



Newsletter of the
BURLEY GRIFFIN CANOE CLUB

Volume 31 Issue 3, December 2020

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In this Issue:

- Christmas get together
- 24 hour Paddle Challenge wrap-up and race reports
- Great Buoy deployment and shed clean-up



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



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Coming Events:

- *Wednesday 9th December. Twilight Paddle to Fitness series*
- *Saturday 12th December. BGCC Multi Round (13km Mini Bash)*
- *Saturday 12th December. Christmas Get Together*

Christmas Get Together

Saturday 12th, plus 13km Saturday Paddle Series Club Christmas Get Together.

Saturday 12th, from 10.30am after the Saturday Summer Paddle Series Race. Please bring a plate to share, sweet or savory. There will be champers and soft drinks supplied.

There will also be a short **Award Presentation** in lieu of our Presentation Dinner. As there have been next to no races this year, there will only be a few acknowledgements and trophies presented.



Could you please **RSVP** by Friday 6pm.

Last Saturday Summer Paddle Series Race for this year.

Saturday 12th, 8am start. It will be a 13km race around the Islands (weather dependent).

There is a trophy at stake here – donated by Craig Elliott for anyone able to complete the course in 2 hours. So put that training into action!

President's Report: Bob Collins

Despite the continuing, albeit minimal, Covid19 restrictions, operations at our Clubhouse have been largely uninterrupted. With Margi providing the guidance to make sure we adhere to the ACT restrictions, we have been able to re-open our showers and toilets.

We anticipate establishing a small gym in the Meeting Room as soon as restrictions ease a bit more. Margi has used our Gym grant money to purchase equipment that should arrive before Christmas.

Shane Lund and Scott Hunter have now finished insulating the ceiling in our Meeting Room and the difference in temperature on hot days is quite noticeable. If you are at the shed, have a look at the workmanship that went into the ceiling lining, they did a great job.

The highlight of the month has been the 24Hr Paddle Challenge. Although we had to jump through a few hoops to comply with current ACT Covid19 restrictions, we were given approval for the event by the NCA and Transport Canberra and City Services. As in past years they again trusted our Club to look after the area and did not interfere at all with our setting up for the event.

Registrations for the event had a slow start but we ended up with about 50 entries, some from Victoria. Given the continuing Covid19 atmosphere this was a good result.

Unfortunately, the weather was not kind and paddlers experienced heat and humidity, then strong winds, rain, and storms with lightning visible. One wind gust in the ACT was measured at 76kph – this was the one that hit at 3:30pm, ripped the canopy off our marquee, overturned tables and chairs, and with the attendant rain had all of the scorers rushing to protect the scoring laptops. Didn't seem to bother the paddlers on the water however! In fact, it just shows what a hardy lot paddlers of all persuasions are – no matter what the weather threw at the contestants over the 24Hr period, the race continued. I noticed that the same grit and determination were on display during the storm laden Morison 50 at the end of October.

There are no further races on the agenda for 2020, however we have submitted an application to again host Race 1 of the PaddleNSW Marathon series in 2021 – more on that in the New Year.

This will be the final Blazing Paddles for 2020, so may you and yours have a happy and safe Christmas.

Bob Collins

Safety Officer Report: Margi Bohm

November saw the first major COVID challenge for BGCC with the 24-hour relay going ahead. Additional signs were put around the shed and our visitors were reminded of ACT COVID regulations during the briefing. I am pleased to say that everyone followed the rules, paying attention to social distancing (after being made away of how close we were all standing to each other during the briefing!) and cleaning various communal surfaces after use. Several club members did the "clean and disinfect" rounds through the toilets, showers and kitchens at different times during the event. A BIG thank-you to everyone.

While still on COVID ... the ACT government has relaxed the outdoors social distancing space to 2 m² per person. This allows us to get a bit closer while taking boats in and out of the shed but please do not congregate around the boat stands if there are people waiting to take their boats out or put them back in the shed. The indoors social distancing limits of 1 person per 4 m² still applies to our shed so not change there.

We are moving into the summer holidays, Christmas and New Year and with so few COVID cases in Australia, there is a danger that we will all get a bit complacent. Please remain vigilant about social distancing and washing your hands frequently, treat all communal surfaces (even at family and friends' homes) as contaminated and get tested and stay isolated if you have any of the COVID symptoms. We do not want to end up in lockdown again!

A reminder to be careful about snakes as the weather warms up. Watch where you put your feet and please note that the end of the dock is very slippery so be careful as you enter and leave the dock.

I hope that you all have a wonderful and safe Christmas and look forward to seeing you on the water during the break.

Margi

Coach's Corner: Margi Bohm

BGCC Flatwater paddlers go Wild

We have had a very wet spring with the river coming down in flood a couple of times. What a great opportunity to get out the little plastic boats and learn some basic boat handling skills in the flowing water!

Craig Elliot, together with Danielle Woodward, ran a series of Wildwater skills for Flatwater Paddlers sessions in November to help us become more efficient at reading rivers and using water to make K1s go faster. The first session was held at Molonglo Reach where we learned to execute a bunch of new strokes, first in the plastics and then in our K1s, finishing off with figure 8s in the K1s between the bridge piers. Then we spent a day at the Cotter playing in the rapids near the campground and another day paddling from Casuarina Sands to Uriarra Crossing. Day 2 saw Craig (the intrepid tour leader), Matilda (fearless woman), Michael (fast in fast flowing water too!), Richard (had a few tumbles to show off his superior rolling skills), Kolya, Jesse, Ted and Margi (the back of pack) get up bright and early, execute a sleepy car drop at the Crossing and hit the water by 8 am. After a few moments playing in the small stuff, we slowly drifted downstream, playing and learning something new at each rapid. We learned how to surf the standing waves, use the water to move quickly from one side of the river to the other and always to lean downstream (which incidentally is upstream in the eddies!). The halfway mark saw the highlight of the trip when Matilda dug into the depths of her canoe and extracted a watertight container of the yummiest homemade caramel slice imaginable – we were very hungry by then. And Margi came across a platypus feeding in the turbulent water just below one of the rapids. It was an awesome day.



Photos from top left clockwise: Craig giving the instructions prior to pushing off at Casuarina Sands; Craig, Kolya, Jesse, Ted, Matilda, Richard and Michael; practising ferry gliding and turning into fast flowing water under Craig's watchful eye; Michael playing in one of the faster flowing chutes; Richard getting ready to demonstrate how to roll, multiple times; Jesse playing in a stopper while Kolya attempts to come down the rapid!

The last session was held on the Goobagandra River near Tumut. Danielle, Craig, Hamish his son and his Dad Bill, a visitor called Al, Gaye and Richard camped in Tumut with Margi and Ted glamping in a local motel. We were superbly looked after by Caro and Kierin who ground crewed us.

We arrived on Friday evening, meeting at the Royal Hotel for dinner – an excellent feed. On the Saturday, we paddled from Kells Lane bridge to the Tumut River confluence.



Photos from top left clockwise: At Kells Lane Bridge from L is Al, Danielle, Margi, Gaye, Hamish, Craig, Ted, Bill; Ted navigating down the first of 4 hours of rapids!; Gaye was mother-duck, paddling at the back to pick up the pieces; Danielle showing us how it is done in a full carbon boat; Richard playing in the very fast flowing Tumut; Craig enjoying the water density differences in eddies.

Everyone was pretty tired by the time we got to the confluence with the Tumut River and thank goodness Caro and Kierin were there with a jummy lunch. It was also stinking hot. Craig, Danielle, Al and Gaye decided to paddle the 6 km or so back to camp on a very fast flowing Tumut River while the rest of us limped home in the cars. We decided to eat out again, this time at the Woolpack Hotel which was not as good as the Royal but still a hearty feed

On Sunday, we decided to do the more difficult section upstream of Kells Lane Bridge. Ted, Hamish and Bill decided to help with the car shuffling. We don't have many photos because the rapids were close together with a few good drops – around mid-high grade 2s and possibly a grade 3 or two. It was high concentration paddling for me and Richard! There was one big drop that we had to portage. I was pleased to find out that while my boat handling skills were rusty, I could still read rivers and managed to get down the rapids with very few mishaps. Having said that, Craig and Danielle did a great job scouting the rapids with us and showing us how to use the water effectively to get down the drops with no tumbles. Danielle, Craig and Al tried to teach Richard and myself everything they knew in the 3.5-hour paddle and I may have been heard to mutter that I could only do one thing at a time! I also got “washed” down a rapid of two to get some time-out! But by the end of the run, my boat handling skills were greatly improved – thanks to a very patient Danielle!



Photos from top left clockwise: No-one in the group had paddled this section before so we did a bit of scouting from the road; Craig making the decision ... put in and go that way!; Margi concentrating during an approach.

All in all, the three sessions were a great deal of fun and everyone learnt how to edge their kayaks to use the water to push their boat rather than waste valuable energy. We also developed more confidence in unbalanced conditions and how to use our paddles to propel and stabilise at the same time. A big thanks to Craig and Danielle and all the ground crew.

Who's who?

Sue Powell (Blazing Paddles editor and newbie paddler)

I joined the club in March 2020 looking for a new challenge where I wasn't likely to kill myself! I grew up bushwalking and snow skiing before taking up hockey in my uni years as a goalkeeper. My career as an environmental scientist specialising in rivers and wetlands took me out to regional NSW with lots of travel. Team sports were out so I took up golf. I do like a challenge and golf is certainly a test of character!

Returned to Canberra in 2004 I returned to ANU as a mature aged student to do my Masters.... and got talked into going on to do a PhD (what was I thinking!). Halfway through my PhD at the age of 40 I damaged my lower spine and spinal cord playing hockey (as a field player), resulting in permanent damage to spinal cord which effects mainly my right leg. I can obviously still do most things but running isn't one of them. Golf & hockey were out, so I took up cycling as a sport I could still participate in.... one thing led to another and I ended up representing Australia in Paracycling for almost 10 years. Highlight was winning Australia's first gold medal at the London Paralympics in 2012. I couldn't quite match that achievement in my final international at Rio Paralympics in 2016 but stoked to come home with a silver and bronze against competitors ½ my age. But more importantly (to me) was doing a PB in one of my pet events in 2016, 9 years after taking up the sport and at the age of 49. Reckon that was a good time to hang up the Aussie jersey.



Having retired from serious cycling, I was training with some Masters friends when I decided to head-butt our concrete velodrome out at Narrabundah at about 55km/hr. After several frustrating years of health issues, finally found that I had actually damaged my cervical spine in the crash. Spinal surgery last Christmas fixed most of the issues but I was told to take up swimming to help rehabilitate. I couldn't think of anything worse than following a black line up and down a pool, so I decided paddling a boat up and down the river was a much better idea and may help with residual balance issues. I have since learnt that K1 is probably not the best idea with dodgy legs and bad balance, but hey, I do like a challenge. And with the generosity of Margi and others in the club to help me and share their experience and knowledge I think I am slowly getting the hang of it.

Having volunteered on committee for hockey, golf and cycling clubs in the past, I can appreciate the level of commitment from BGCC members and committee to build up the facilities you have at BGCC. I also think it is important to give something back to those that have helped me get back on me feet (and upright in a boat) this year, so I put my hand up to take on the Blazing Paddles for a year. I wouldn't really call myself an editor, more of a compiler, so please do send in your stories to share with the club.

Saturday Summer Paddle Series Event 5 – 5km Dash for cash \$\$\$\$

The Summer Saturday Paddle Series Training Event 5 – 5km Dash for Cash \$\$\$ was held this Saturday 5 December 2020 at Molonglo Reach. There was a great turn out of more than 15 BGCC paddlers who were primed and prepped to win the \$100 bounty on offer for the fastest male and female paddler across the line.

From a mass start which saw a tsunami wash from the lead pack (if you were lucky to get onto it) to the race finish, was flat out paddling. Testing the top speeds and endurance of each paddler vying for the cash on offer. Surprising entrants were Marcelo and Pete in the K2 canoe which kept up with Michael Hanemaayer (race favourite) for a good 2km. Those hoping for an early winter ice burg, or something to slow Hanemaayer down, were disappointed. Hanemaayer easily finishing the 5km in 22min 36 seconds. It was a closer race for our female paddlers with a tough battle fought by Jacqui Keogh and Sue Powell. Jacqui ultimately holding her speed to finish in 29 min 53 seconds.

A deserving bacon and egg role and chat of 'what could have been' post-race has been a welcome change to bring the social aspects to the club back. Well done to all BGCC paddlers who competed! It was a fun race!



Michael and Jacqui - 5km Dash for Cash winners

Don't forget the Mini Big Bash 13km revival race is Event 6 and final event for the Saturday Summer Paddle Series on Saturday 12 December 2020.

A trophy is on offer for the fastest male and female. This will coincide with the BGCC Christmas Party and awards for the 2020 year (although in COVID lockdown). See you there!

24 Hour Paddling Challenge 2020 Wrap-up

Results are in for the 26th annual Burley Griffin 24hr Paddle Challenge, which took place on Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th November 2020.



Moments into the start of the 2020 Burley Griffin 24hr Paddle Challenge, with some setting a steady pace while others can't resist a sprint.

Starting at 10am on Saturday morning and running through the night to finish at 10am on Sunday, the event attracted 13 solo paddlers and 9 teams from NSW, the ACT and Victoria. With a 4.7km course around Molonglo Reach, the race is open to all types of craft from K and C boats to outriggers and SUPs. Paddlers could choose between the classic 24-hour challenge or new a 16-hour option that allowed for sleep between 10pm and 6am. The 16hr challenge proved a popular option, taken up by both solo paddlers and relay teams with a need for speed!

Among the many challenges of paddling for a full day and night is the variations in temperature and weather. Following a 2019 race that was called off due to falling ash, paddlers were hoping that the high forecast temperatures would be the only challenge presented this year.



The first few hours of racing indeed proved hot, with glaring sun and a breeze to keep some of the tippier boats on their toes. The afternoon brought an isolated storm, with an hour of wind gusts over 60kph and waves that locals usually see on Lake Burley Griffin rather than Molonglo Reach! Half a lap later, and the storm had passed, leaving the sun to set into a calm river with the promise of a full moon. With a wonderfully lit course and balmy night-time conditions, the overnight laps were a highlight for many paddlers.

In the 24hr challenge, James Miller covered the most ground as a solo paddler, completing an impressive 33 laps of the 4.7km course and a total of 155.1 kms. Close behind were Richard Barnes with 126.9kms and Stephen Routley with 122.2kms. Kerri Vaughan paddled a total of 14 laps and 65.7kms to clock up the most distance as a solo paddler in the 16hr challenge.



24hr solo paddler Richard Barnes takes a quick breather.



John Preston & Larissa Cleverly



Nita Primasari - 10 laps in her first ever event

Laps were hotly contested in both the 16hr and 24hr relays, with finely tuned change-overs and vocal cheer squads on the bank. In the 16hr challenge, local team *Train Smart 1* just pipped *Shirekayakers* squeezing in one more lap to make 178.6kms. Over the full 24hrs, *Creatures of the Cove* from LCRK clocked up 220.9kms with local team the *Sonnambulists* hot on their heels with 216.2kms.



Matilda Stevenson & Kolya Cook



Emily O'Rourke & Jacqui Keogh

Thank you to all volunteers from Burley Griffin Canoe Club who went out of their way to put on a fabulous race. It's no easy task to run an event through the night, and many in the timekeeping tent were also taking turns out on the water and ensuring the clubhouse adhered to COVID guidelines. After a year with so few races, it was great to get on the water and paddle with mates, challenge ourselves a little and marvel at the stars.

See also

[Results summary](#) (interim)

[Paddle NSW](#) (detailed results)



24 Hour Relay - from the Timing Tent.

Helen had decided not to paddle this year, but to run the timing. We had several others who offered to assist, which is just as well as we had 4 systems running! Bob Turner helped set up the Webscorer system which is used for all the marathon series races. Just to be sure, we had 2 ipads running Webscorer. Helen, being a believer in old school technology also had a paper backup which she then transcribed over to her own laptop. In the end, this is what we went with – as neither webscorer ipads showed the same results, and both were different from



Patricia, Helen, Rebecca, David



Richard, Bob, Helen, Tom, Nita, Rebecca, David

Some of the volunteers for the Time Keeping were, Paul McCarthy (an ex club member) who did the morning shift, Patricia, split shifts, Paul Hartlipp, did the night shift, Jeremy Cook, came in at 2am to relieve some tired time keepers; Bob Collins who also paddled, Tom Hick, safety boat operator & light installer, David Gordon, safety officer and generator operator and Helen, time keeper extraordinaire, were there the whole time; as well as guest appearances by Richard Fox, Shadi, Rebecca Snape, Bob Turner, Alana (Lane Cove). Thanks to all, it can be a long, long night. There may have been others too, apologies if I've left you out!!

While I was home having a nap, the wind strengthened to over 70kmph around mid afternoon which sent the gazebo roof flying, with a downpour as well, this meant that the time keepers and all the computers and paper had to be collected, saved and moved up to the shed until things settled down. This was partly to blame for the discrepancies. The paddlers of course, kept paddling!



With so many in the tent, it can actually be quite entertaining, so, next year, if you're not doing anything else, come along and help out. You do get to know some of your fellow club members quite well! All the paddlers appreciate the effort put in, and through the night both paddlers and time keepers often try to keep each other going, a few jokes, some cheeky calls....

Well done to all. Till next year. Patricia

Paddle4Ella SUP relay team (Sydney Paddle Surfing Club)

Our Paddle4Ella SUP relay team just made history for SPSC, and Australian SUP!



This weekend, Amy Blakemore, Mike Hayes, Simon Kent-Jones and Tuan Lam achieved 206.8km in 24 hours paddling 44 laps on a 4.7km course on Molonglo River in Canberra, Australia, during the Burley Griffin 24H Challenge.

They broke their objective of 200km, and just established the longest distance ever paddled on flat water in 24h in a mixed SUP relay team.

They went beyond their limits into the challenge to raise fund and awareness for ME (Myalgic Encephalomyelitis), which has impacted Ella the daughter of John Engel, founder member of Sydney Paddle Surf Club and the Australian SUP community.

A big thank you to Burley Griffin Canoe Club (BGCC) to organize the annual 24h Challenge, the closing race of the PaddleNSW ultra-marathon series.

Kudos to the team partner SquareOne Physiotherapy for the preparation and in-race recovery gear and protocol!

And a massive hug to our paddlers' families for their support during the weekend and the preparation phase, including also all the pre-cooked meals!

Congratulate the team by making a difference and donating to support Ella and all victims of M.E. here <https://qf.me/u/y79pj2>

24 HOUR event by Anne Pacey

There's life before a 24-hour paddling event and experience after a 24-hour event. Life will not entirely be the same.

I had no idea what I was considering when I signed in for this event. In amongst a busy work life, being free that weekend, not had the time of late to paddle much at all, I joined into a team with Bob Collins, Danielle Winslow and Richard Fox and from a 16-hour event to a 24 hour.

This team provided generous support, their endurance was admirable, and I feel privileged to be part of their experience, thank you, team!

Having to be there and paddle a lap every 1.5 hours, in reality, was something in retrospect one had to be prepared for and trained for just as an endurance cycling race training to paddle longer distance is very advisable.

The weather that weekend was unpredictable, with high winds, rain and extreme heat were other conditions into the mix.

Nothing could have prepared me for the incredible experience of paddling in the night. Equipped with glow sticks front and back of the kayak and glow stick placed on all the obstacles and buoys along the route one set off on double laps. There was a full moon that night, no wild weather, just a slight breeze to break the surface tension on the water making paddling ideal and a couple of light showers. It was a slightly weird, totally different experience paddling at night, even after 20 years of paddling I had never experienced. Without the light one didn't realise you need that to help keep you balanced, you couldn't see the waves from the other kayaks or other water conditions you rely on in the daylight as your mind adjusts your balance. The upside is in the dark you could not see the path ahead; you had no perceptual idea of how far you had to paddle. Now that is a good thing; all you had to do was just paddle.

In Canberra on that Burley Griffin lap, there was a bridge at the eastern end, the Malcolm Fraser Bridge. Those in Canberra may know it as it has lights under the bridge that continually change colours like a rainbow.

So apart from the darkness, the glow sticks, the blinking lights on the buoys, the brilliant full moonlight in amongst the few clouds and the lights on the timing tent paddling toward and under the changing lights on the Malcolm Fraser Bridge was a truly magical moment.

I have been paddling for a long time. I have not had experience with one of these events before. After doing this event work or children worry seem less of a burden.

I can only highly recommend just do it. I hope you, like me, you will enjoy something you have never experienced before.

I would also like to thank along with all other paddlers the never-ending support and enthusiasm of Margi Bohm without whom I would not have entered the event.

Many thanks to Patricia, Helen, Bob and Dave (just ask me).

The Great Buoy deployment and shed clean-up.

The Great Buoy Muster happened after recent floods, with a large pile of old buoys in various states of disrepair returned to the BGCC sheds thanks to the ACT government.

After sensibly waiting for a few more rainfall events to pass, the committee rounded up concrete blocks, rope, hose, spray paint and a small army of volunteers. Post training cool-down one week involved scraping, cleaning and repainting the buoys.

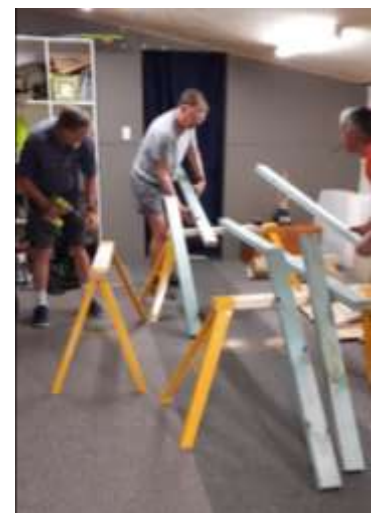
Then the mammoth effort of reattaching and redeploying the buoys began. Coinciding with the Great Shed clean up, the clean up LBG Day and SUP come-n-try, the riverfront was a hive of activity.

With some innovation, docks were repurposed as floating barges behind Tom's rubber duckie.



A different sort of marathon, Margi Bohm, Tom Hick, Dom Hides, Sue Powell, Jacque Keogh, Emily O'Rourke, Matilda Stevenson, Jesse Robertson, Craig Elliott & Ted Hall. spent over 5 hours hard at work.

Meanwhile, back in the shed, Bob Collins, Jeremy Cook, David G, Scott MacWilliam, Kevin Swain, Fiona Stevens, Craig George, John Lockie, Basil Lau, Anne Cronin, Di Bell, Margy Burn, Brigit Maguire, (Ela Majocha – came to assist, but on the wrong day – sorry Ela for the confusion) were hard at work cleaning, scrubbing, building, blowing, vacuuming, moving boats in and out from 8.30am till just after 1pm. You may also have noticed some shiny new boat racks around the shed.



Clean-up LBG Day - thankyou to organisers and volunteers

Hi everyone

Thanks to the Lake User Group and their friends and family who organised and participated in the 3rd annual Clean-Up Lake Burley Griffin Day on Sunday.

On Sunday, over 100 volunteers on foot, dragon boat, kayak and rowing club tinnies took part in Clean-up Lake Burley Griffin Day at 6 different locations across the Lake. In three hours, they managed to haul in 61 bags of rubbish plus many more items that couldn't fit into bags.

David and I from the NCA supervised the Black Mountain Site. Volunteers on land cleaned up around Black Mountain Peninsula and the volunteers on water cleaned up around Taroola Reach and West Lake. We had the most volunteers at our site with 26 people. We filled 17 full bags and found 5 milk crates and a tyre.

Other interesting finds around the Lake include clothing, 1 disposable face mask, a mouth guard in its container and Frisbees.

A huge thanks to everyone who came out to give Lake Burley Griffin a good clean! We hope to see you there next year in 2021.

Kind regards

Chantelle Martins | Officer Lake & Dam

National Capital Authority

From the Lake User Group Newsletter Dec 2020

MARION MAHONY GRIFFIN'S BDAY Event proposal

In February 2021, the NCA is proposing to allow certain petrol vessels on Lake Burley Griffin to celebrate Marion Mahony Griffin's 150th birthday. At this stage, no details are confirmed, but we are proposing to hold it on a Saturday in February, between 10am and 4pm. The Canberra community, and interstate visitors would be invited to bring their petrol-powered vessels and enjoy the beautiful landscapes that we get to enjoy every day. There will be restrictions on which vessels are allowed. The vessels would be limited to 10 knots and operators would need be licenced. All lake users would be welcome to join in, in the day's activities. More updates to come. For any questions or concerns relating to this proposal, please email events@nca.gov.au

Thankyou to all contributors to this edition of Blazing Paddles. If you have items you would like to contribute for the next edition please get in touch sue_702@yahoo.com