

Case Study: Silver Salties at Seacliff Surf Life Saving Club, SA



Walk & Talk, Yoga & Mindfulness, Swimming Skills

November - December 2019; January - March 2020



"I feel the concept is brilliant to bring together people of a certain age, from all walks of life to participate in healthy activities in a socially friendly environment."

Sarah B,
Participant

What they did

- **Club support:** Club Committee Member, Jacinta Day, was the first point of contact with SLSA and took the lead to get Silver Salties up and running. Jacinta, as a member of the Management Committee was well placed to gain support within the club, which was aided by the club's culture of willingness to try new programs, and the perceived benefits for the club and participants including growing awareness about Seacliff SLSC and promoting healthy ageing.
- **Club member engagement:** The Club called for expressions of interest from members to help deliver Silver Salties. Several members responded and a small group was formed to progress implementation. Several experienced members, including Terry Keeffe and Terry Crabb (who became known as the two Terrys), took a lead role to coordinate and deliver Silver Salties and share their enthusiasm and experience with participants.
- **Inclusion:** The Walk & Talk program was chosen as the first Silver Salties program the club would try given it was something everyone, regardless of fitness or ability, could get involved in safely. The club leaders would divide the group into two or three smaller groups each session with a leader in each group so that different abilities and paces could be accommodated and communication between groups maintained.
- **Safety:** A roll call, coupled with giving out and returning name tags, pre and post activity ensured that all those who started the activity could also be checked off on completion. Safety guidelines around wearing hats, sunscreen and water bottles were also promoted. The moderate to warm weather also meant the activity could be done safely each week.



- **Variety:** The club leaders chose different walking routes each session to maintain interest and learn more about the local surrounds e.g. beach walk to jetty, esplanade walk, street walk. Participants always started and finished at the clubhouse. Following group discussions, the club then decided to offer swimming skills and yoga as subsequent Silver Salties programs.
- **Convenient time:** The Silver Salties programs ran from 9am till 10am (sometimes 10.30am) on Thursday mornings between November and December 2019, and January to March 2020, prior to COVID-19 restrictions.
- **Promotion:** The Walk & Talk group was promoted within the club via newsletters, at Nippers, and word of mouth. The club also created a flyer (prior to Silver Salties flyer templates) and gave these to the Holdfast and Marion Councils and Brighton Caravan Park for public notice boards.
- **Social connections:** The final activity of each session was coffee back at the clubhouse where participants could enjoy more social interaction, including exchanging reading books. The club offered discount prices for coffee and cake to participants.
- **Participant registration:** Most people registered online for the Walk & Talk Group before arriving to participate, but the club welcomed walk-up registrations as well.
- **Other special touches:** The club organised a special Christmas brunch for participants after the final session. Club leaders often sought feedback from participants through informal chats and provided a summary of each session to the club organiser (Jacinta). The club leaders encouraged participants to help take the warm-up movement and stretch before and after sessions.

The impact

- **Participation:** 17 Older Australians aged 65+ years engaged with the initial Silver Salties program.
 - 6 participants were already Seacliff SLSC members
 - 11 participants were non-Seacliff SLSC members i.e. general community citizens, thus became SLSA Community Members during the Silver Salties Walk & Talk program
- **Club membership growth:** Whilst non-Seacliff SLSC participants had free 'Community Membership' coverage with SLSA during the program, Seacliff SLSC discussed the potential of offering all non-club members a social/associate membership in the future to really engage participants in the club.
- **Building better communities:** Based on participant feedback, participants enjoyed their interaction with Seacliff SLSC members and the feeling of being part of the club, meeting new friends and enhancing their confidence and wellbeing through physical activity and social interactions.
- **A positive and active vibe at the club:** The club was buzzing when the Silver Salties participants arrived, talked with other group members, got active, then returned for coffee at the club bistro.
- **Excitement to grow the program:** Participants and club leaders discussed additional physical activity ideas following the initial Walk & Talk program which led to the inclusion of Yoga & Mindfulness and Swimming Skills in 2020.

The investment

- **Financial**
 - Income: Surf Life Saving Australia provided Seacliff SLSC with:
 - \$500 seed grant for participating in the Silver Salties pilot program
 - A retrospective subsidy for the Walk & Talk Group (2019) of \$270
 - Expenses: Seacliff SLSC has had minimal financial outlay:
 - Some printing costs for flyers
 - Purchase of name tags
 - Member discount price for coffee and cake at the club bistro
 - Subsidised yoga instructor payment (from SLSA seed grant/subsidy)
 - Participants in Yoga & Meditation paid a subsidised fee for an instructor
- **Time**
 - Club Contact:
 - Initial planning time including liaising with SLSA, Club Committee and Club Member leaders
 - Inputting participant registration detail into the online management system
 - Preparation of flyers, and marketing material within the club e.g. newsletters
 - Club Leaders:
 - Checking that participants had completed registration forms and waivers
 - Meeting to discuss participant needs e.g. fitness, mobility etc.
 - Liaising with the Club Contact/Club Organiser
 - Organising name tags
 - Checking attendance sheets
 - Meeting with council representatives and local organisations to promote the program

Looking ahead

- Seacliff SLSC is highly likely to continue implementing Silver Salties once COVID-19 restrictions ease.
- Other factors which will determine future involvement include; continued support from the Club President and Management Committee, access to the Club Contact who was a critical element of the success of the program, commitment from experienced and passionate club leaders (the two Terrys), and interest from participants.
- Seacliff SLSC will expand the Silver Salties program offerings as it progresses, have greater involvement with local councils and expand its group of program leaders.
- **Advice for other clubs**
 - Identify what capacity your club has, start with a program that is easy and does not require much investment
 - Build your participation levels
 - Work with the participants regarding what the club can offer and what they want to achieve
 - Tap into the amazing people around the club and engage with them to utilise their skills, experience, and availability
 - Most importantly, keep it fun and engaging for everyone involved.

Testimonials



“Silver Salties has provided an opportunity to meet and engage with new people of similar age and interests, and introduce them to our Club, our people and what we have to offer.” Terry Crabb, Club Leader



“When Jacinta Day first discussed this Silver Salties Program with me I was instantly convinced of its positive impact on the community and did not hesitate to be involved. To date my expectations have been exceeded and as we further develop our member numbers and group activities, I see further benefits not only for the participants but for the community in general and of course for Surf Life Saving.” Terry Keeffe, Club Leader

“We joined because we are part of Seacliff SLSC. We also like the fact that it targets older people and we are all conscious of the fact that we need to keep moving. We feel there is certainly a need in the future, post COVID-19, to keep stability in the program.” Marianne den Dekker & Cliff Joseph, Participants

“We have enjoyed the company and look forward to doing more swimming, walking, and talking with the other Silver Salties. We felt it has worked well because of the like minds and enthusiasm of the two Terrys and Cliff leading the way.” Jeff & Allison Day, Participants

“We first started with the Silver Salties after meeting Cliff and Marilyn at a concert. When they told us about the group, and what was involved, they asked us if we would like to join. Well, it turned out to be the best move we have made. Having moved from the other side of Adelaide, leaving all our friends behind had been difficult. So, this became an occasion when we were able to meet new people and exercise at the same time. The time with the Silver Salties, has been great. We made new friends and became fitter at the same time. This was a great way to make friends and stay fit. We’re looking forward to when we can recommence.” Yvonne & Allen Vanstone, Participants

Club Contact

Jacinta Day: youth@seacliffslsc.com.au

“My role in the Silver Salties program at Seacliff SLSC has been to facilitate and assist with the administrative & organisational side of the program. I have really enjoyed hearing about the groups’ activities, seeing the participation rate grow and getting to know some of the participants. I really feel this is a great initiative from SLSA and Seacliff SLSC has a lot to gain from the increased exposure, participation rate and new people around the club. It has been fantastic to see some of the older members (including life members) reengage with the activity and also to see people who haven’t had the experiences so many people take for granted when they are growing up around the beach, willing & keen to give things a try & have some new experiences. Seacliff SLSC are really lucky to have some keen & engaging members who have taken this program and run with it, developing it to meet the participants needs & encouraging everyone to take part. I am looking forward to working with the group & participants to get them to engage with the club even more in the future.” Jacinta Day