



PRESIDENT'S EMAIL

FEBRUARY 2019

## Dear Members

On behalf of the Club Committee, we trust that you have all been enjoying the peak paddling season and had great break around Christmas and the New Year. With the year now cranking up, I wanted to share with you all some important developments planned for 2019.

### Sea Trek and Communications

We still do not have volunteers to undertake these important roles. The Committee has assessed this situation further and unless we get some volunteers coming forward, we will have to drastically cut back Sea Trek in 2019.

The best we can realistically do with Sea Trek is to encourage Members who have any trip reports or articles they want to publish to forward these to the Committee. We will consider publishing these on the website in a section we will set up to house member articles. Once we have enough articles to warrant an issue of Sea Trek, then we will collate them all into an issue. We have decided that we will pay for editorial assistance to do this, but only when we have enough articles to work with. This will be a passive process, meaning that we will await submission of any trip reports or articles rather than chasing them.

If you have any articles, please send them to Club Secretary, Maggie MacPherson. **In the meantime if you are interested in helping the Club out by taking on the Sea Trek Editor role, then please let me know as soon as possible.**

In relation to other communications related activities, i.e. Facebook and the Website, we will do our best to keep these up to date, But we are reliant on member's posting news items on Facebook.

### Implementation of New Grading Model and Training

The Committee is delighted to see the growing interest in the Club's new grading and training model. The recent very successful training and assessment weekend at Phillip Island is a particularly highlight and I want to publically thank all those who made this event possible – the members who went along for the training, those who got assessed and the Club's Assessors and Instructors who facilitated the event.

This fantastic weekend culminated in:

- 4 successful Sea Skills grading awards
- 4 successful Intro to Sea Skills grading awards
- 11 successful Sea Kayak Basics awards
- 2 pending Assessor awards (which now means that once registration is completed with Paddling Australia, John & Tina Evertze will join Terry Barry & Les Allan as a group of motivated and highly skilled Assessors)

This is a fantastic result, but I want to reinforce what is planned for the rest of 2019:

- **Assessment for Intro to Sea Skills, Sea Skills and Sea Leader** – expressions of interest are now open and all members who are either graded under the Club's old grading model **or** wish to be assessed for the new grades to register by 24 February (see website). The next assessment will be undertaken in early Spring, but timing & what is offered will be influenced by numbers. So, please register NOW.
- **New Sea Instructors** – a current batch of 4 trainee Sea Instructors undergoing their training will be finally assessed in April. Once successful this will greatly strengthen our Instructor numbers. The Instructors have committed to running the equivalent of one month/year of training along with events like the previous assessment weekend – that is 6-7 events per year, which is fantastic. Take advantage of it!
- **Paddling and Related Skills** – we will continue to offer specific skill building sessions (eg rolling, forward strokes, surf, etc.) pending interest. So let us know what you want to see and we will do our best to make it happen. Please forward suggestions to Andrew Meuller, Trip Coordinator.
- **Sea Kayak Basics** – this is compulsory for all new members. You must complete this in order to participate in Club trips. So if you are a new member, please make sure you get along to a Canadian Bay paddle to enable assessment (if you have not already done so). As mentioned in the December e-News, the Club is also introducing a **Sea Kayak Basics Tag** to be worn on your PFD, and this will be provided once you pass the assessment. Trip Leaders will be asked to check Sea Kayak Basics standing with members on paddles they lead. The Sea Kayak Basics award is not onerous, but is very important in establishing a basic level of skills in the Club. See also further details below.

### **Implementation of Sea Kayak Basics – Ungraded Members**

The Club still has a large number of ungraded members. In order to enable at least a minimum skill standard, it is planned that Sea Kayak Basics will be rolled out as follows:

- The Committee will undertake an **initial scan of all ungraded members** to determine where automatic granting of Sea Kayak Basics can apply. This will be based on general awareness of paddling capabilities. If you have

been regularly paddling, we expect this will be well known. Where this is unclear, the following will apply.

- For members with **over 12 months membership** of the Club, you will be asked to self assess that you meet Sea Kayak Basics requirements. Endorsement by a Trip Leader familiar with your capabilities will be also requested as part of this process.
- For members with **less than 12 months membership** of the Club, you will be invited to attend a monthly Canadian Bay paddle where Sea Kayak Basics can be assessed by the Trip Leader or an Instructor.

### **Website Upgrade – Nominations for Member User Group**

As advised in the last e-News, a member's user group will be established to guide this important functionality upgrade.. The Committee has allocated a substantial budget to enable this important upgrade in 2019, which will centre on improving the web interface for trips registration and management. This will integrate with the calendar to enable opt in/out email alerts when new trips are posted. It will also substantially automate trip float planning, thus assisting Trip Leaders.

**So if you want to be a part of making this exciting new web functionality happen, then register your interest by 16 March (email Club Secretary, Maggie MacPherson – [secretary@victorianseakayak.club](mailto:secretary@victorianseakayak.club) )**

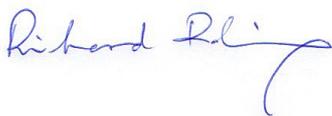
### **Student Membership**

The Committee has had an initial discussion about this idea (raised at the 2018 AGM). Vice President, Peter Newman is preparing a short discussion paper for initial consideration by the Committee. The aim is to help attract more younger members wanting to get started in sea kayaking. If you have any views on this possible new membership category, then submit these to Peter in the near future.

### **2019 AGM at Barwon Heads**

As previously advised, we have committed to Barwon Heads as our venue again in 2019. Initial venue and campground bookings have been made and we are finalizing our guest speaker for the keynote session as we speak. The dates will be 8-10 November, so pop that in your diary now! Later in the year we will seek input from members as to the preferred mix of paddling, training and other activities for the weekend.

**very best regards**



**Richard Rawling  
President, VSKC**