

UP THE CREEK

The club known as “the Orange Army” where fun, support and equality are the foundations of its success

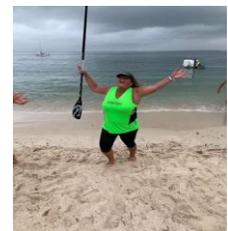
Another year of the COVID19 virus has passed with the club focusing on local events, helping the local community and improving the facilities for its members.

The highlight was running our annual charity event Paddle4Good which also celebrated our 5th birthday and seeing the containers painted as a reflection of the local Awabakal and Worimi communities. The face of Throsby Creek took a positive step forward with a new wharf and retaining wall being built by Roads and Maritime Services.

A Weekend of Fun – Sat 13 – Sun 14 Mar ‘21

What a weekend of fun for Newy Paddlers - we were everywhere.

Nicki, Dave and Charlie were competing in the Port Stephens SUP challenge at Buribi doing a range of events that included technical racing and 3 & 9km distance races. Steve and his mate Gary (HVPC) were representing Nobby's Surf Club at the NSW SLS Championships at Swansea Belmont coming up with a silver medal for the Masters Double Ski 60-64. Justin, Nathan & Brad had a great race in the PNSW Pittwater challenge over 14kms finishing 8th, 13th and 15th for the single competitors respectively. Malcolm, Julie, Mark, Cheryl, Murray, Liz, Darren and James did a beautiful 10-14km paddle from Morpeth towards Lorn with an incoming tide and then back against the tide to earn a big breakfast and coffee at Savannah's Cafe:), which is what it is all about. While we were doing this Scott was using his skills to finalise much needed items for the 2nd container which our members are going to appreciate a lot. Even he said he had fun even though he wasn't on the water. Go the Orange Army.



It is so great to see the club enjoying themselves in a wide range of paddling activities.



Paddle4Good, Throsby Creek - Sun 28 Mar 21 & Presentation Wed 19 May 21

Thank you to an amazing group of people who have supported us for a number of years now and we are extremely grateful for.

Back on the 28th March, local club, [Newy Paddlers](#) held their annual 'Paddle4Good' Fundraiser which for the 4th year in a row now has specifically raised money for our Trisha House Refuge.

40 people from various clubs in Newcastle took part in the race day, along with numerous organisers and supporters.

The fundraising proceeds on the day, along with some very generous donations from the [McCloy Group](#), [Tilligerry RSL](#) and [Transitions Chiropractic](#), have raised and donated \$8,520 to assist the women & children we support. Thank you so much to everyone involved and those that contributed in any way, this is an extremely generous donation that will be enable us to provide support for the women and families that we just could not have done alone.

Big thank you to Cheryl from Newy Paddlers along with Lahnee (pictured) and Rachel from McCloy's for taking time out of your evening to present the grand cheque to us at our Newcastle Drop-in Centre last night. 🙏



Containers, Sept 20 – May 21

The new container arrived on the 11 Sept 20 and a number of working bees were undertaken to install new racks and paint the exterior.

Thanks to a small group of dedicated members, in particular Scott Gibson, further improvements were made to both containers which included solar lights, whirlybirds, carpet and paddle and storage hooks. This has made a huge difference to the paddling experience of our members.



State Doubles Championships, Lane Cove Sun 23 May 21

In a year where the club has done very little competition paddling due to COVID it was great to see Malcolm Lewis team up with Russell Brown and compete in Division 11 over 10km. The outcome was an overall 3rd in 1 hr 3min and a 1st in the 70+category to be State Champions. Like a good wine they keep getting better with age. Well done guys.



Murray Paddle, Sun 23 May 21

The Murray River Adventure continues with only 636 river kilometres to go....

After missing last years due to the Covid 19, it was all systems go to get back onto the Mighty Murray River, to complete our quest in paddling the full length of the Murray. This year's group was Mike, Murray, Dorothy, Wendy and Liz with David being our road land crew on and off over the 4 weeks.

On the 9th of May 2019 we finished at Old Customs House, just past the SA/Vic border and Border Cliffs. So that is where we continued from this year, starting on the 29th of April, it was a 3 day, 72km paddle to Renmark.

With near perfect summer weather and pristine paddling conditions winter nearly here!

With a day off to do a car shuffle and bus trip, shop and get organised for the next leg, Renmark # 568 to Waikerie #382, 186 km along the river, 7 days paddling. Through a few more Locks #5, #4, #3, generally 3-3.5 metres down. But unfortunately, no flow at all, as a mere 1,800 megalitres going down. The scenery was great, the cliffs, the landscape and river red gums, the river itself. The windy and cooler weather came....

Around every bend the view always changed. We passed house boats, fisherfolk and grey nomads. So, the days were paddling, morning tea and lunch stops and finding the camp sites, and of course taking in the enjoyment of it all. Dorothy finished here at Waikerie.

Next leg was Waikerie #382 to Blanchetown #274, 107km, 4 days with 2 days off, 1 planned and the other due to the very windy and cold front that came through. It was better to sit in the bakery and eat cakes and drink coffee, than suffer on the river! We continued on, with many ferry crossings along the way, these were at Lyrup, Waikerie, Cadell, Morgan, Swan Reach, Walker Flat, Purnong, Mannum, Tailm Bend and Wellington. The camp spots were good but getting harder to find, as so much development, a lot more houses and the "landings" have become community parks with boat ramps, toilets and green grass, but no camping allowed.

At Morgan the river turns towards the south and generally keeps going all that way, and now there is a lot longer straight stretches, easily up to 12km long and that with a head wind, makes determined paddling to achieve your goal.



Arriving at Blanchetown, going through the last Lock #1, with the caravan park only 300mt downstream. Looking forward to a nice hot shower and a big feed at the oldest pub on the Murray River here at Blanchetown. This is where Murray finished and continued as land crew with David. With a day off here, we did another car shuffle, a 5hr return trip. Then it was all systems go for the last leg, 7 days to Goolwa, only 274 km. At this stage it was not looking good to paddle across Lake Alexandrina due to the wind and what was forecast ahead.

So, on the water again, paddling and still enjoying the views, we did have a few good days with the wind behind us and the sun shining.

Passing the little towns along the way. The great cliffs of the west and east Big Bend amazing. Passing the paddle steamers "Proud Mary" and the "Murray Princess". We had a great lunch at the Bowhill General store/cafe. A quick look around Mannum, which has so much river history, Murray Bridge, to Tailem Bend, then to Wellington. Here, Wendy finished. So, we put the kayaks onto the cars and drove to Clayton Bay, where Mike and I paddled the last 14km with very choppy water and wind to make it to Goolwa on Sunday 23rd May around 3.30pmish. We were both very happy with our achievement, 5 years in the making with a huge amount of planning and a lot of driving, but definitely worth the huge effort.

And yes. I would do it all again.... if the opportunity arises. ...

Written by Elizabeth van Reece

Defibrillator Grant, Office of Sport \$1,067 – Mon 31 May 21

This is an essential piece of equipment to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our members and the local community. The club successfully applied for a 50% contribution by the 'Office of Sport' which enabled the purchase of a unit for \$2,134 from Surf Lifesaving NSW.



Wharf & Retaining Wall, RMS – Mon 8 Feb – Fri 11 June 21

This wall was installed to address an environmental issue and is another important step towards improving the foreshore within Newcastle waterways. It will be a great asset for future events as it is a perfect lay down area for boats based on the sandstone blocks preventing car traffic driving on the grass area.



Drone Video, Throsby Creek – Sat 26 June 21

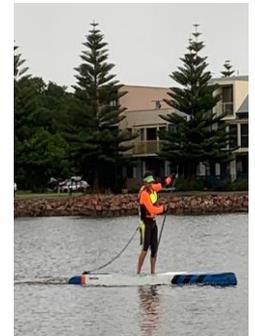
On a cold and windy day 28 of our members turned up with enthusiasm to share their thoughts on the club and paddle the course on Throsby Creek. The aim of the video was to promote our club, the benefits of paddling and showcase the sights of our local community. A big thank you to Andrew Wise from Bowline Media for his professional approach and 'nothing is too hard' attitude in making this video which will be a great way of remembering our 5th birthday. The video has been placed on our Facebook page to enjoy.



Mud Crab Cup 20-21, Wed 4 Nov 20 - Sun 18 July 21

The original plan was to run this series on a Wednesday during Summer daylight saving and then keep the members engaged through Winter on a Sunday afternoon. The Summer was a great success but unfortunately Winter was hampered with poor weather and cancellations. On top of this COVID was affecting our ability to run the events safely so a decision was made by the committee to cease further events which were due to end 20 Oct 21.

As a result, Dave Freeman was rewarded with his consistent effort and regular attendance to be the official winner with 79 points, followed closely by Robert Fenwick on 78 and Darren Forbes on 71. Congratulations to everyone who participated and made the series so much fun.



Recreation Events

Liz Van Reece took on the role of organising our event booklet and planning some recreation paddles and camping trips that didn't conflict with the busy Paddle NSW calendar. The club did a beautiful paddle at Morpeth in March and then every event after that was cancelled due to poor weather or COVID. We did have the opportunity to do the Raymond Terrace paddle in June but this was changed to Throsby Creek to fit in with the club video. A small group of members did a paddle into Newcastle Harbour afterwards but the cold and windy conditions encouraged a shorter distance and going for coffee instead.



We look forward to a better 2022, where the opportunity to get on the water and enjoy each other's company will be appreciated.

Mud Crab Cup 21-22, Wed 20 October '21

Our new series commenced 2 weeks later than expected due to COVID restrictions. This has been adapted this year to be 10 fortnightly races with the best 7 race results being used to determine the winner. The club has been fortunate so far with the first 4 races being run in good conditions and average participation being 15-20 paddlers. With 6 races to go it looks like an exciting few months ahead.



Defibrillator Training, Sat 23 October '21

Due to COVID restrictions we patiently waited for the training which finally occurred last Sat 23 Oct through Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW). A big thank you to the dedicated members who attended - Moira, Malcolm, Mitchell, Ian, Mark and the informative instruction by Stephen Joseph who made it a fun session. We now have a number of our members accredited through Surf Life Saving Clubs and their employers so our members and visitors to Throsby Creek can feel comfortable that they are in safe hands. The defibrillator will be at all our events and will be a useful asset to the club and community.



Refurbishment of Trailer, Wed 17 Nov '21

5 years ago, we did a rush trip to SA and purchased a trailer and boats from West Lakes Canoe Club. The aim was to provide some foundation assets to help with the growth of the club. Through the efforts of many of our members, in particular Guy Fiddes the trailer was transformed from a rusty blue into a black beast in 2017. Exposure to the weather led to a decision this year to give it some identity and further TLC. The outcome is this very funky, cool set of wheels that reflects the club's culture of having fun and being different.

A huge thank you to Scott Gibson who arranged his mate Mick at Varley to give it the facelift - they certainly did an amazing job. The members can look forward to many more hours of enjoyment knowing that it has the capability to hold 12 boats for any event we participate in.



Moon Island Classic, Sat 27 Nov '21

The Moon Island Classic was held last Saturday 27 November with 101 people racing overing 16 kms. Due to the large swell and safety reasons this race was relocated into Lake Macquarie, starting at Salts Bay, Swansea and finishing at Speers Point. We had 6 members, who from all accounts had a great downwinder, participated hard and had lots of fun.



Dan Stein – 7th Ski Open Male
Justin Borthwick – 7th Ski Over 40 Male
Alan Cross – 9th Ski Over 40 Male
Nathan Hays – 6th Ski Over 50 Male
Scott Gibson – 14th Ski Over 50 Male
Steve Brinkley – 2nd Ski Over 60 Male



Doubles Race, Presentation & BBQ Wed 15 Dec '21

We had our Doubles race, trophy presentation and BBQ Wednesday night and it turned out the perfect way to finish what has been another difficult year of cancelled events.

The conditions were ideal with an incoming tide and plenty of sunshine - 8 doubles and 5 singles raced on handicap starts over 7.5km and 5km respectively. There was a bit of shenanigans going on at the start with a paddle getting greased and a double jumping the start to get an advantage all of which led to a swim at the Lewis St bridge. There were no points involved, it was all about getting bragging rights which Scotty and Steve achieved being first across the line with our only women's team, Vicki and Marnie getting a very credible 4th

The fastest team on the night was Nathan and Cameron in 35:31. Well done to everyone.



The fun continued over at the containers devouring some sausage sandwiches and celebrating the achievers in our club with trophy presentations.

The winners of the Mud Crab Cup 20/21 which finished on the 6 June were:

- 1st Davy Freeman
- 2nd Robert Fenwick
- 3rd Darren Forbes

Congratulations to the winners, it was a good series enjoyed by all.

Even though there were limited events in 2021 a couple of Stand-Up Paddlers stood out for their consistent effort - both competed to the best of their ability and are genuine people that put other people ahead of themselves.



Paddler of the Year: Davy Freeman (selected in NSW State Team Over 40 & winner of MCC 20/21)

Most Improved Paddler of the Year: Nicki Day (involved in anything virtual, highlight being Clarence 100)

Finally, 'Club Person of the Year' Trevor Jordan (alias Grumpy).

His contribution over 5 years as Treasurer, always helping at working bees, running the race series and preparing race results has been invaluable in making the club what it is today - a recognition well deserved.



As always, the club wasn't short of volunteers – a big thank you to Trevor and Ian for doing the BBQ, Moira for her action photos from the bridge and organising the food, Jodie for biking home to get utensils 😊, Pauly and Mark for doing registration and Liz and Murray coming down from Nabisac with the new double ski, supporting wherever they could.

Acquisition of K1 Ergo & Double Ski

Thanks to the generosity of Murray and Liz, the club acquired a K1 Ergo for training and an Apex Double Ski suitable for our intermediate paddlers to enjoy. These should both be put to good use over the coming years.



Adaptive Paddling, Thurs 23 Dec '21

The club is receiving several new enquiries from people wanting to do adaptive paddling. We are happy to say that we took the first step this morning in helping Pauly get on the water. It is difficult not having proper access and having no amenities but as always, we took up the challenge.

The initial step was to see if transitioning from the wheelchair to the boat was a problem which was done with relative ease on land near our container. The next step was to access the water – while Mark held the boat Darren and John were able to carry Pauly and safely seat him in the front of the boat. Darren helped him with his balance, and they were able to manoeuvre off the beach taking some positive strokes in unison.

There are some exciting times ahead as Pauly is keen to learn and race in a double as his confidence and skill level grow.



Bring on 2022?

Mud Crab Cup

The next race is **Wed 12 Jan '22** which is race 5 of a 10-race series. The last race is on the **16 March '22** so still plenty of time to catch Mitchell Webb who is the current leader.

Coaching Clinics

2 Coaching clinics will be run free of charge for all members **Sat 22 Jan '22** by Stew O'Regan. This will be for Beginners/Intermediate and Advanced so keep this date free.

Paddle4Good & 6th Birthday

Keep **Sunday morning 20 Mar '22** free for our annual charity event where we will compete over 10km. The monies this year will be for 'Hunter Melanoma Foundation' which is very appropriate based on the exposure to the sun when paddling.

Competitive racing – Marathon & Harbour Series

PaddleNSW has released the calendar of events which is on their website <https://nsw.paddle.org.au/#> under events and have also been placed on our container door. We are hosting our **first Harbour Series race on Sunday morning 3 July '22** so keep this date free. As a club we have always had a strong presence at these events and we would encourage all our members, especially the new members to participate and represent our club.

Uniforms

The club's colour is "Orange". Besides being a great safety colour, it also makes us stand out from other clubs most of which seem to be some form of blue. Our club prides itself on being different so consider purchasing an item of clothing for when you represent our club. The club makes no profit on the clothing, it is about being part of the "Orange Army". An email will be sent in the new year itemising the clothing available with the aim of placing an order at the end of January '22.

Adaptive Paddlers

Our club is getting quite a few enquiries, so it is our intention to find the right craft to suit the needs of the people that approach us. The club intends to work closely with Newcastle City Council and the relevant government organisations to improve the amenities at Throsby Creek.

Lease – 1 Jan – 31 Dec '22

We are happy to say that after 4 years effort and with the support of Newcastle City Council the club has secured 153sqm which enables our trailer to be also parked in an accessible position for use by members.

Message from President

Amazing that 2021 is nearly over and a year we all needed to adapt and be able to take it all in our stride. It was good that there were opportunities to do some events during the year, which I am sure people enjoyed. Great to see the participation for the Mud Crab Cup races, the making of the club video presentation in June and then to finish off with the doubles/end of year BBQ last week. The club is in a positive space. With the container's looking smart and both very well decked out, a great system in place for the club members use. In the background the committee has been working hard, so well done and thank you to all.

2022 is going to be a big year for the Orange Army in all disciplines of paddling so I am looking forward to all members and their families supporting and participating in the variety of events planned.

Merry Christmas and a safe New Year and Happy paddling to all.

Regards,

*Liz Van Reece
NP President*

Go the Orange Army