

## Swan Canoe Club, Inc.

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Club Sponsors 2002-2014

[www.mainpeak.com.au](http://www.mainpeak.com.au)

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT to the AGM – June 2015

#### Introduction

When no one came forward to be President at the 2014 AGM, the position was vacant for near three months which was not healthy, so I volunteered to the Committee on the understanding that I travelled a lot and could not dedicate the time this role probably required.

Fortunately I was able to welcome to the Committee a very capable Vice-President in Kerry Hughes, and together with the rest of the Committee and a few generous volunteers, I feel that overall we have had a very successful year as I will detail below.

#### Membership

Our numbers continue to rise after the low point created by our major building extensions such that we now have 351 full-time members.

#### Connecting Members (find a buddy)

A common comment when new members fail to renew is that they have not found others with similar interests and skills to paddle with. A major initiative this year has been to investigate social media platforms to see if a friendly yet very secure system could be implemented. With the help of Kerry's non-member son-in-law we now have a secure Facebook Group to enable this form of communication. Soon we plan to conduct a "Facebook 101" evening for members who know nothing about Facebook and want to learn how to use this system in a secure and private way.

#### Boat Replacement and Repair

A priority this year has been to upgrade our aging fleet of Club boats, now that our bank balance has recovered from the building extensions. Not much progress has been made on this front however. T&D have recommended a range of boats to suit their courses, however with no spare space in the racks we need to work out which boats are pensioned off. Since there are a wide range of boat types required by different groups of users within the Club this is a delicate balancing act. Asset Office Andrew Maurice and I have been through all our boats, renewed their numbering and updated the Club's Asset Register including placing a value on each boat.

We have contracted Dave Worthy (does repairs for CWA and Ascot) to repair all the boats that he feels are worth some effort, and to replace the foot pedals on kayaks with rudders with identical systems to make it far easier for members to make adjustments, and to minimise maintenance of this continually problematic issue (the yellow Gecko has had this new system for several weeks as a trial).

## Boat Storage

The new storage racks have been full for some time and a few spaces are available on the top level of the old racks. Many thanks to Chesson Henshaw for taking on this role and her efforts to ensure no free-loaders are using rack space.

## Junior Program

A major change in the last year or so has been the addition of a flat water sprint/marathon program, largely due to Amanda Simper's efforts. The Club now owns five Guppies which are used for under 10 year olds. Amanda has also lent the Club another Guppy and some K1 boats for use by juniors who become too large for Guppies.

Our long-running slalom junior program has continued with both beginner and advanced sessions under the wonderful coaching of Zlatan Ibrahimovic.

Demelza Wall, Nick Rankin and Georgia Rankin were selected in the Australian junior and u21 teams and competed at the Junior World Whitewater Slalom Championships in Brazil in April.

## Building and Maintenance

We lease the clubrooms from The Town of Mosman Park and they conducted a thorough inspection in late 2014. The resulting report listed many issues which needed addressing: unfinished and/or poorly painted areas, toilet role holders, rusting columns, missing hand-rails in the disabled bathroom, spider webs everywhere etc. Thanks largely to Kerry and a couple of other volunteers these have all been addressed.

The Committee decided to delay the balcony extension works, even though money was available to give members a break from disruptive building works. Roller blinds have been installed on the upstairs windows to make viewing the data projector easier.

The Council had two new evaluations on the clubrooms at around \$1.3m, much more than the \$440k we were insured for, so our insurance premiums have seen a dramatic increase this year.

## Electronic Access Issues

The electronic controller which runs the keyfob access failed for the fourth time recently, and the contractor who installed and maintains our system is at a loss to know what is wrong, since no other similar systems he is aware of have ever failed. He is now demanding that the suppliers replace the core module.

## Floating Ramp and Sand Issues

The wooden boat launching ramp which had been severely damaged by aquatic woodworms has been replaced with a new locally designed and built hinged floating ramp in September 2014, and this has performed its function very well, having recently rising on the spring tides to be horizontal.

However the removal of the long wooden poles which supported the old ramp has led to serious scouring away of the sand near and below the ramp. We recently added some sand bags to both make the step up/off the ramp easier, and to reduce the swirling water motion that is thought to be causing the sand scouring.

## Hiring of Clubrooms

With the expanded clubroom and audio-visual system in place we have been successful in hiring the first floor room to several groups, thus creating a new source of income. We also increased the rate for weekend use since this is when member use should have priority. Gaby has taken over the administration of this, and it would be good to have a volunteer to promote the facility, especially for weekdays. We have bolstered our crockery and culterly stocks to ensure we can cater for 50 guests, and added a WIFI service for presenters and use during Committee meetings.

## Website

Australian Canoeing made a complete change to its website provider and services in September and this was a minor disaster for most clubs' websites including ours. For several months the new event and calendar system was disfunctional and we had trouble communicating our events and courses – fortunately the system has recently become useful. Our 'new' website lost its professional design and much of the great history of trip reports and photographs. With time and probably some expense this can be rectified but it was very disappointing after being promised much more during the planning of the change-over.

## Sponsors

Mainpeak continue to be our only sponsor and a new agreement is belatedly been negotiated. Ideas for other potential sponsors would be very welcome.

## Town of Mosman Park Fair

We participated in this annual fair for the first time in March. In the tent provided we displayed a pull up poster about the Club, a PowerPoint animation of photos on a large computer screen and two plastic kayaks for kids to sit in. Several member volunteered to chat with visitors and it proved quite successful and we should participate every year to support the Council and attract new local members – we were surprised how many locals did not know there was a club like ours so close. It made me realise we do no Club promotion other than our annual Open Day and this should be discussed in future.

## Events

We ran the Open Day in October with nearly 100 people attending and having a tryout paddle, and some subsequently joined the Club.

The Rod Fry race happened in March and saw about 60 people competing – about 50% improvement from the previous year.

Several day and overnight paddling events have been arranged such as Broke Inlet, Ningaloo, Penguin Island etc and I thank the instructors who have arranged and led these trips.

We have been lacking an active Social sub-committee this year and so have seen few social events other than our Christmas Party in December, so I hope we see some volunteers emerge to energise this aspect of the Club soon.

## Awards

At the Christmas party Geoff Palmer was awarded Club Member of the Year, and Isabella Choate was Junior Paddler of the Year.

## Treasurer

Special thanks go to Julie Wheelhouse who has been Treasurer for **four** years, an especially trying period as we sourced funds then paid for all the recent building works. Julie retires from this role tonight.

## Thanks

Lastly I would like to thank the many people who have made this year a good success – especially our Committee and the Training and Development sub-committee, especially our Instructors who continue to provide a wonderful service to the Club.

Peter Ewing – 16/6/2015