



*Newsletter of the*  
**BURLEYGRIFFIN CANOE CLUB**

Volume 35 Issue 11 August 2025

**Your Committee:**

**President:** Laura Kleinrahm

**Vice President:** Richard Fox

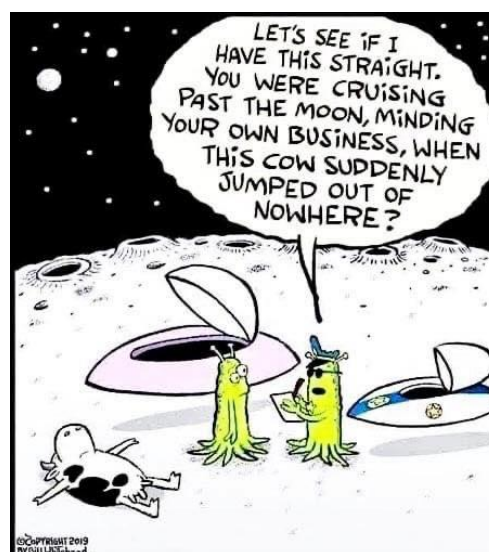
**Secretary:** Patricia Ashton

**Treasurer:** Neil Fargher

**Boat Captain:** Andy Osborne

**Safety Officer:** Tom Long

**Ordinary Members:** Shayanna Beck  
 & Colin Calderwood



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- [Boats for Sale](#)
- [Draft August Committee Meeting Minutes](#)



*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')	Helen Tongway
Coaches' rep	Margi Bohm
Webmaster	Geoff Collett
Vice-Boat Captain	Scott MacWilliam
Canoe Polo Convener	Adam Hofmeyer
Time Trials	Helen Tongway & John Lockie
Marathon Convener	Colin Calderwood
Event Co-ordinator	Bob Collins
Sprint Convener	Marcelo Cabezas
WW Convener	Mic Doyle
Slalom Convener	Colin Calderwood
Social Convener	Wendy Xiao

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## Coming Events:

- 31 August, 2025 PNSW Marathon Series Race 9, MWKC Narrabeen Sydney NSW
- 20 September, 2024 Myall Classic 12, 27 & 47 km Tea Gardens Nth Coast NSW
- 21 September, 2025 PNSW Sprint Series Race 2 MWKC Narrabeen NSW
- 29 Sep-4 Oct 2025 ICF World Slalom Championships SIRC Sydney NSW
- 5 October, 2025 PNSW Marathon Series Race 9, WPC Windsor, Finale Sydney NSW
- 10-12 October, 2025 Clarence River 100 Grafton NSW
- 11-12 October, 2025 Canoe Polo Summer Series #1 Penrith NSW
- 8-9 November, 2025 Hawkesbury Canoe Classic Windsor to Mooney-Mooney NSW
- 17-21 November, 2025 Massive Murray Paddle Yarrawonga-Koondrook NSW/Vic
- 6-7 December, 2025 24Hour Relay Paddling Challenge Molonglo Reach BGCC ACT
- 6-7 December, 2025 Canoe Polo Summer Series #2 Oxenford QLD

## President's Report

Happy final month of winter! Things are certainly a bit less chilly already, so if you've been considering re-emerging from your winter hibernation, perhaps it's time to join in Sunny Saturday Time-Trials or Canoe Polo training!

As you should hopefully be aware, the Club AGM is being held on the 30th of August. It's not too late to join our Ace Gang of Committee members by submitting a nomination, or otherwise just make sure to come on down to support the Club and get a cheeky snack.

Thanks for everyone's patience as we compiled all the data from the 83 members who participated in our Club Survey. The insights were super valuable, and you'll be seeing some changes rolled out across the Club as a result. You can read our full length summary [here](#), or if you're just after a snapshot, you can read the [brief version](#).

Some handy links to save are also our:

- [Club Calendar](#)
- [Volunteer Skills Register](#) - if you've got a handy skill or interest you think might help the Club, pop it down!

As the weather warms up later this year, we'll also be looking to run a Club clean-up and Open Day (25/10), so keep your eyes peeled on how to get involved. We also need a couple party-pals to help organise the Club Presentation Night, so if you speak in sequins, get in touch!

El Presidenté - Laura Kleinrahm

## Canoe Polo Report

Not much to report on the Polo front. Weeknight A-Grade trainings have been sputtering along and it was good to get a Saturday B-Grade session going again after a few weeks off. Friday night polo games have also been going ahead most weeks. However, it seems to be the *Ladies who Lift* sessions that have been attracting the most energy and numbers this winter. The girls have been getting fit'n'foxy in preparation for the season kicking off again in October; ready to fight our interstate foes with our new moves.

### Summer Series Calendar

- |                                |     |                        |                |
|--------------------------------|-----|------------------------|----------------|
| • Summer Series                | #1: | Penrith NSW            | 11/12 October  |
| • Summer Series                | #2: | Oxenford, QLD          | 6/7 December   |
| • Summer Series                | #3: | Molonglo Reach, ACT    | 17/18 January  |
| • Summer Series                | #4: | Lysterfield (tbc), VIC | 14/15 February |
| • 2026 National Championships: |     | Mawson Lakes, SA       | 3/4/5 April    |

- Laura Kleinrahm

## Marathon Racing Report

### PNSW Marathon Series Race 8 Report: *A Birthday too Many*

While we optimistically registered for the Early Bird entry by the Monday before the race, looking at the weather forecast for Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> during the week we were not optimistic! Rain up to 40mm with winds up to 35 kph really wasn't inspiring Bob Collins and me - to drive the 3 hours to Penrith to get cold, wet and buffeted. However, by Friday evening the forecast was looking way less grim, and the decision was made that yes, we'll go.

We'd already missed a couple of races this season so were not able to defend our Division 5 season's win from last year and this would be our last race this season as I'm heading off for 6 weeks. So yes, we go and we go hard. Wind is our friend – the SLR2 is quite stable and in conditions that are hard for our Div 5 K1 paddlers we can usually creep up and overtake. We had 6 paddlers in our division and while there were several we knew would finish way in front, we were (quietly) confident of coming 4<sup>th</sup>. What we weren't prepared for was coming 6<sup>th</sup>! And by 1 – 2 minutes. What happened?



We'd caught and overtaken our 3 boat pack in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter; the other 2 wash riding us and we're chatting away – Cassandra just had a baby 3 months previously.....we got to the 10 km turn and I thought I'd give her a bit more room than I normally would (we don't usually chat and always try to get away from any long-term wash riders!) and they were gone... both K1's took off and all we could do was watch as the distance got greater with each kilometre. Depressing! We didn't seem to get the second wind that we rely on.

Why? Was it the weather? It was windy; there was quite some flow; one short rain-shower; but nothing dramatic. Hmm, maybe not training in my single; not paddling quite as often; 3 grandchildren (who are always passing on their germs as well as cuddles) and a semi significant birthday for me – and every birthday is significant for Bob these days! He did inform me that we have 142 years between us.....so we'll go with that – *Too many birthdays!*

[Below:](#) Richard Fox



As for the other BGCC paddlers – Craig Elliott and Laura Lee looked good as they powered past – unfortunately for them, in their double they get bumped up to Div 1. Their time would have had them well in front in Div 2. Speaking with Jason Rantall after the race, he said he '*just didn't fire*', same could be said for Matt who DNF'd. While describing our

woes to Richard Fox, he tried hard to be sympathetic but (smugly) said he had a really good race. Robert Bruce was happy with his performance given the windy conditions and Louise Gates is still finding her way in Marathon paddling saying she needs to pick the right line.

Oh well, there is always next season...

*-Patricia Ashton*



## BGCC Results: Penrith, 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2025: <https://www.webscorer.com/startlist?raceid=399526>

Division 1:	5 <sup>th</sup>	Laura Lee/Craig Elliott	K2	1:36:58	96
	DNF	Matthew Gates	K1		
Division 2:	9 <sup>th</sup>	Jason Rantall	K1	1:47:54	92
Division 4:	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Richard Fox	LR1	1:54:46	99
Division 5:	6 <sup>th</sup>	Patricia Ashton/Bob Collins	LR2	2:06:22	95
Division 12:	5 <sup>th</sup>	Louise Gates	K1	1:16:54	96
Division 13:	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Robert Bruce	OS1	0:36:10	99



### Note the change of date for the final race in the PNSW Marathon Series

#### From the PVC web-site:

On Sunday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, the Penrith Valley Canoeing club hosted Race 8 of the Paddle NSW 2025 Marathon series. The event, held on the Nepean River, saw a strong turnout with **81 competitors** representing 10 clubs from across the region. Participants came from Lane Cove, Cronulla Sutherland, Burley Griffin, Brisbane Waters, Illawarra, Windsor, Hunter Valley, Sutherland Shire, Manly Warringah, and Central Coast clubs.

The race took place in cool conditions, with the temperature hovering around **13 degrees** and minimal rainfall. However, the Nepean River itself presented a significant challenge. Heavy rainfall overnight caused the river level to rise by **1.5 meters**, resulting in a strong **2 km per hour** flow in the main channel and a powerful **7 km per hour** flow through the Narrows.

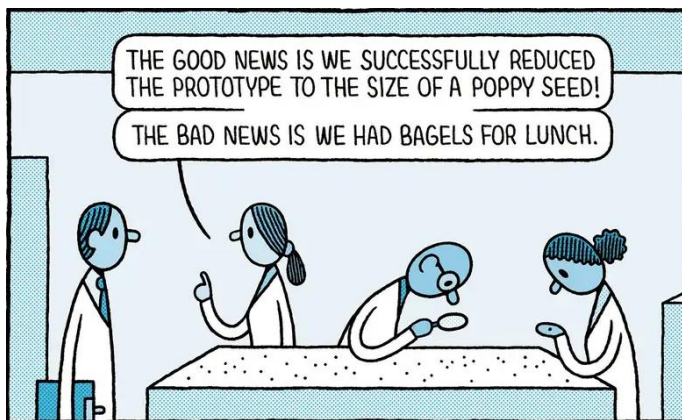
Starting at the Penrith Rowing Club, the famous Nepean out-and-back course, a staple of the Penrith Marathon, had to be altered due to the dangerous water rapids conditions at the Narrows. To ensure the safety of all paddlers, the race was adjusted to a circuit for the 15 & 20 km course. Starting and finishing in front of the Penrith Rowing Club, Paddlers competed in a range of distances to suit all skill levels and ages. The four distances offered were **5, 10, 15, and 20 kilometres**.

**Next Race: 31<sup>st</sup> August, MWKC, Narrabeen – enter now!**

## 2026 Australian Canoe Marathon

### & SUP National Championships:

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> April – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2026. Hosted by BGCC at Molonglo Reach. Volunteers will be needed! Please consider how you can contribute to this event – and provide to the rest of the Australian paddling community a **Capital Event!**



TOM GAULD for NEW SCIENTIST

# Myall Classic 2025

Saturday 20 Sept

## ENTRIES OPEN

Race Distances 12, 27 & 47km

Entry Fees (by Sunday 17 Aug)

- Adult \$80
- 65+ \$65
- Junior/Student \$40



MIDCOAST  
council



## CLARENCE 100

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MARATHON 3 DAY PADDLE EVENT

10<sup>TH</sup>-11<sup>TH</sup>-12<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER

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Next PNSW Series Race: 31<sup>st</sup> August, MWKC, Narrabeen Lake, Narrabeen – enter now!



## PNSW Sprint Racing Series

**2025 Sprint Series got underway at Avoca Kayak Club on 17<sup>th</sup> August.**

Sprint Series 1 - Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> August - Avoca Kayak Club

Sprint Series 2 - Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September - Manly Warringah Kayak Club, Narrabeen

Sprint Series 3 - Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> October - SIRC Penrith

PNSW State Championships - Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> November, SIRC Penrith

*-Marcelo Cabezas*

## BGCC Winter Time Trials Results:

With the even chillier winds of winter and paddlers away, there are not many results on record this month!

**Results: 9/8/2025: 1 lap:** Diane Gibson K1 35:36(**PB**); **2 laps:** Matthew Gates K1 33:00; Craig Elliott K1 35:08; Laura Lee K1 38:40; Matilda Stevenson K1 39:31(**PB**); Margi Bohm K1 41:28; Patricia Ashton/Bob Collins LR2 43:20; Andy Osborne OS1 43:24; Helen Tongway/Yvette Maconachie LR2 54:11.

**Results: 16/8/2025: 1 lap:** Neil Fargher LR1 28:01; **2 laps:** Matthew Gates K1 34:57; Craig Elliott K1 37:32; Laura Lee K1 41:22; Matilda Stevenson K1 41:23; Richard Fox LR1 41:36.

***Time Trials:** 10 a.m. start each Saturday. Paddle against your own best time – not some other speedy paddler in a faster/fancier boat! All grades of paddlers welcomed /encouraged!*

## News of the Month

### The 2025 AGM is Coming!

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August 12 p.m. at the shed. All Welcome. Followed by a light lunch.**

An email has been sent out - with the Minutes, Agenda and Nomination forms.

PLEASE, take the time to think about how you can help.

All positions are vacated and while several of the current committee will stand again, Committee Members are only permitted to hold a position for 2 years in succession. So: all positions are open for you to nominate for, but our Treasurer and Secretary need to move on. We've had some interest in the Treasurer's position with one club member spending time with Neil Fargher, to get his head around what is involved.

We will need a **Secretary**. This position can be simplified to:

- *Receiving and recording all incoming and outgoing correspondence*
- *Providing the agenda for club meetings and recording the minutes of all meetings*
- *Liaising with the committee.*

Other duties associated with this position can be taken on by more experienced club members. In this format the Secretary position would be a great place to become familiar with the committee and the club itself, without being overwhelmed. Meetings are generally once a month and last for 1 to 1½ hours.

So - if you've got some free time and have an interest in the club and are interested in 'giving back' - let me know or nominate yourself for the position.

We also need a **Safety Officer**.

Person in this position: gives advice to the Committee on safety issues in relation to

- shed, boats, equipment and facilities
- environmental and health issues such as smoke, blue/green algae and Covid
- the conduct of events
- club rules and procedures
- content of training and education programs

And to assist the Committee engender a culture of individual responsibility in relation to safety, consistent with

- applicable legislation
- Paddle Australia and Paddle NSW safety standards
- ACT Public Health Directions
- what an ordinary person would consider reasonable.

We need **Two Ordinary Members**: with the aim of them being from different disciplines, to ensure a greater spread of expertise in the Committee

These people do not hold a specific office but will need to attend regular committee meetings and support the executive members.

They can vote on general matters.

They may be requested to take on ad hoc tasks, e.g., look into insurance, special purchases, policy matters, etc., (depending on skills).

*-Patricia Ashton*

## World Marathon Championships

I am sure all members would like to join the Committee in wishing all our BGCC paddlers representing Australia at the Worlds Marathon Championships in Gyor, Hungary, 4-7 September, the best of luck. Our squad consists of Margi Bohm, Laura Lee (absent from photo) Craig Elliott and Matthew Gates. Best of luck to them all. *-Colin Calderwood*







## About ENHANCE Healthcare:



Enhance Healthcare was established by **Peter Garbutt** and **Celina Miller** in 2001, initially providing Massage and Chiropractic Services to the Gungahlin and Canberra community.

Over the past 15 years, our service offering has increased to include;

- - **Acupuncture;**
- - **Soft Tissue Therapy;**
- - **Chinese Herbal Medicine;**
- - **Chiropractic and Massage Therapy;**
- - **Physiotherapy**

Email: [healthcare@enhance.com.au](mailto:healthcare@enhance.com.au)

Book online: <https://enhance.janeapp.com.au/login>

Mitchell: (02) 6241 6060  
Denman: (02) 6287 1377

Our business is built with the customer at the forefront of everything we do. We have established a highly skilled and professional team, across multiple disciplines with the specific view of delivering the best possible client outcomes.

At Enhance Healthcare we listen to our clients, diagnose the problem properly and utilise the combined skills of the ENHANCE team to resolve whatever the problem may be. We then follow up to ensure our clients are happy with outcomes

***Pete Garbutt is also a long-time member of the Burley Griffin Canoe Club***

### **Denman Prospect Clinic Address**

Shop 25, 3 Felstead Vista,  
Denman Prospect ACT 2611

### **Mitchell Clinic Address:**

Unit 10, Level 1 141 Flemington Rd  
Mitchell, Canberra ACT, 2912

### **Opening Hours:**

<b>Monday</b>	5 a.m. – 8pm	<b>Tuesday</b>	7 a.m. – 7 p.m.	<b>Wednesday</b>	7 a.m. – 8 p.m.
<b>Thursday</b>	7 a.m. – 7 p.m.	<b>Friday</b>	7 a.m. – 6 p.m.	<b>Saturday</b>	10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
<b>Sunday</b>	10 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Mitchell only)				

## Club Shed Update

August news is that I (for the club) have been actively looking to replace the ageing fleet of plastic kayaks, primarily used for recreational activities and Taste of Paddling events.



We have acquired a second hand sit-on-top fishing kayak - White (not yellow) Cobra (left) and a sit-on-top ski-like kayak (yellow Sprinter) (Right)



We are also looking to acquire a couple of extra stable kayaks, (e.g., see Left) as well as some replacement stable skis to replace the two older epic V8s which are a bit leaky.

The old Dagger sit-in kayak is being retired and will be scrapped. **If anyone would like the Dagger, then please reach out in the next couple of weeks before it gets taken to the tip.**

All of this aligns to the outcomes of the recent survey where the majority of club members are focussed on recreational paddling.



*-Andy Osborne*

## Meet a club member: John Lockie

I joined last century after attending a lecture on a coaching topic by Toni Harmer, where she was (easily) distracted and started talking excitedly about paddling. As a rower, it was appealing to be able to see where I was going rather than where I had been. Thanks Toni.

My Club involvement has included a couple of years as Property Manager (some of the boat rack numbers I painted in the 1990s can still be seen) and Triathlon Coordinator when we raised funds by putting boats around their swim course. A high point was working with Bob Collins and the Grey Army to demolish the old toilets and build the extensions. I have also written teaching materials, including the initial version of the Taste of Paddling course and assisted in presenting it; plus done lots of (unqualified) coaching, particularly with juniors and vulnerable adults.



Left: John Lockie, having completed the 405 km Murray Marathon in 2007

My racing has included many BG Bashes, 24 Hours, various marathons, a couple of full distance Murrays and 2½ Hawkesburys. The high point from a racing perspective

was sitting behind Helen Tongway in a double at Nationals (as the only entrant in our class, we did quite well). For the low point, see the ½ Hawkesbury.

Paddle sports have so much potential. So, having worked with a range of other sports, it has always been sad to see Paddling's inward looking governance culture, from Australian Canoeing (now PA) down, restricting paddle disciplines to little-known minor sports; and I am not sure "Towards 32" will change that.

Paddling with BGCC has brought so many highs and contact with nice people, with hopefully more to come. But my most moving moment to date was "showing" a blind girl a double Mirage and then paddling in the back seat down the river and across East Basin; while she steered a true course, with the odd hint from behind, but mainly by the feel of the wind on her face. That's paddling for pleasure. *[Below: John paddling with great Pleasure with his grandsons](#)*



## Recreational Paddling

Quite a number of BGCC members join the club with the aim of Recreational paddling. While for most, the local river and lakes are all they are after, some would like to venture further afield. In order to do this, cars will need both roof racks and boat cradles, so members travelling with boats will need to spend some money – even if using club boats.

Away paddles also require the paddler to be a bit "paddle-fitter" than those drifting along our pleasant local waterways. To gain this fitness, more regular paddling sessions are needed – so join in the Thursday morning, 7 a.m.; Saturday morning time trials, 10 a.m. and/or Paddle for Pleasure, 11:30 a.m.; Sunday mornings, 9 a.m. Paddle along with others while you gain help with paddling technique and see how you cope with longer times seated in your boat of choice.

When you are able to paddle at 7 or 8 kph for a couple of hours in one go, you then need to commit to the trip away – organise your own accommodation (perhaps sharing with others on the trip) and boat, paddle, PFD, food and drinks, etc. Sometimes a trip needs to be cancelled or postponed because of adverse weather conditions or the like, but it is extremely disappointing for a club member trying to fix a date and place to paddle, only to have people drop out of the expedition at the last moment.



Patricia has been looking at a trip to Kangaroo Valley on 1<sup>st</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup> November. If this is of interest to you – let her know. Prepare yourself. Commit. Be ready to go – and enjoy your paddle on some beautiful waterways!

*-Helen Tongway*

## **Tales from the Far North Basin.**

They said it would be cold in the New England region, but I had my doubts.

My wife, Karma, moved up to Armidale in June last year while I stayed on in Bungendore until we were certain where it was that I was going to be moving all our stuff to.



As a result, we had a daily comparison of winter 2024 and at almost every metric Bungendore (and, by proxy, Canberra) was colder. By a long shot.

This information returned a certain kind of glumness from some of the locals – they almost seemed disappointed that we hadn't been brutalised by the 2024 weather and that we didn't seem to be concerned about the winter to come. Others just smiled knowingly and informed us that we hadn't experienced a real Armidale winter yet.

We have now, and I am prepared to eat as much ice-cold humble pie as can be placed in front of me. Because, as if to prove a point, winter 2025 seemed to really exert its dominance. Just a couple of weeks ago we had a foot of snow in the paddocks and we've had weeks that haven't gone above 8 degrees.

Granted, the photos of the snow are evidence of the most snow that the region has seen in 40 years, but still, even if it is a meteorological outlier, it has demonstrated that being smug doesn't keep you warm at night. The snow fights were fun, though!

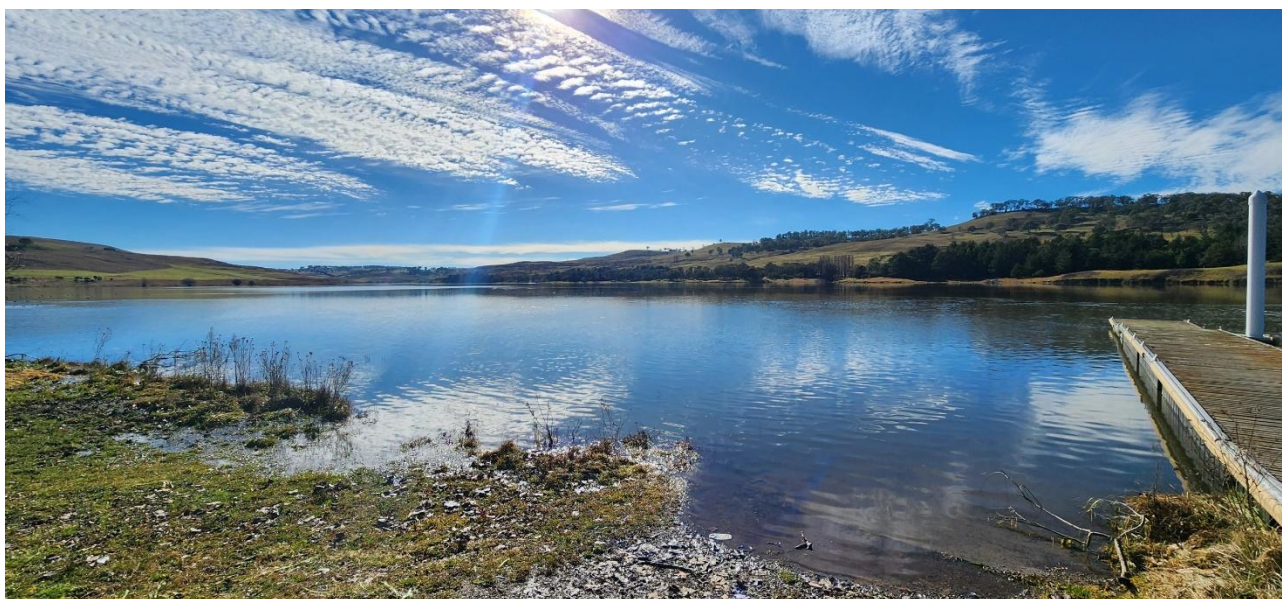


## Paddling in New England.

It's been a slow year of training up here. I've been doing my training on a very small public recreation dam called Dumeresq. It's only 500m long and a couple of hundred wide.

Anyone who has looked at my Strava this year would have seen the random circuits I've been limited to. In fact, Jason Rantall has more than once referred to me as Mr Squiggle. If there's an upside, it is that it is only 20 minutes from my front door. That said, 25 minutes in the other direction is the much bigger Malpas Dam. However, access to that body of water has until recently been ... challenging.

At about 9 km around and with multiple bays to keep one away from the biting wind if required, Malpas is pretty near perfect. It's also home to multiple user groups including sailing, rowing, angling; and there's even evidence of some dragon boating.



However, getting someone at any of the user groups to talk about paddling has been a slow process and involved multiple well-guarded fiefdoms to navigate. Thankfully, I've also had people on my side and, as of last week, I have access. Partly through multiple conversations by me and by people on my behalf, but I also think that a willingness to be patient and not just be some guy up from Canberra demanding access has helped. There's also been a little bit of luck as well. The New England Sailing and Aquatics Club (The Aquatics bit was added recently) have decided to increase their membership parameters. This doesn't mean that there is a paddle club on Malpas for you to visit yet, but it does mean that there is a place for one – so get excited, but just not too excited yet.

There's a lot of club-tape to get through before we can throw open the NEPaAC Paddling Wing, but it's a start. Looking forward to paddling in a club environment again, even if it's only a club of one paddler now. One becomes two becomes half a dozen in pretty short order.



And who doesn't want to paddle in a snow-storm? Actually, perhaps that isn't a selling point...

*-Andrew Webber*



## Canberra's Canoe Archaeology – a creative introduction



*(Source: The Festival of Canoe and Kayak, Shoalhaven)*

*Mark Grundy, August 2025*

*Talk about canoeing history and we normally think about the traditions around Greenland or North America. But Australia has an ancient canoeing history going back tens of thousands of years and some of it is well-recorded around the ACT.*

*When we're not off somewhere paddling, Ela Majocha and I volunteer with several environmental and cultural heritage groups. You can pick up some interesting local information that way and when Helen was scratching to find some end-of-Winter newsletter material, I thought about putting together this introduction, in which I creatively interpret my ongoing research into how indigenous locals might have made their canoes. When next we paddle Canberra's magnificent waterways, I hope that members might remember and enjoy.*

So picture this:

You live in a band of maybe 30 people, all second cousins and in-laws, up in the place that will come to be called the Limestone Plains.

Your people have been living here since before the last Ice Age, 25,000 years ago – and maybe longer. Later, scholars will estimate your population density at around one person per 36km<sup>2</sup>, which means that you and your cousins are all living in an area two or three days' walk across. That area – your home -- supplies you with everything you need: food, medicine, materials for clothes, shelter, fire. You've lived there your whole life, have walked every inch of it season on season and know it like the back of your hand. Ancient traditions make this land yours, not by claim but by earned custody: you earn your right to occupancy by the way you live there and by what you learn and know, through multiple initiations and through careful, daily observation.

Every game animal has someone in your family who protects it, and this responsibility is inherited from their mother's totem. Every creek, tree, river, mountain, animal, plant and waterhole has its own stories and traditions. The land itself is governed by ancient stories

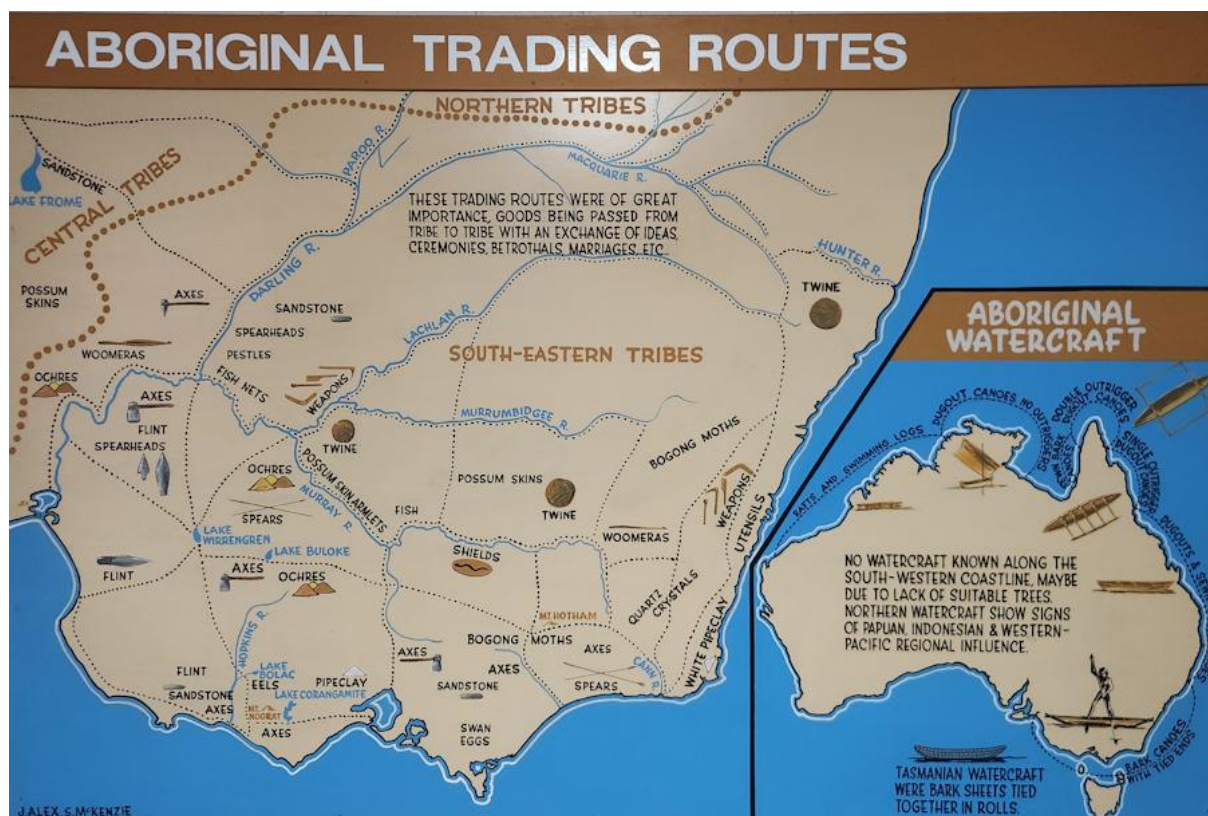


and customs intertwined with you and your family. Their stories, their practices and their ancestry constitute your right to live there and are as much a part of you as your name.



(Indigenous groups of Canberra and surrounds, adapted from [AIATSIS map](#))

But you're not living in isolation. You're trading with people from hundreds of kilometres away, who have resources that you don't; many who don't even speak your language.



(Aboriginal trading routes, display at the [Killer Whale Museum, Eden](#), image from author)

They welcome your thick-furred possum-skins, your twine from the stringybark tree and are honoured to share a feed of fat Bogong moths with you in Summer up in the cool, mountain caves of the Brindabellas. And you're glad to trade for their hard axe-stones, their pristine, sacred white pipeclay from far down on the South Coast, or their beautiful red and yellow ochres from out where the Murrumbidgee meets the Lachlan.

But yours is a subtropical highland climate: cold and dry in the winter and hot and dry in summer. Plant foods are important, but hard to come by. There are starchy native yam daisies called *murnong*, which you can roast or eat raw. Your sisters and aunts collect native seeds, nuts and berries including wattle seeds, native cherries and native fruits, along with greens and roots in season. But for most of your calories you depend on meat: kangaroo, wallaby, echidna, possum, freshwater fish, lizards, snakes and insects like Bogong moths. If you know where to look, then even when the frosts and snows come and nothing grows, you can feed your family and keep them warm all year round.

But water is central to where your people move at any time of year. You use water for hydration, for cooking, and in season, for catching food. Out on the Molonglo, the Murrumbidgee, the Cotter, on Weston Creek, Tuggeranong Creek, or Ginninderra Creek, the water-birds and fish are fat and juicy in season. But they're elusive, and the platypus are wily and shy. Catching any of them requires time and patience and it helps to be on the water to do it.

So, despite living up at the roof of an island continent, you make canoes. It takes time and effort to do this.

You're climbing trees to cut bark big enough to make a canoe that can hold a man safely in the cold, swift alpine waters. And it's not just any tree – you want the old, straight girls that stand tall on hills, with their limbs spreading up high – and they may be a long way from the water where you'll use them.



Because you don't store grains away like future settlers will, everything you do has to make practical sense, season on season. This canoe is going to help your whole family find calories that are hard to get some other way. You'll want to cut this canoe-bark right, make it once, make it good, make it last and know how to use it.

Your whole family will be watching.

If your new canoe works well, it will help feed your family for weeks. They'll sing songs about using it and your chest will swell with pride. They'll use it for a handy shelter; will even light a fire in it, laying clay on the canoe floor to protect the bark. Year on year they'll repair it and hide it away between uses; look forward to the food it brings. It will become a family asset that's from the land, that binds you to the land, but is left behind when you leave the deeper creeks and rivers for upland game.

(Canoe Tree, Lanyon Homestead. Source: Ela Majocha)

Your tree of choice will be tall, straight, old and have bark that's easy to access, cut and work – perhaps swamp she-oak (*Casuarina glauca*), bangalay (*Eucalyptus botryoides*), or stringybark (*Eucalyptus agglomerata* and *Eucalyptus acmeniodes*.) The one out at Lanyon Homestead is from Yellow Box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*.)





*(Bark canoe from West Kempsey, 310x45cm, source: Australian Museum)*

You won't want to ringbark and kill the tree that you take your canoe from, so your canoe-width is limited. From a tree with a 1m diameter your canoe won't be wide – maybe 40-45cm. Designed to hunt, fish and gather eggs on flat water it won't need much freeboard, but if it's used for spearing then it needs enough length and buoyancy to hold a man standing, making it up to 6m long.

To cut such a length from a tall, straight tree you'll need to climb pretty high up a sheer trunk, but that's okay: you're used to it. In the Winter, your brothers and uncles climb trees to find possums in well-known tree holes and they do that using cord of stringybark, with little triangular notches cut into trunks for their big toes. Later white settlers will marvel at this ability.



So, you'll select your tree carefully, respecting the resources, the tree, the land and your traditions. When you cut, you will be leaving a permanent mark on this land, visible for generations. Everyone will know if you cut it wrong. Perhaps they'll tell stories and laugh!

So you'll cut carefully, making one end pointier, and the other more rounded. Like scraping a skin you'll carefully, carefully pull the sheet away from the tree. In your mind you already imagine how the canoe will look.

But careful! It's going to hang heavier as you cut. By the time you're done, this bark sheet could weigh 30-50kg. It'll want to flop and tear. You'll want to cut the outline first, then scrape it off and have family at the bottom to catch it, bring it down. It's a relief when you cut it right.

*Canoe tree at Crace, the surviving cut approx. 80cmx450cm, up on a hill 1km from Ginninderra Creek (source: author)*



Then you'll want help to carry it carefully away to where you'll prepare it for use. You'll trim and scrape. You'll tie the ends with twine to make a pointy bow and a rounded stern, and lift the sides, perhaps using rocks, clay or fallen branches to help shape it.

You'll pack the bottom with clay and light a low fire to help set your canoe into its new form. Your family will want to watch this new marvel taking shape. The children will be excited. When the bark has stiffened and firmed, they'll want to see you paddle it, but you can't yet – you'll be looking for holes and sealing them with gum from the grass tree (*Xanthorrhoea*.)

When it's ready, you may sing, you may dance, you may pray. Will it float? Can you stand up in it? You're done. It's ready. You push it out and step gingerly into it, balancing lightly to avoid falling out and making a fool of yourself. It floats. You can squat in it and paddle it with a piece of bark, maybe 60-90cm long. Your family cheers!

The children swim out to you, yelling in delight. Because they can all swim – the sisters and the aunties teach swimming early, holding their babies up with a finger beneath the chin. Later settlers will report drownings in the Molonglo and Yass rivers almost every year, but your people cross these rivers routinely.



*In 2011, artists from Boolarng Nangamai Aboriginal Corporation in Gerringong created a traditional bark canoe or nawi at Bundanon. It was the first traditional canoe to float on the Shoalhaven River in living memory (Source: Bundanon.com.au)*

You're naturally proud of your new canoe, but you should be. Your people are masters of barkwork. Later settlers will marvel at how well you build bark shelters – warmer than they can build and sometimes lasting a decade or more.

This canoe will last too, because wherever you leave it, others will respect your right to the land and will leave it alone. Guided by your family's totems and traditions, whatever eggs or fish or birds or platypus that you take with this canoe will never be more than a third: a third for your family, a third for the other predators and a third for the future. With those traditions, this canoe will help feed your family for years to come.

### **Acknowledgements**

*The author wishes to acknowledge the following sources. Any errors of fact are the author's own.*

1. AIATSIS, *Map of Indigenous Australia*
2. The Australian Museum, *Bark canoe from New South Wales*
3. The Killer Whale Museum, Eden, *Aboriginal Trading Routes*
4. Flood, Josephine, *The Moth Hunters, Aboriginal Prehistory of the Australian Alps*
5. McDonald, James *Canberra I. From Antiquity to the Invasion*
6. Uncle Wally Bell, Ngunawal elder, *Yass Heritage Walk*
7. Bundanon: [The Nawi](#), *making of a stringybark canoe*.
8. Canberra Tracks Heritage Trails
9. The F.O.C.K: [Festival of Canoe and Kayak](#), Shoalhaven

## Market Place: Boats for Sale

### **For Sale:** FENN Surfski.

Primary Stability: 1-2,

Secondary Stability: 2.5

Kayak for intermediate to advanced. Possibly up there with the Epic V10.

Condition: Average to good.

Price: \$1200.

Phone Steve: 0434 264 016



### **For Sale:**

Kermit (Weapon) K1

Primary Stability: 1

Secondary Stability: 1

This Kayak more for the advance paddler very tippy and quick.

Condition: a little worn, but reasonable okay

Price: \$100 Phone Steve: 0434 264 016



**For Sale:** 6m, stitch and glue from an Australian kit. Very good condition, always kept indoors. Includes Skee paddle and leash, skirt, PFD, safety gear and anchor.

Selling due to lack of use. \$250

Weight: about 22 kg,  
(from memory.)

Comes with a two-wheel trolley which can be stored in the aft compartment. And an electric pump!

Geoff: 0423 490 913

Queanbeyan.





**For Sale:** V5 Surf Ski Ultra Construction  
(white deck/white hull/Red bow & stern)  
Comes with a sock. Never used. \$4000

Excellent opportunity for someone looking for a light touring/recreational ski which could also be used in the surf. 13.5 kg

Plus: Epic Mid Wing Club Carbon Hybrid Shaft LL 210-220 cm \$499 NEW. NEVER USED Sell for \$300

Stephen Rowcliffe M: 0409 059 769  
Email: [schooey1@me.com](mailto:schooey1@me.com)



<https://www.epickayaks.com.au/collections/surfskis/products/v5-tourer?variant=43484703555761>



**For Sale:** KX-ONE Slider 485 2-Person Inflatable Kayak  
\$1,500

Has only been used 6 times in 4 years. It's too heavy for me which is my reason for selling it.

The double kayak comes with 2 paddles, 2 seats, 2 foot-rests, a skeg, a pump and a bag to pack it in.



Multiple D-rings allow seat adjustments for one or two paddlers. Detachable large skeg keeps kayak on a straight track while paddling. Phone Lynne: 0416 089 396

## Letters to the Editor?

Have you ever felt like having your say about something in the club?

How it is run. Club-member(s) you would like to know about (for new 'Meet a club member')

Constructive suggestions on what to do about something which is a worry to you?

Praise for something which has affected you?

Keep it nice. No libelous words! Your name will be attached 😊

Get your thoughts published – write to me! [htongway@iinet.net.au](mailto:htongway@iinet.net.au)



## 2025 Hawkesbury Canoe Classic: 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> November. Moonlight!!



And new in 2025: you too can create a new record for the 65 km Windsor to Wisemans Dash!

(Records have not been kept for this shorter course in prior years.)

Kent Heazlett

Event Coordinator / Race Control

On behalf of the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic Association Inc.

M : 0418863950

E : [info@canoeclassic.asn.au](mailto:info@canoeclassic.asn.au)

*How do you stay warm in a cold room?*

*Stand in the corner – it is always 90 degrees!*

*(That is degrees Fahrenheit for our younger club members!)*

### Draft Minutes of August Committee Meeting

**BGCC Meeting 12th August, 2025. 6:30 p.m. – at Club Shed**

**Attendees:** Laura Kleinrahm, Adam Hofmeyer, Andy Osborne, Richard Fox, Helen Tongway, Walt Daly, Neil Fargher, Mic Doyle, Colin Calderwood, Tasman Cocks, Patricia Ashton

**Apologies –** Shay Beck

**Minutes of Last Meeting:**

Proposal: that the Minutes of the July 2025 meeting be approved		
Proposed: Laura	Seconded: Andy	Passed

**President's Report:** Things are plodding along with the cold weather, however there are things coming up soon – our AGM, a cleanup, our Presentation Night.....

**Treasurers Report:** see attached. Marathon Nationals budget being finalised, should be profitable, however will depend on good attendance.

**Safety Officer:** No report. Tasman introduced himself to the committee and has offered to nominate for the Safety Officer position. Thanks Tasman!

**Boat Capt:** 2 years into our 5 year plan. Purchasing some very stable kayaks sit-on-top (SOT) and sit-in for our Taste of Paddling as well as boats for those looking to upgrade. We will be well below our \$8000 budget, so may look at investing in replacement paddles.

**Correspondence In:**

**Out:**

## Items from Previous Meeting:

- **Child Safe Standards Scheme:** review in 6mths
- **Succession Planning:** We need to do a skills audit of club members so we know who and where we can go for targeted volunteers. Targeting specific members to encourage nominating for committee.
- **BGCC Survey:** still requires a little tweaking then will be sent via email, Facebook and hard copy in the shed.
- **Grants:** now open. Need to discuss outside of committee meeting – look at long term requirements & grants would benefit this. Need interested members to get together. Mic is going to look into youth development opportunities. Need a sub-committee to look into long term goal strategy.
- **WWVP – PA** has agreed to use ACT requirements. If read in detail very few volunteers will require one. Send members details on how to attach their WWVP card to their JustGo profile.
- **CCTV** – haven't heard back from Gary Rake yet
- **AGM** – Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August from 12 p.m., at the river. Light lunch provided – look at getting wraps from Cosco plus asking for slices. Need convenor and committee reports please.
- **Presentation Night** – need to start organising – Need to confirm dates for November and ideas next meeting. 100% of responders said at the river, 50% wanted pot-luck, the other catered! Only 2 responses! Committee preferred the option of going out – less work for all involved and it's a once a year 'event'. Look at finding a venue for 40 – 50 people, \$50 - \$70pp Saturday November 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, or 29<sup>th</sup>. Patricia to look into venues, though any ideas welcomed! Convenors will need to start considering awards for the range of Paddlers of the year etc., as well as any amusing awards. Laura to MC.

## Convenor Reports

**Canoe Polo:** training still continuing though low numbers through winter. Adam was recently in Malaysia as part of a Canoe Polo team made up of Aussies, NZ'ers & Taiwanese to play against 10x International teams. Adam was in the winning team! There was a US\$3000 prize as well as travel expenses paid.

**Marathon:** Penrith last week: see Blazing Paddles. Narrabeen at the end of August. Four BGCC paddlers heading off to Hungary for World Marathon Championships shortly – good luck to Matt Gates, Margi Bohm, Craig Elliott and Laura Lee!

**Ultra Marathon:** Currently 163 paddlers registered for the HCC! Four being from BGCC – not too late to get involved. Myall Classic has 72 registered with 1 from BGCC – this is quite a challenging but 'fun' race in a lovely part of NSW – it's a good way to get into Ultra Marathon. Have a chat to Richard Fox if you're interested.

## Sprint:

## Slalom:

**White Water:** the King of the River event was held last weekend with Four BGCC paddlers taking part. Caitie Burr won the Female Youth award. At the end of September Mic will be holding a river rescue course, with Dave Burr completing his assessment for White Water Instructor qualification. PA & PNSW have tightened up on levels of safety and compliance which has meant that the Snowy River event has been cancelled. Still looking into what this means for the Murrumbidgee Event. There is a much higher level of governance required for all events – see New Business

A WW program for BGCC members will come out in the next two weeks, with one day weekend activities between October and December, with pool sessions for rolling practice. A new Intro to WW skills will go ahead in Feb/March.

**Recreation:** Social paddle to the dam wall; weather dependent Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> August.

**Coaching:**

**Membership:** 169 adults & 18 juniors

**Time Trials:** Still being well attended. Will move to 9 a.m. from October.

### **New Business**

**Compliance** – PA & PNSW will be checking Just Go and requiring a much higher level of compliance and governance for all events, including flat water and recreational paddling. Mic (through PA) will be running local flatwater and moving water courses later in the year. It would be advantageous if we get club members trained up – participants should have an intermediate level of rescue skills and the capacity to lead others.....we can get some training in to develop skills. When suits best for us as a club?

For Rec paddles: How do we ensure formalised informed consent? The club will require robust Risk Assessments and Float Plans

**Come & Try:** We'll have a full club Come and Try on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October, more info next meeting; with a Taste of Paddling on the Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> October.

### **Club Insurance Due 25<sup>th</sup> August. Property (Fire & Perils)**

Buildings \$534,458    Contents: \$137,321    Stock: Not Insured  
Fee: \$3785.75        Agreed to accept.

### **Business via Email**

**Meeting Closed:** 7:40 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** 9<sup>th</sup> Sept

### **Treasurer's Report for BGCC Meeting August 12, 2025**

#### **1. Financial Statements and Review Letter for Year Ended 30 June, 2025**

As recently circulated for this meeting, the final financial statements for fiscal year ending June 30, 2025 have been provided by the accountant. A review (audit) letter has also been completed. No issues have been noted regarding the club financial statements.

**I move that we accept the financial statements as provided.**

A signed copy will be provided for the AGM.

#### **2. For information: Recent Payments**

	<b>Paid</b>	<b>\$</b>	
14/7/2025	Reimbursement Laura Klein.	70.22	\$15.35 shed supplies, 54.87 polo repair box
14/7/2025	Infinite Cleaning Invoice 0359	330.00	Cleaning 16/6 to 2/7
14/7/2025	Shane Lund Invoice 4334	184.00	Ladies' showers buy and install curtain rod and curtain
14/7/2025	Trent Birkett - bookkeeping	170.00	
14/7/2025	ACTEWAGL	353.71	
25/7/2025	Reimbursement Bob Collins	29.60	Nationals - ink cartridge for printing draft schedules
25/7/2025	Reimbursement Ben Edwards	50.00	Return of key deposit
4/8/2025	Lakeside Leisure	98.10	Adjustment previous invoice



5/8/2025	Mysites	10.66	subscription
9/8/2025	Xero	75.00	Accounting software license
	<b>To be Paid</b>		
	Reimburse Neil Fargher	279.90	BPAY personal card Crucial I732458 web hosting
	Reimburse Neil Fargher	690.00	Cash payment made for kayak, Cobra Tourer (white)
	Lakeside Leisure Invoice 76272	594.30	Pool-hire July 4 -25
	V Insurance		Invoice to follow; pay by month end
	Reimburse Andrew Osborne	200.00	Cash payment for Sprinter ski (yellow)

Any further invoices for payment or reimbursement?

*-Neil Fargher 12/8/2025.*

### An event for all paddlers –

#### The annual BGCC 24 Hour Canoe Paddling Relay Challenge

Get ready. Get a Relay Team together. Organise your sequence of paddlers. Plan your food and drinks. Check your boat-lighting system. Prefer to go solo – go for it! You can take a break any time.



## 2025 Marathon Series



**Sun** Race 9, Narrabeen  
**31 Aug** [2025 Marathon #9 - Narrabeen](#) | [Event registration](#) | [Webscorer](#)

**Sun** Race 10, Windsor & Finale  
**5 Oct** [2025 Marathon #10 - Windsor](#) | [Event registration](#) | [Webscorer](#)

Updated: 21/11/24dl



<https://nsw.paddle.org.au/upcoming-events>



[PaddleNSW - Marathon](#)



[marathon@paddlensw.org.au](mailto:marathon@paddlensw.org.au)



## LBG depth going down...

## LUG NOTICE: Information about Lake Levels

Dear Lake Users,

Works are continuing at Scrivener Dam for the Dissipator Strengthening Project.

As you know, the water level of Lake Burley Griffin will be lowered up to 500 mm below normal levels over the next two years to facilitate construction activities and ensure a safe environment for our workers.

To assist you in making decisions about your activities, you can find the latest water level reading for Lake Burley Griffin on the NCA's website: [www.nca.gov.au/scrivenerdamproject](http://www.nca.gov.au/scrivenerdamproject). This will be updated regularly as required. In the coming weeks signage will be installed around the lake at key boat ramps/access points with a QR code to scan and retrieve the water level reading.

Fluctuation lake levels may present additional hazards and we urge all lake users to consider the impacts and potential new hazards prior to setting out onto the water.

We will continue to keep lake users updated as the project progresses. Should you require any further information please contact us at: [communications@nca.gov.au](mailto:communications@nca.gov.au)

Kind regards

Lake and Dam team.

11<sup>th</sup> August, 2025.



A reminder to all Lake Users to please report any near misses, incidents or hazards via the WHS Monitor on the NCA's website. Please use the following link to report incidents of near misses - <https://www.nca.gov.au/node/20364>

**To check Lake Burley Griffin water quality:**

<https://www.nca.gov.au/environment/lake-burley-griffin/water-quality#>

**Other Waters:**

<https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/news/news-and-events-items/water-quality-in-our-lakes-and-ponds>

## Club Coaching and Escorted Paddling

- **Saturdays 10:00 a.m.:** Club Time Trials. 1 or 2 laps; 3.7 laps. You can use these to increase your paddling fitness, or you can take out a boat and go for a paddle yourself. Shed is open from about 8:30 till 11:00 a.m.
- **Thursdays 7:00 a.m.:** David Gordon and Russell Murphy's session, for Novice and Recreational Paddlers. 1 hour; some interval training and technique instruction.
- **Lunchtime Thursday:** Masters' training with Margi Böhm. Capitalise on the ability to train at lunch time in the Nation's Capital!
- **Saturdays 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.** over winter, Paddle for Pleasure with John Lockie and Helen Tongway.
- **Sundays 09:00 a.m.:** Lake Paddle. 6 km – 10 km paddle, usually out on LBG
- Train with Gary Rake – **06:00 a.m. Thursday** (& some people 06:00 a.m. Tuesdays); **06:30 a.m. Saturdays**



- **TrainSmart** – for the more serious paddler who wants to be the best they can be. This group **trains most mornings** under the guidance of Margi. If you want to know more about TrainSmart, contact Margi on [margi.bohm@gmail.com](mailto:margi.bohm@gmail.com).

### Recreational Paddling

The Eurobodalla Kayakers organise fortnightly kayak touring trips along different waterways between Narooma and Bateman's Bay. It's a great way to enjoy nature and explore coastal waterways with experienced paddlers.

There is no fee to participate and trip maps for each trip are available from the website: [www.eurobodallakayakers.com](http://www.eurobodallakayakers.com) or you can just turn up at the meeting spot and simply follow the leader. The trips average 12 km in length, suit stable craft such as sea kayaks; and there's a 30 min stop for BYO morning tea. Most trips are round-trip paddles and have been well-planned to favourably factor in tidal movement. Send an e-mail to [eurobodallakayakers@gmail.com](mailto:eurobodallakayakers@gmail.com) to request being added to their mailing list to get detailed information about each upcoming paddle. You need to be able to comfortably paddle 12 km, have the usual safety equipment and be reasonably self-sufficient on the water.

### ----- AGM NOMINATION FORM

I: \_\_\_\_\_  
(nominator)

Wish to nominate: \_\_\_\_\_  
(nominee)

For the position of: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (position)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(nominator) (signature)

I second this nomination \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(seconder) (signature)

I accept this nomination: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (nominee)  
(signature)

Email the nomination form to a committee member (see BGCC website for email address) or Public Officer (Bob Collins) at [bobcollins48@outlook.com](mailto:bobcollins48@outlook.com)  
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Thank you to all contributors to this edition of *Blazing Paddles*. If you have contributions for the next edition, please get in touch as soon as your event happens or as soon as you know some dates to advertise an event. [htongway@inet.net.au](mailto:htongway@inet.net.au)