

Silver Salties Club Case Study: Wauchope Bonny Hills SLSC, NSW

Why did your club get involved in Silver Salties?

We saw the promotional information in the SLSNSW website and as a club we are always willing to embrace new initiatives, so we thought it would be good for general community engagement in our area as we have quite a high proportion of older people in our area.

What does Silver Salties look like at your club?

We started around April 2021. I took on the role of Silver Salties program leader for our club since it is based on healthy activity it seemed to fit under the sports related umbrella of

competition and I am the club competition director. I was also off work recovering from my first hip replacement at the time and it seemed like a good way for me to jump start my own way back into activity.

We held a morning tea to promote the idea at the club and we advertised on the club website and by posters in the community. We started with a simple walk and talk group. We had 12 people show up to the first session and our numbers grew steadily over the first few months. We have delivered three walk and talk blocks so far and because this group is popular now, I have just kept it open ended so it can run indefinitely.

We now have over 40 members registered, although we usually only have between 12 and 20 show up to any one session as there are always people away on trips and we have some members who signed up while they were here on holidays for a few weeks, so they only attend when they are back in the area for another holiday. We have also just finished a block of Tai Chi which we ran alongside our walk and talk group. It went for 8 weeks, and we had a local instructor come to the club to give us an introduction to the art of Tai Chi.

I have another surf club member who helps me run the sessions, Godfrey. He is one of our older patrolling members and is a great fit in the group because he always has an entertaining story to tell us. Godfrey is currently a first aider on patrol, but he is planning to try to do his SRC or BM next season.

All our members come from the wider community, some have been involved with SLSA in the past, so they are enjoying reconnecting with the movement. Many of our members are new to the area having retired here from further afield so for them it has been a good way to make social connections.

What outcomes have there been for the club, program leader and participants?

It helps to promote the club locally as our members love telling people about the group, we have often been approached in the cafe while we are having our morning tea by other people wanting to know what our group is all about, and we have gained a few new recruits in that way. I feel I have benefitted from being program leader because it has been rewarding seeing the improvement in some of the members' health; not just physically but mentally as well. The social aspect has been hugely beneficial for some of them.



What helps make your Silver Salties program a success?

The Silver Salties resources were a great boost when we were starting up. We had a lucky dip every week to give away the free keep cups and hats that came when we first signed up and those were highly sought after.

Godfrey is a big asset with his larger-than-life personality -he keeps the group well entertained. And our surf club cafe is a big factor in our success - we get 50% off our coffee after our walks and the baked goods are much looked forward to.

How does your club support/embed Silver Salties?

We feature our Silver Salties on our club website, Facebook page and Insta feed. And they also feature in the club newsletter, and annual report.

We also included our Silver Salties in last year's Christmas party, and we have plans to get them involved in volunteering at various club events next season.

What advice would you have for other clubs starting their Silver Salties journey?

Find a committed and enthusiastic leader, preferably at least two to share the load. Keep it simple to start with and purchase some Silver Salties merchandise or source local sponsors to provide some free giveaways.

Program Leader

Elaine Walker, E: wbh.competition@gmail.com

