hurry. David Gordon, Anne Cronin and Patricia will be restarting the Sunday morning paddles too, 9am on the water.

For October, we have our first Taste of Paddling happening. This gives non-members a chance to try out kayaking and often results in new members. If anyone is keen to help us out – we're often hauling all our boats out then back after the session and washing them. Depending on numbers (usually 8 but up to 10) means about 15 boats! So even if you don't want to assist on the water, before and after would mean a lot. First session is Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> 1pm till 4pm with boats out about 12.30. The club makes about \$760 + each session and we run 6 over the warmer months.

We also have Soldier On tentatively booked in for a weekday session on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October. We cater for up to 10 participants over 2 hours, a bit of technique to start then some skills on the water as we paddle and chat. Usually quite a fun session – we've run 3 previously.

As you will know, we held our on line AGM last week and elected a new committee. We welcome Gabrielle as our Secretary, Tammy as our Treasurer, John Lockie is our new Safety Officer and Barry Marshall is our 2<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Member. So along with David Abela, Jeremy, Bob and myself, it should be a great mix of club experience and business /governing experience.

We also have an almost full complement of convenors. Richard Fox is hoping for a better, 3<sup>rd</sup> time lucky as Marathon Convenor. With the last 2 years racing decimated by Covid, hopefully the 2022 race season will bring better times! Laura Kleinrahm is sorting out the Canoe Polo crew, keeping the committee informed about all their activities – read her excellent AGM report to see how CP have been spending the last 12 months.

One of our new members Lachlan Parker volunteered to take on our Time Trials/Paddle to Fitness with Matilda Stevenson volunteering to help out. Haven't heard what they've come up with yet, but we're hoping to start in November. There may be a new format – we'll see.

We also have Peter Strazdins a former Aust Rep in Men's K1 Slalom taking on the role of Slalom Convenor. So we're hoping we might get some Slalom action happening for interested members as well as integrating it with a possible junior program the club will be looking into.

Craig Elliott has agreed to run a couple more Rescue sessions this season. These were exceedingly well attended last season, so we're looking at possibly late November for the first one.

Thanks to Robert Bruce for taking on Blazing Paddles – I'm sure it will be entertaining!

All being well with Covid freedoms, BGCC is also looking at running the 24 Hour Challenge again this year. Something to aim for over the next 2 months! 11<sup>th</sup>& 12<sup>th</sup> December, it will be run along the same lines as last year. Either a 24 hour challenge or for those liking the idea of a decent sleep a 24-8 hour challenge. Paddle from 10am till 10pm then restart at 6am till the 10am finish. Competitive teams of 4, single paddlers or non-competitive teams of as many as you like! More info to follow.

Cheers

*Patricia*

## Looking for coaches, instructors or peer paddlers - Patricia

I have sent out this request several times over the years and luckily there have been members keen to take the next step by building their skills and sharing their expertise and time with our newer members.

Are you one of these people?

### **What are we looking for?**

**A people person** – you don't have to be a great paddler; you need to be enthusiastic about getting people on the water and encouraging them to build their skills. Many of our new members have never been in a kayak, some are quite nervous, so it's about being able to help them past that, give them some basic skills and see them improve each time. Others may have paddled in their youth and now many years have passed, and they are keen to get back to where they may have been. Seeing people go from a very stable plastic kayak to our racing boats is satisfying, but seeing someone who was very hesitant, who may have only been able to paddle 500m at most, who needed constant support to become confident enough to choose a boat and paddle it in varying conditions out around East Basin and beyond, is even more satisfying!

**Someone who is committed** – you don't have to be a marathon paddler; you need to be able to commit to at least one session a week during the summer months. We run regular beginner sessions, one hour on the water, so 2 hours or so, helping members choose a boat, get it to the water, assist where required, then paddle with them. Either as a coach giving technique advice or organising some drills for individuals or a group, or as a peer paddler, giving encouragement and confidence.

We also run Taste of Paddling sessions, which are a 3-hour introduction to kayaking, which is coach lead, but requires several assistants. There are junior sessions too or if you become a coach, you may want to coach more experienced paddlers in race technique.....

**Willing to Up skill** – you don't need to become a coach to Australian champions; but you need to be interested in improving your knowledge, as a coach, (a coach looks after the long term improvement of a paddler) that requires quite a commitment in time, working with an accredited coach and keeping coaching diaries; slightly less for becoming an Instructor (getting beginners on the water), and for our peer paddlers (as well as the others), it's about learning the various boats, how to adjust them, who do they suit best, a bit of risk management – should I take this person or group out on the lake? How to do an assisted rescue.

For all positions there is also the benefit of what you learn will improve your own paddling.

If any of this sounds of interest to you, please let me know. There are regular Coaching and Instructor sessions run by PNSW, but in the past if there has been enough interest, we could run something from here. BGCC reimburses members for costs of the course, accreditation fees and first aid fees once you are accredited.

**The Introductory Coach** award is run online by PA and is free if you complete it by 31 Dec21. .

There are 3 online courses that will take you about an hour to complete all up and you also need a working with vulnerable people clearance from ACT police. First aid is optional but desirable. There is no 6 or 12 weeks working with an accredited coach - just the online training. If there are several of you interested we could complete the course at the shed in a group.

There is a \$40 registration fee after you have passed all the online work and this is valid for 3-years. It covers your liability insurance etc; BGCC will reimburse this fee if you assist with sessions Let [Margi](#) or [Patricia](#) know if you are interested

Summer is approaching.....

## Paddlers wait

A lone fly patrols the room, cut-off from outside, its drone synchronised with the slow and regular breathing of snoozing paddlers can be heard. They doze, mostly. They do not rouse themselves. Not yet. For Covid restrictions have yet to be fully lifted. Some snoring, some mutterings from the restless is audible, but muffled. Some lay, eyes half open, feeling thirsty or perhaps the need to relieve themselves, but they do not rise. They roll to the side and dream of their last spicy chorizo enchiladas, listen to nothing but their well conditioned heartbeats, or to nothing at all. The spring flowers bloom outside and some are prompted to sneeze and rub their faces. The fly continues its restless circling.

## Paddler activities during lockdown

How about a paddle from Sydney to Melbourne and back next winter? Equivalent to 294,000 Olympics size swimming pools or 147,000 Rugby fields. If you use cricket pitches or tennis courts as your relative distance measurement, you can work it out yourself.

A fair challenge I would say. One of our marathon club members did an equivalent distance this winter on Lake Tuggeranong while training for the Hawkesbury



Classic. "Keeps me sane" said Richard Fox before he went slightly around the bend after he learned that the event had been cancelled.

"Well I probably would have paddled that distance anyway just to distract from covid and being housebound."

Sad news for Canberra's other intrepid Hawkesbury paddlers residing in the north-western corner of our city. They have persisted with the long distance training through the winter months on Lake Ginninderra hoping that this year they would get another chance at this testing event. Bob and Danielle were a bit evasive when asked if they had kept a log. Suffice to say they "paddled a long way." Alas they will have to wait and see what the gods have on their agenda next October. If our club is able to run the 24 hour race in December these paddlers would be an excellent addition to any team.

A cub reporter was tasked with trying to get a sneak pic of the dynamic duo, came back with this pic.



I said "close enough"

Other Ken Behrens\* who found they had no lake or pond within the 5 klm exercise limit used their initiative and found other ways to get some paddling fitness. Who says you need a lake or river.

\*If you aren't up with the Ken Behrens joke it is explained here:-

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-08-20/meet-the-creator-of-canberra-covid-19-hero-ken-behrens/100393472>



Other lot of paddlers went looking for a bit more water to float their boat



*Editor's note:* The last two images above were used for poetic licence. Credit to Beau Miles for use of the stills from "The Commute: A four day paddle to work". An entertaining vid on YouTube.

He sent this message:- 'G'day paddlers. I hear you, locked down within your orb, trying to figure out the best way to use your ball of life. I love it actually, although I tend to break the rules by living on the edge of a mega forest- as I imagine a few of your folks have. "I don't wear a fancy watch or have my phone with me, officer, and the bush tracks are so twisty and turny I lost track of distance". Paddling beyond the bubble is a tad harder I imagine. Best of luck Ken Behrens in the short term. Summer and a much bigger bubble awaits. In the meantime watch as many of my films as possible while eating beans, only beans. My best, Beau.'

And now for some tall tales but true this time.

Contributed by Margi, Larissa and John.

### **Banished from the ACT – Tales from the burst border-bubble.**

Queanbeyan hosts several BGCC members who, due to NSW Health designating the ACT as an "Area of Concern", are banished from accessing the shed and Lake Burley Griffin. Here are their stories .... **Larissa** ... I first heard about this lockdown when I was at work (Woolworths). I was running around like crazy because our online shop orders suddenly increased and my device was beeping at me every few minutes with a new order. I stopped for a moment and looked around the store and noticed the queue for the registers was getting longer and everyone was carrying a packet (or more) of toilet paper.....not again!!! I was uncertain as to whether I could make training work. Queanbeyan River didn't seem like an appealing place to train. However, John Preston advised me that it wasn't too bad as the

river had deep enough water and an almost 4km loop was possible. So I set an afternoon aside to give the river a try. That first training session on the Queanbeyan River was definitely needed. An escape from the overwhelming workload at work and a moment to forget about the craziness of the world. To be honest I actually find this part of the river to be quite peaceful and beautiful with plenty of wildlife including platypus, black swans and their cygnets. There is a current, but it isn't too strong (unless it has been raining



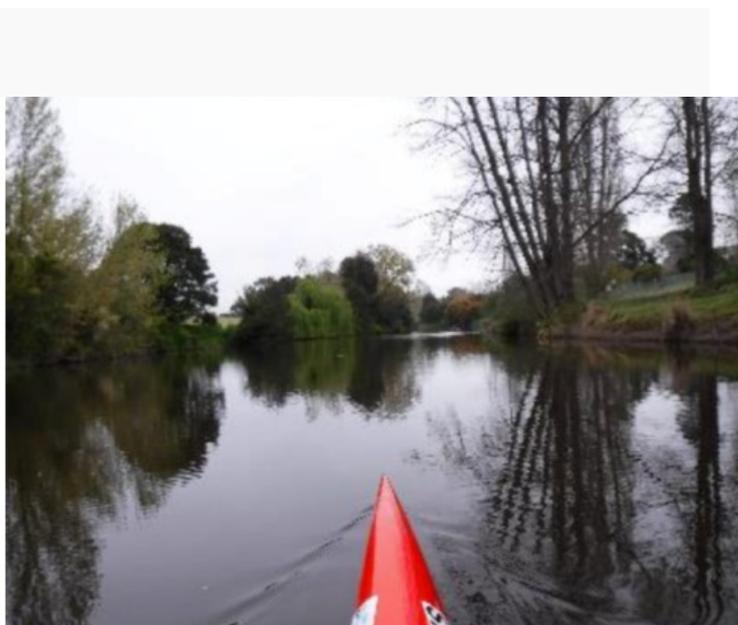
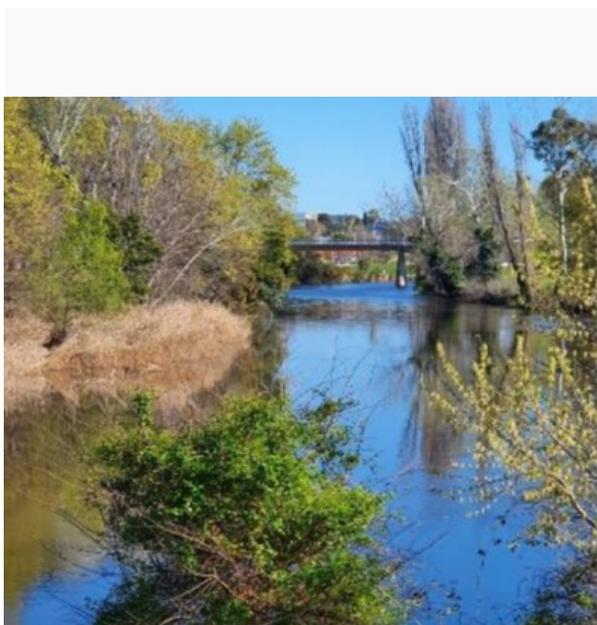
significantly). It's amazing what you can find when all other options are closed off. I look forward to when I can return to the

club and see everyone again, but for now I feel incredibly grateful to have another option for my training.

**John** ... After I finished work on the Friday of the ACT lockdown I had less than an hour to get to the BGCC shed to grab Larissa's and my newly purchased kayak and escape back into God's own country, Queanbeyan. Although I've lived in Queanbeyan since 2004 I'd never paddled on the Queanbeyan River. I had visions of disgruntled ex-students throwing rocks at me. Then it dawned on me that most of them were still serving time at Her Majesty's pleasure so it shouldn't be a problem. A week into the lockdown I finally made the effort to give it a crack. Nervously I pushed the bow of my kayak into the flow of the river. I had only bought the kayak during the week before the lockdown and had never paddled it. Unfortunately, I hadn't adjusted the footplate to the correct length and spent the first session with my knees getting close to hitting me in the chin. Despite being uncomfortable I was able to paddle upstream for 1.8k before having to turn around. The river narrowed and was unnavigable because of a set of rapids. Probably would have had a go if I'd been in a club boat. The flow from Googong Dam was steady but wasn't too hard to paddle against. The trip back to the 'beach' near the weir was about 1 kph faster. It is easy to do intervals in the space available and so my training hasn't diminished much. I'm getting on the water 4 times a week. Luckily Larissa can paddle with me a fair bit so chasing her ensures I keep the intensity up. Admittedly the intensity drops off a bit when she's not there. This is when I work on making sure my unique technique remains unique. There are no real negatives about training on the Queanbeyan River. I 'miss' the group I normally train with but we get to see platypus about 50% of the time on the water which is fantastic. There are the usual water birds and water rats as well. No-one has thrown a rock at me (yet) but I keep being spotted by work colleagues, neighbours and fellow gym members who think I'm a nut for paddling so early on cold mornings. One thing that has crossed my mind is how I would get back into the kayak if I (when I) fall out. There are not many available places to re-enter easily. The flow would eventually get me back to the starting point or at least caught up on the weir. When the lockdown eases I'd encourage BGCC members to come out to

Queanbeyan and have a paddle session in paradise. I reckon we could even have a time trial out here.

**Margi** ... Ted and I were on our way back from visiting Ted's Dad at the coast when we noticed a stream of cars headed the other way! Hmm we said ... ACT lockdown? But most of the plates were NSW so ... Hmmmm we said ... Queanbeyan lockdown??? We arrived to Queanbeyan shopping at Woollies! Toilet paper was rushing out of the store ... YEP lockdown. My first priority was to get something to the club committee as Safety Officer. By the time I had finished that, I realised it was too late to get my boat from the shed. RATS. Over the next few weeks, I did a lot of visualising from the couch watching the Olympics and then the Para-Olympics, walking with Ted and grumping around as my K1 sat in the BGCC shed gathering dust. THEN the ACT opened up a bit and I was able to organise with Jesse to bring my boat to the 5 km ring around our house (the eastern edge of the airport where Jesse works) and at last I had no more excuses ... Queanbeyan River, here we come. I got on the water on one of the days with the highest flows following extensive rain in the Googong Dam catchment. The trip upstream was slow but steady and when I got to the top, my South African background kicked in ... time to paddle up some rapids and play. So up I went in my Nelo ... didn't hit anything. And up the next rapid too. And then the third one ... oops abandoned that in mid rapid as I realised that there is no way I could turn the K1 upstream of it. Zoom down the rapids I went – not hitting anything. YES .. this is a great river to paddle on. Turned around and did it again, and again ... I have been a regular since that day. I totally agree with Larissa and John. This is a beautiful little river – I have lived here for more than 20 years ... why have I not paddled here more often. I can squeeze 4 km loops by paddling to the head of the first rapid and taking the long way around all corners so it is not that different to training on the Molonglo loop. There seem to be fewer snags and less shallow spots. There are water rats and swans and cygnets and platypus and birds and it is really peaceful. Everyone is friendly and I get lots of greetings from people exercising on the paths beside the river. So when we return to some sort of new normal, I agree with John .. we should have a time trial on the Queanbeyan River every so often and when the river is in flood, the stretch from the Queanbeyan low level bridge to the Oaks Estate low level bridge has a nice fast flow with grade 1 rapids – perfect to learn to play in faster flowing water in a plastic or even a K1 (with a stern hung rudder)



## Marketplace

This month there is an opportunity to get your own personal **nuclear** sub.

This little beauty has never been out of the shipyard. Only being sold because of design changes, **now** they tell us they want torpedoes. I have been informed it will run for the rest



of your life on one tank of unleaded thorium, provided you are older than 75. This sub doesn't have any problems with seeing where it is going. Its eyes have infra-red vision if you happen to be out late on a Saturday night. One thing you won't find on any other submarine is the beautiful picture window. You can enjoy the underwater seascape as you glide along in your own personal submarine.

All enquiries to be directed to the Adelaide shipyard.

Also in our Market place this month you have an

opportunity to own your own battleship. The Lilliputian Navy are selling off their conventional warships and going nuclear. Next time you do a time trial or inter club marathon you could easily clear the course with a few well aimed salvos. Other paddlers won't dare to challenge you on the rounding boys again.



*Thank you to all contributors to this edition of Blazing Paddles.*  
*If you have contributions for the next edition, please get in touch **robertba28@gmail.com***