



*Newsletter of the*

## **BURLEY GRIFFIN CANOE CLUB**

Volume 30, Issue 3, March 2020

### Your Committee:

**President:** Jeremy Cook

**Vice President:** Bob Collins

**Secretary:** Patricia Ashton

**Treasurer:** Trent Birkett

**Safety Officer:** Margi Bohm

**Membership Secretary:** Helen Tongway

**Boat Captain:** Robert Bruce

**BP Editor:** Andy Bodsworth



### This Issue:

- Important Covid19 Update
- Marathon Race Reports
- Margi's Coaches Corner & reading the river
- Bateman's Bay Paddle Challenge, and more...

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*The ACT Government assists this organisation  
through Active Canberra, ACT*



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## President's Report: Jeremy Cook

Regrettably, COVID-19 and our club's response to this is the focus of this report.

Members will have seen announcements from the committee about our response. These and future announcements do not over-ride government announcements and recommendations. They are simply trying to apply best practice measures to protect our members in the circumstances and surrounds affecting our members.

The suggestions and policies announced by the committee are not personal. They are aimed at all members, for the benefit of all members.

This comment is particularly relevant to the closing of the showers, except in exceptional circumstances. A lot of money was spent building the showers and our club is exceptionally fortunate to have them. But the showers are a privilege, not a right, and their closure is largely in response to advice from Paddle NSW that:

Communal facilities such as *shower blocks should not to be used where possible*, and where that is not possible, social distancing practices maintained.

Having the shed to shelter in will make members' lives more comfortable as autumn and winter descend, but we will need to be aware of indoor social distancing recommendations from government. I'm aware of other clubs in Canberra that have closed their sheds entirely and are asking members to operate out of the backs of their cars. We need to maintain access to boats in the shed, so we need members to be sensible and aware when moving around it.

It would be brilliant to have government and PaddleNSW restrictions removed in time for us to hold our re-scheduled 4<sup>th</sup> of July marathon series race – but I'm not holding my breath. Regardless, the committee will be continuing with BAU activities and planning as far as possible – normality will be restored ... some time.

In the meantime, paddling while you are healthy will hopefully help keep you healthy—and fit and sane—in an increasingly locked down world.

It is somewhat ironic that the club has just purchased a double surf-ski for members to use. At least it will still be there when the restriction on using multi-paddler craft is lifted.

A reminder that you can contact me at [swimming.fast@yahoo.com.au](mailto:swimming.fast@yahoo.com.au) about club matters.

*Jeremy*

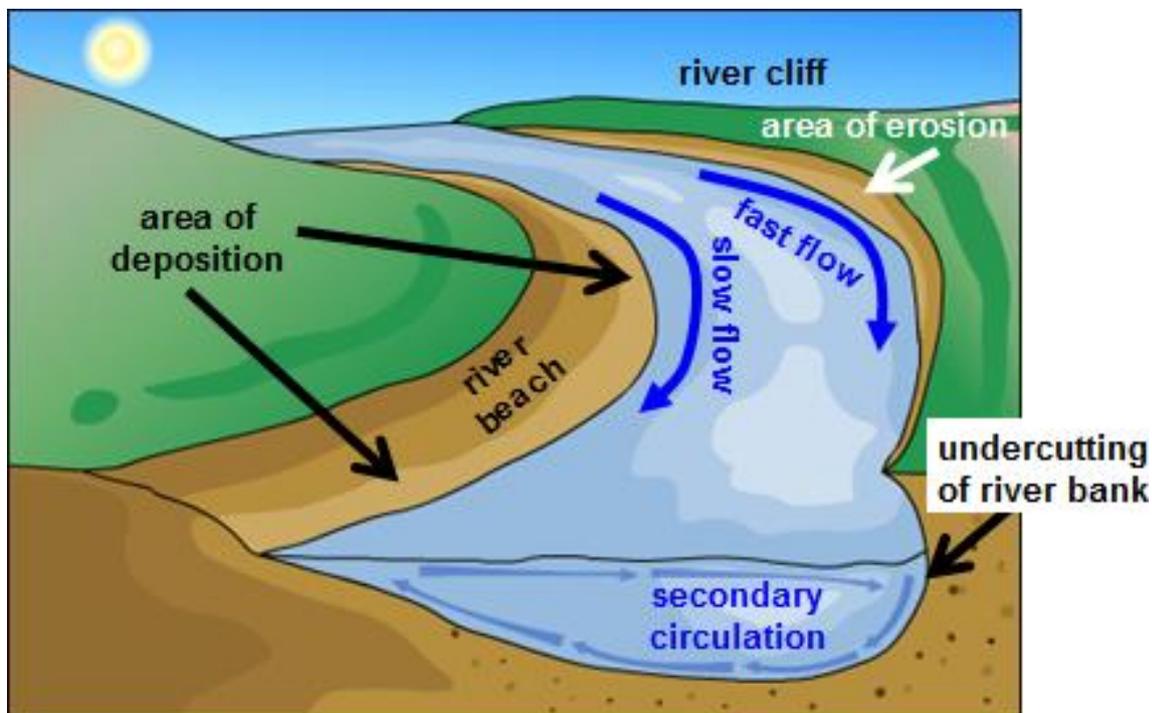
## Coming Events:

With the onset of the Covid 19 Pandemic, the great majority of Paddle NSW, and other races and events, have been cancelled or postponed. Stay tuned for updates via the BGCC Website and email advice to all club members.

## Coaches Corner: Margi Bohm

Well, we have had quite a roller coaster ride since the last Blazing Paddlers. Having survived the smoke, hopefully with the help of P2 masks, we then had hail, floods, and now COVID 19. Luckily the shed missed the hail, but we did get a welcome rise in water levels in February. This gave many of us an opportunity to learn a bit about how river courses work.

Knowing how to use the natural water to your advantage is a very useful paddling skill regardless of whether you are racing or just paddling around for fun. Regardless of how much flow there is in a river, the water will follow the path of least resistance, namely the deep channel. Furthermore, the water flow is fastest along this path. The figure below provides a good schematic of what to look for. The water will tend to flow along the outer part of river course with slower water on the inside of the turns. As the water slows down, the lower energy in the flow causes sediments to deposit and we get beaches along the banks on the inside of the curves with associated shallow water. There is also not enough energy



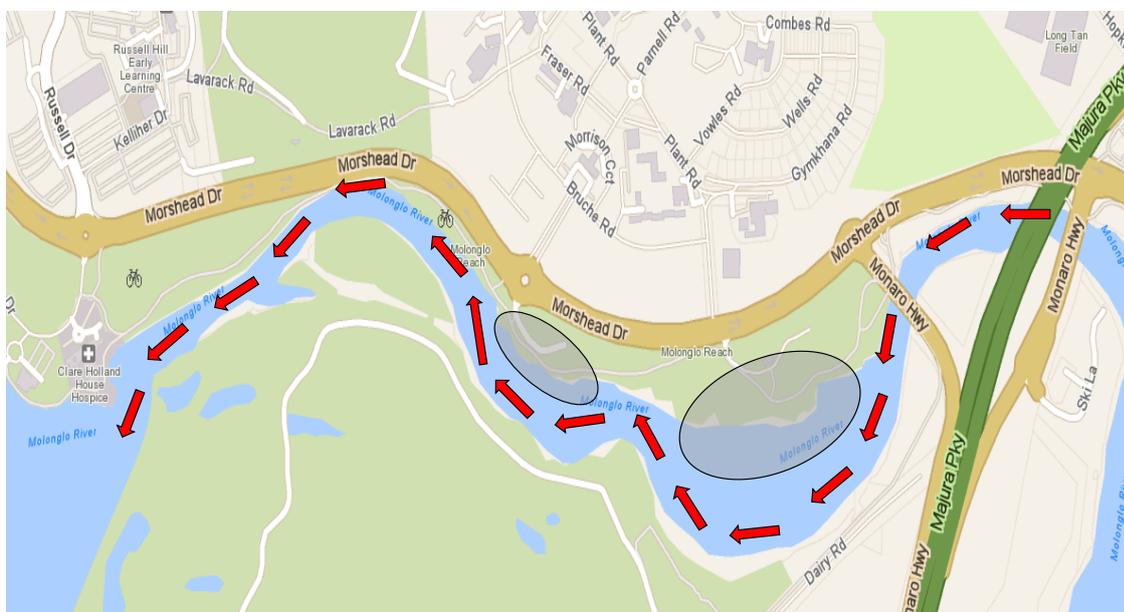
Source: [river geography](#).

to keep objects floating in the water moving and the shallow water causes them to get snagged resulting in the deposition of branches and tree trunks in the shallow waters on the inside of the turns. This deposited debris is often hard to see because it is not visible above the water and is the main source of damage to boats and paddles when hit by unsuspecting paddlers. On the other hand, the banks along the outer edges of the turns tend to be steep and cut away as a result of the higher energy flows. While you may encounter flotsam in the faster flowing water, it will be floating and moving with the flow and is usually easy to see and avoid if you are paying attention.

This pattern of deeper, faster flowing water running along the outer curves of the river course with shallow, slow moving water with hidden obstacles along the inner part of the turn influences a great deal of what we do when paddling on a river:

- If the water is flowing, it is often faster to paddle the longer route, especially in narrow rivers where the increase in distance is not that great. Remember that when you paddle in water shallower than about 2 m, the drag of the river bottom on your boat increases exponentially as the water depth decreases so in order to make up for this loss of speed, one has to work a great deal harder to maintain boat speed.
- While cutting corners is always an attractive option, it does increase your chances of hitting a submerged object and damaging your paddle, boat or rudder. Also if you hit something solid on the catch of your stroke, you can really hurt yourself.
- If you fall out and you have the option, the water will be shallower on the inside of the turn and you will be able to empty your boat more easily. Furthermore, the water will be more quiescent so you will be able to get in more easily.

We were really lucky just after the rains in February to have a brisk flow of water on the Molonglo River. This gave us the opportunity to learn where the Molonglo River flows and my training group and I spent a very enjoyable session playing in the flowing water. The diagram below shows schematically the path the river takes on our own backyard (red arrows) with two major deposition areas where there is usually a great deal of submersed debris. We paddled the course marked by the red arrows 5 times a week through the time



when the river was very low, avoiding the areas of deposition, and did not hit anything. If you keep well clear of the major deposition areas, you will limit your chances of hitting something nasty that has been left behind during the recent “flood”. Just a different application of social distancing.

And while on the topic of **COVID 19, PLEASE do NOT COME TO THE SHED if you have ANY FLU LIKE SYMPTOMS.** This pandemic is not about you or me, it is about us infecting more vulnerable people in our community. It is a sobering thought to realise that 75% of our membership is of an age that would prevent treatment in an Italian hospital regardless of how ill we are! So please follow advice given by the committee regarding behaviour in the shed so that no-one in our club gets sick.

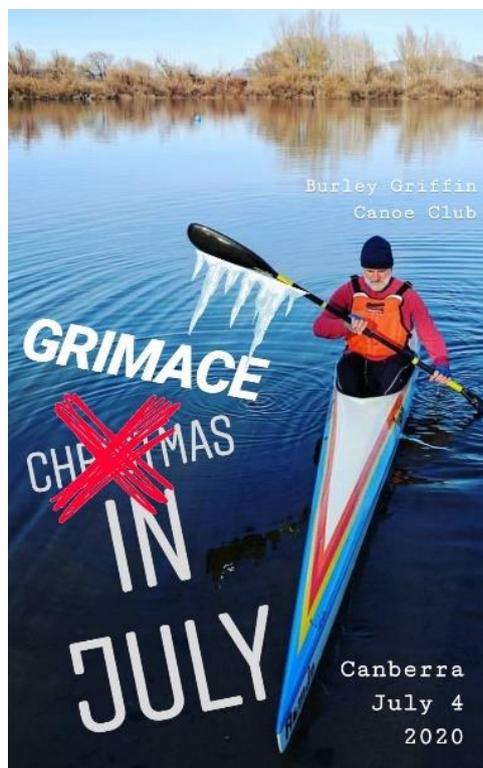
See you on the water, *Margi*

BGCC Health and Safety Officer

## Marathon Convenors Report – Richard Fox

Hello fellow paddlers. It has been a coughing and spluttering start to the marathon racing season – perhaps not the best phraseology in the current health climate. We did get BGCC paddlers to the Batemans Bay Challenge and the Frank Harrison Race in Albury.

Of course, our own race had to be rescheduled to July 4. No sooner had the Committee made the final decision to postpone than the rain started ... and continued. The new date has raised a few eyebrows, however, if we were to host a race in the 2020 PaddleNSW Marathon Series this was the date. The Burley Griffin Bash, normally held the day after, has been put on hold. A new date for this event has not yet been set and finding a suitable date will be difficult.



Embracing our July 4 event is in our best interests. Due consideration will be given to safety for this event. A 12:00 start will allow the mercury to rise; there will be several safety boats and it will no longer be the portage round. Turning up in big numbers will also be important for our own credibility!

Some interesting 'promotional' slogans have come in that include:

*"Canberra in July ... no sweat".*

*"Canberra in July. Where COOL people come for training"*

*"Warning:- huskies and dog sleds may be encountered when crossing bike paths"*

*"Fur seals on the pontoon should be approached with caution".*

There have been changes to the rules for the 2020 season, again available on the same website, that paddlers should be familiar with. If you intend racing in Division 7 (20 km) or Division 8 (15 km) I strongly suggest you familiar yourself with the cut off times and progress

markers. The starting order has also changed significantly and there are more divisions and accommodation for SUPs.

See you on the water, *Richard*

Marathon Convener, 2020

## **Danielle Woodward Honoured for Contribution to Police**

Danielle Woodward was recently inducted into PA's Hall of Fame for her services to paddling throughout her career as a canoe slalom paddler, sports administrator and PA Director and President. Woodward was further honoured on Australia Day this year as a recipient of the Australian Police Medal for distinguished service to the Australian police force.

We congratulate Danielle on the significant contribution to the community she has made in her many different roles

## **The 2020 Makai Cup... was WILD!!**

This was held in mid-February 2020 in very rough and challenging conditions. Scotty Hunter took part with a mate from Sydney – check out the footage via the link below – Wild! Definitely not for the inexperienced – or faint hearted!

Scotty and Kenno came home with a medal for 3rd place in the doubles, and boat and paddlers in one piece – which was quite an achievement. The race was called off after 2 of 4 laps, due to the conditions. A great video here: [Makai Cup Ulladulla - Ocean Racing](#)



Makai Cup 2020 (pic Makai Paddlers)

## Batemans Bay Paddle Challenge: In Pictures...

Despite extreme conditions, there was a large contingent of dedicated BGCC paddlers at the 2020 Batemans Bay Paddle Challenge, in part to support the region after a savage summer of bushfires, including some heartbreaking personal stories of loss and hardship... It was very hot, windy, choppy and challenging; and the organisers did a fantastic job of making it all happen, and then running the event smoothly and safely. Definitely one for your race or social paddling calendar next year...



Top: The BGCC Contingent B Bay 2020. Bottom: A relaxed Andrew Parkinson IN A SKI! (Pics Paddle NSW/Flickr).



Top: Larissa Cleverly relieved to finish - and BGCC helpers, John Preston hits the start, Paddlers cooling off...(Pics Paddle NSW/Flickr)



Top: Dom Hides, centre, Margi; and bottom, Liam - all racing hard.....(Pics Paddle NSW/Flickr)

## Frank Harrison Race Report: Helen Tongway

On Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 12 BGCC paddlers took part in the 2020 Mitta Mitta Canoe Club's marathon races; six paddling the full distance of 26 km from the Hume Dam wall, along the Murray River to Albury; with the other six opting for the shorter 16 km paddle from the Water Works to Albury. On Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February there were only four of us staying on for the second course (doubles day).

### BGCC Paddlers' Results:

#### Saturday: Single boats

<u>26 km</u>	W	Open	K1	Larissa Cleverly	5 <sup>th</sup>	1:54:26
		V35	K1	Gabrielle Hurley	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2:11:43
	M	Open	K1	Michael Hanemaayer	4 <sup>th</sup>	1:42:10
		V35	K1	Dom Hides	4 <sup>th</sup>	1:54:26
				Andrew Parkinson	6 <sup>th</sup>	1:58:18
				John Preston	9 <sup>th</sup>	2:08:35
<u>16 km</u>	W	Open	K1	Emily O'Rourke	1 <sup>st</sup>	1:10:33
		V55	K1	Margi Bohm	1 <sup>st</sup>	1:09:37
		V70	TC1	Helen Tongway	1 <sup>st</sup>	1:56:36
	M	Open	K1	Thomas Long	1 <sup>st</sup>	1:11:51
		V55	K1	Al Long	1 <sup>st</sup>	1:12:28
		V70	TC1	Allan Newhouse	1 <sup>st</sup>	1:30:58

#### Sunday: Double boats

16 km	M	Open	TK2	Thomas Long & Al Long	1 <sup>st</sup>	1:09 <sup>''</sup> 57
	X	V470	TC2	Helen Tongway & Allan Newhouse	1 <sup>st</sup>	1:25:55



Margi Bohm (top) and Emily O'Rourke (All photos courtesy David Anderson Photography)



The 2020 races were on a lower river level than previous years, but the water was still moving along quite fast. In fact on Saturday, so fast, I was too slow at looking at exactly where I was headed took the wrong line in trying to avoid a large log in the middle of the river .... and took a swim. I am grateful to the half-dozen or so paddlers who helped me to the bank and back into my canoe. I seemed to enjoy the swim so much that at the next



Thomas Long (top) and Al Long (#342)

big corner I took another one! (Must have been shaking too much from the previous one, I think) Thankfully two of the rescuers were still behind me and once again helped me back into my canoe! No other "events" to spoil an otherwise beautiful paddle down the Murray River in the best paddling conditions I have encountered there. Why not join us at Albury next February?



Helen Tongway and Allan Newhouse TC2 (bottom left of pic)

## Oura Beach to Wagga Beach Race 15th February: Patricia Ashton

This was one of the iconic local races, 26km downstream. I remember taking part many years ago in a TK2 with Brendan (former member). Looking down into the swirling waters of the Murrumbidgee River with its snags and watching the antics of the local SES trying (and failing) to trailer one of their boats onto the river, filled me with trepidation.

Luckily Brendan was an experienced paddler and we actually had a great time. I was chuffed to finish in just over 2 hours.

This year, after a 10 year hiatus, Waggabidgee decided to run the Oura race again. They would love to see it included in the Marathon series, so this was a test run. Unfortunately, water levels dropped dramatically – 80cm – in the 36 hours before the race (due to rain, the dam release was turned off, however there was actually very little rain...). This necessitated some quick thinking and an amended course. The lower water level meant more snags, but also some small rapids, very shallow gravel races and the main reason for the course change, a significant rapid with strainers.

So instead of starting at Oura, the new start was 8.5km downstream at Braehour Reserve which meant the course was too short, so it was extended 2km past Wagga beach, then 2km back upstream to the finish.

While I have done a little bit of white water over the years and paddled the Murray, I really didn't know what to expect and was grateful that the Waggabidgee crew put on a social paddle on Saturday afternoon. This meant we could check out some of the course and get a taste of the river. It was fun, the rapids were very short & not too strong, however the river was quite shallow and a thick chocolate brown, so no chance of seeing any submerged snags. You did need to focus.

The club was extremely helpful, organising the club trailer and car shuffles to get paddlers to and from the start/finish.

I had a good start and found myself in 2<sup>nd</sup> position, following Jake, a former BGCC member and recent Waggabidgee member. As a local I thought he would know the river so I followed him through heavily snagged sections, moving from one side of the river to the other to get the fastest flow, followed him through a couple of rapids but when I heard his boat bottom out on a gravel race, I thought I'd take a slightly different line – oops. I came to a shuddering halt, had to get out of the boat and move it a couple of meters to deeper water. Was that a clever race tactic from Jake – I lost quite some distance and had to chase him for the rest of the race & never quite caught him again. Or was it just bad luck? Found out after the race that he had never paddled the first 10km of the course anyway and never paddled in the river while it was so low.....still, in our start (TK's TK2's, ski's and assorted other craft) he finished first and I came in about 30sec behind.

It was a pity there were only a small number of participants, however, I have to say I really enjoyed the event. More fun than going around in circles and the river changed with each

turn. It was also very scenic, the gums were beautiful, and the huge snags were quite picturesque, then there were birds flying overhead screeching or perched in the trees, plus there was flow to help you on the way. Overall, a good couple of days out, we should be supporting this race and hopefully we'll have more club members making a weekend of it next year.

*Patricia*

## **Important Announcement: BGCC Covid -19 Measures**

### **ANNOUNCEMENT 2 FROM THE COMMITTEE TO MEMBERS REGARDING COVID-19 MEASURES**

The BGCC committee is concerned to ensure risks to its members from the COVID-19 virus as a result of participation in club related activities are sensibly managed.

The committee is not expert in health matters, but has endorsed the following suggestions and policies for our club to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading to our members and others when using the boatshed, boats and facilities or participating in club activities. This announcement is additional to updates released on the Paddle Australia and PaddleNSW websites.

Although our members are generally fit, many are in the more vulnerable older age group, so we need to take care to ensure the safety of everyone. Beating this virus will require us all to work together to ensure the health and safety of all of our club community.

**ASSISTANCE PLEASE:** Hand sanitiser and kitchen towel/paper towel are in limited supply and we have not been able to provide any in the boatshed. Please purchase some if you find these items in the shops and you will be reimbursed.

### **ATTENTION: THE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SHOWERS ARE NOW CLOSED TO NORMAL USE**

The **showers** should only be used by paddlers who have **fallen into the water and need to wash themselves and/or are very cold and need to shower to restore core body temperature.**

- The shower areas **can** still be used as **change rooms**.
- Anyone who uses the showers and toilets should be familiar with the **cleaning procedures** in these areas. Cleaning materials are available.

- Showers **must** be cleaned thoroughly in the unlikely event they are used.

Thanks for your co-operation!

1. **Please do not come to the boatshed if you are experiencing any of these symptoms:**

- Fever
- coughing
- sore throat
- shortness of breath

**\*\*Consult a doctor for medical advice\*\***

For more information: <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert#how-to-protect-yourself-and-others>

1. Personal hygiene is the best defence against this virus. **Ensure you wash your hands with soap and water at the small basin in the corridor to the men's showers or use sanitiser immediately upon arrival at the shed.** Paper towel for drying hands and a lined waste bin will be provided.
2. To reduce hazard from touching **common surfaces**:
  - Note that **opening and locking up the shed** may expose you to the virus so be vigilant in washing/sanitising your hands.
  - Using the **sign-in sheets** is optional during this period, but can still be useful for safety reasons, for example if you are going out on the lake.
3. **Club kitchenware is NOT be used. Disposable cups will be provided,** as well as a lined waste bin.
4. If you are using club equipment **wash paddle shafts** with soap and water **BEFORE** and **AFTER** your paddle. Continue to wash the boat and dry it before putting it away.
5. **Please keep the kitchen and other surfaces clean.** Spray disinfectant and paper towels will be provided to help you do the right thing.
6. The **kayak erg** must only be used **outside and with the permission of a club coach.** It must be **wiped down.** Spray disinfectant and paper towels will be provided in the shed.
  - You will note that weights and the weight bench have been removed from the back room.
  - Please stretch, roll and warm-up at home; not in the back room.
7. You should be aware of government recommendations around social distancing. **Gathering in the boatshed, particularly in the kitchen area, is discouraged** despite the cold weather coming.

The committee is keen to encourage the social aspects of paddling, but wants to balance this against the risks of transmission of the virus. To this end:

1. Training and coaching groups can continue, including flat water and canoe polo **BUT participants should be aware of social distancing and hygiene recommendations** from government and **exercise common sense regarding attendance if they exhibit any flu-like symptoms.**

2. **Paddling team boats is discouraged** owing to the risk of close contact between participants. Club doubles **must not** be used.
3. Club **time trials** will continue.
  - These will change from Wednesday evenings to Sunday mornings when daylight savings ends;
  - Again, participants should be aware of social distancing recommendations.
4. **Conduct of canoe polo competitions is discouraged** owing to the risks of close contact and **canoe polo training sessions need to be mindful of social distancing**.
5. **Coaches and instructors must keep a record** of the date and time as well as who has attended a training session or activity.
  - If a case of COVID-19 has been confirmed in a member of your squad or a confirmed case has attended your activity or event, please contact the club President immediately ([swimming.fast@yahoo.com.au](mailto:swimming.fast@yahoo.com.au)). He will advise ACT Health and get further advice on what steps need to be followed.
6. **Occasional events**, such as introductions to paddling, will be cancelled until further notice.
7. Induction of **new members** will be cancelled unless endorsed by at least two of the committee executive and safety officer. New members will be encouraged to wait until spring/summer or after the pandemic is officially over.

Conduct of the club's marathon series race scheduled for 4 July 2020 and similar events will be a matter for PaddleNSW.

Please remember that this is an evolving field and there may be important changes to this document as our understanding of COVID-19 improves. The committee will continue to monitor the situation, including the advice of Paddle Australia, PaddleNSW and government authorities.