

# Ski for Life

## Newsletter



### FROM THE CHAIR

This is the first of our quarterly newsletters, so it is going to be a long one...

So much has happened to the Ski for Life Community, both within the committee and with our members over the past 6

months:

- We have had changes within the committee with members stepping aside and a newly appointed Executive Officer
- The 2022 South Eastern Australian Flood changing the path of our Mighty Murray River
- This years' Ski for Life initiative the 'Recovery Clean Up Program'
- Deferring our iconic relay event to 2024
- Our 'land-based' 2023 events
- Up and coming projects

We also want to bring our Ski for Life community closer together by introducing you all to our committee members, our great teams, and our ambassadors.

We look forward to keeping you informed through our quarterly newsletters.

Mark Facy  
Chair

### WELCOME ANITA!

The appointment of the Executive Officer role has enabled us to focus on building the platform for the continued growth of Ski for Life as a medium sized, non for profit charity organisation Anita joins us as Executive Officer with skills in charity organisations and event planning, bringing enthusiasm and energy to the management of Ski for Life. We officially welcome Anita and her family to the ski for Life family.



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### Deferring the 2023 Ski for Life Relay Event

The rising flood levels have impacted many parts of the river and even with receding river levels, the Committee decided that the River will still be too unsafe to hold our 2023 event on the March long weekend.



The good news is, all registered teams for this year will have their registrations carry over to 2024. If teams prefer they can request a full refund for the 2023 event.

There is no expectation for teams to continue fundraising for the 2023 March weekend.

Teams are asked to consider participating in the Recovery Clean-up Program and also the 'land event' on the 2023 March weekend.

### Ski for Life Community Land Event, 11th - 12th March 2023

The impact of the river rising has been devastating for so many and this year the Ski for Life Committee would like to invite the Ski for life members and local communities to a series of *free* community events being planned along the river.



#### Saturday 11th March:

Cobdogla, Cobby Club, starting at 4pm  
Ski for Life presents Mary O'Brian's '*Are you bogged mate?*', followed by live music.

#### Sunday 12th March

Renmark, Renmark Club, starting at 3pm  
Ski for Life Presents '*Mates on a Mission*', delivered by Real Life Resilience, followed by live music.



Registration for events will be via website

Nibbles are supplied.

Purchase of drinks can be made at the venues; meal bookings should be made directly with each venue at own costs.

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### **Ski for Life's 2023 Initiative 'Recovery Clean-up Program'**

The 2022/23 South Eastern Australian Flood changing the path of our Mighty Murray River. The flooding has affected many people who live, work, and play along the Murray River and with the rising water levels, we have decided to post-pone our iconic event until 2024.

This year's initiative is the 'Recovery Clean-up Program'.

The Ski for Life Community is reaching out to help those who have supported the Ski for Life events every year. Our primary aim is to provide hands on assistance for minor flood recovery clean-ups for Ski for Life businesses, supporters and community groups that have been affected by the flood waters.

There have already been multiple offers of assistance from our Ski for Life members and we are now in the process of coordinating efforts. We are maintaining contact with those that will need our help over the next 6-8 months and are asking members to reply email with offers of physical (manpower and/or equipment) assistance to help in the clean-up

If you are able to offer any assistance to help in the clean-up process, please email [anita@skiforlife.com.au](mailto:anita@skiforlife.com.au)

# Ski for Life

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### Team Spotlight! Watt's Up

#### Who are we?

We are the Watt's Up Ski team. We started out as just our family & have grown from there. We are now made up of Tim, (aka Watty) Sue, Mitch, Mia, Lach & Adele. Paddy our god son is our Team Captain & we couldn't think of doing SFL without him. Our roadies have changed over the years from Pam & David Snook, cousins Brendan & Leon & now Lynch & Al. We can't forget the trusty fuel boys come under our watch, Leigh, Dennis, Bob & Hoffy along with Andrea & Felicity. Last, but not least, Bob the Pilot with his crew Kerry & Andy pretty much wrap up the Watt's Up Ski team.



#### When did we first participate?

As one of the founding families, we have been involved in this life changing event from the beginning back in 2013. The first couple of years we joined forces with the Veale family as we were unsure we could do the event with the then young kids. In 2015 we formed the Watt's Up Ski team & 'Terminator' being one of the oldest boats saw us cross the finish line for the next 7 years. We've mostly skied the event with 3 skiers out the back which would have us skiing a total for our team of just shy of 11k kms.



#### What does the event mean to us?

Where do we start...

This is an event that is very close to our hearts having personally experienced losing two family members to suicide.

For us as a family this has been a life changing event & one that has provided a platform to enable us to move on. The friendships formed on this event are lifelong.

For Sue, this event became her baby after taking over the management for 7 years after Bill organised the first couple of events. Organising may not have been one of Bills strengths & surviving on sausages in white bread for 5 days wasn't ideal. However we will be forever grateful for Bill coming up with the idea & as they say the rest is history.

For our kids, this event has enabled them to connect to such a vast array of people of all ages, community & empowered them to help make a difference in someone else's life.

For Watty the event has bought about all kinds of positives. The friendships formed, the people who have experienced the 'arms straight, knees bent & never let go of the rope' lesson, the opportunity to wear a mankini due to consistently teaching & displaying what not to do with his power turns, but the greatest highlight & privilege would be skiing along side both his blind mates Ben Pettingill & Charlie Duncan.





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### From our Ambassador Ben Pettingill



G'day, Ben here to give you an Ambassadors update. To kick us off I wanted to share how I got involved, why this role means so much to me and what it involves. When I was 16 I lost 98% of my eyesight overnight due to a rare genetic syndrome that, as you can imagine, turned my world upside down and through a whole lot of challenges my way. One of the things I loved before losing my sight was water skiing and thanks to my old man being pretty determined to not let this stop me we found a way to get back out there behind the boat. Among all the things I could no longer do due to being blind water skiing was the one thing I still enjoyed. The impact it had on me not just physically but also on my mental health was massive. Fast forward a few years and I took my skiing to a whole new level above when I could see competing in the Southern 80, a ski race on the Murray and was the first blind person to do so.

The Ski for Life committee at the time came across this story and asked if I would consider being the ambassador. When they explained it was skiing 456km's I thought it was a pretty ballsy thing to ask a blind guy to do but when I found out more about eh cause there was no way I could say no. Skiing has had huge benefits on my mental health when I first lost my eyesight and it continues to do so even now. As the ambassador it is my role to promote Ski for Life at every opportunity, continually kick off conversations about the cause and live our mission by promoting the importance of mental health, wellbeing and suicide prevention. I am extremely proud to be the ambassador for this incredible organisation as I come into my 6th year in the role which is looking to be another huge one!

### Standby Support After Suicide - Tracey



The much smaller Ski For Life 'family' reached out for support after their second event realising that raising awareness can also impact on those who have lived experience of ill mental health, suicidal thoughts or a loss to suicide. Their enquiries led them to StandBy which was very new to South Australia at that time. I joined the third event with about 20 participants and have been involved ever since then including the most recent event with 26 boats and 290 participants.

I have been involved in Ski for Life for the past 7 events as the 'professional support' but have been involved in the Committee for the past four years. My current role of Professional Support means providing information, advice and emotional support where required both in the planning of and during the event.

StandBy Support After Suicide is a national, federally funded, free service operating across Australia. Anglicare SA provides the service to the whole of South Australia. StandBy is a suicide bereavement response service that provides a 24-hour coordinated community crisis response to families, friends and associates who have been bereaved through suicide.

StandBy is available to people, families, friends, associates, witnesses, schools, workplaces, groups and individuals, emergency and community responders and whole communities affected by suicide. This service is available to people bereaved by a recent or past suicide. Because people grieve in very different ways, support services may not be required for many weeks, months or even years in some cases. Whenever help is needed StandBy will be there to provide support and assistance.

We can also provide professional development sessions, briefer information sessions and run community workshops – all without cost.



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### Ski for Life Grants

Often people wonder who are successful in their grant applications and what they are used for, if the grants helped and what advice they might have for others.

Here you will find those that were successful in their grant applications.

2022 saw the following Organisations successful in their grant application:

- Rural Health Initiative Inc – Fat Farmers Calender 2023
- Sammy D Foundation – Connect – Community Youth Mentoring
- Clare Medical Centre – Educating the Community
- Hart Wellbeing Pty Ltd – Save our Mates – Chew the Fat – Men's event
- Waikerie Primary School – Grief and Loss Program

Previous Grant recipients include:

- Moorundi Aboriginal Community -
- Soul Essence Therapy and Life Coaching
- Arts Alive
- Moving A Head Inc
- Stamp out Suicide Yorke Peninsula Inc



[Click here to access Grant information on the Ski for life webpage.](#)



Clare Medical Centre



**WAIKERIE**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

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### Ski for Life Projects

Ski for Life are proud to be the drive behind the 'Mates on a Mission' program, delivered by Real Life Resilience. They call themselves Legless and Blind, Ben Pettingill, who is 98 per cent blind, and double amputee Mike Rolls.

The Mates on a Mission program aims to respond to the needs of vulnerable members of regional, rural, and remote Australian communities who have been deeply affected by the severe impact of ongoing drought, COVID-19 and the recent 2022 flooding.

The Mates on a Mission community program provides a unique opportunity for those living in rural areas to improve and maintain their physical, mental and social wellbeing through this critical period.

The mates do this by:

- Delivering uplifting, innovative, real life strategies to tackle tough times
- The power of storytelling
- Identifying external resources available, and further developing individual internal resources
- Creating a strategy to increase hope, happiness, and optimism
- Encouraging and facilitating whole of community to be involved
- Directing their program to all members of the community, including youth

### *Where's the next Mates on a Mission?*

Currently, there is planning to bring Mates on a Mission to the Barossa Valley in early March, 2023....watch this space!



### *How do I get Mates on a Mission to my area?*

Want to get the Mates on a Mission program to your area?

Complete a Grant Application form

Want more information?

Send an email to [anita@skiforlife.com.au](mailto:anita@skiforlife.com.au)



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### Dates to remember:

- Mates on a Mission, Barossa Valley (2nd March - 9th March)
- Ski for Life Land Event, Riverland (Saturday the 11th of March and Sunday the 12th of March)



### Community Shoutouts

This month, we would like to send a shout out to the following communities and business for their continued support in our annual Ski For Life events:

- Paxford Canvas Products - Sewing of the Team Flags and Polo personalisations
- Country Bakehouse - Hot Cross Buns every year
- Berri Ski Club - Sunday Lunch every year

### Merchandise

#### **Ski for Life Hoodie**

Ski For Life branding on back and left hand side of the chest.

Back branding is visible when hood is down.

Available in Kids and Adult's sizes.

Price: \$50.00

Purchase via the Ski for Life shop on our website

