



CRONULLA SUTHERLAND KAYAK CLUB

CSKC PADDLE PULSE DECEMBER 2023



Tis the season to be jolly and take a break from the rush of everyday life to embrace the tranquillity of the water. As we gather around the virtual BBQ of our paddling community, we want to extend our warmest wishes to you all for a FAAAAABULOUS Christmas season.

2023 has been a year filled with thrilling river runs, a couple of dramatic spills and unforgettable moments on the water. As we approach the year's end, it's time to reflect on our paddling journeys, celebrate our accomplishments, and look forward to the exciting adventures awaiting us in the New Year. So, grab your favourite paddle, along with a beer and a prosecco and relax.

The casual Wednesday race has still been happening with great attendance; there have also been some Christmas paddles and get-togethers, It was also great to see Gareth out paddling again after a recent heart hiccup. There was a rumour that Santa turned up at one of the Christmas parties; I have no idea who it was, so I can only imagine it was the real Santa. There were even the faint footsteps of the reminders nearby. Santa gave out some gifts and a big shoutout to Danny and Ashleigh from Priceline at Gynea for helping Santa with those.



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NEW LIFE MEMBERS

At the 2023 CSKC Presentation Night held on the 3rd of November 2023, two more Life Members were added to our prestigious list of CSKC Life Members.

Carol Kirkman & Margaret Ryall were awarded this honour due to their tireless commitment to our club and were presented with Club Life Membership Shirts.

Carol Kirkman has been a member of CSKC, with her husband Ellis, for over 20 years. As well as racing, she has been a long serving Committee Member. Carol has represented CSKC at World Masters Games, Australian Masters Games and in PaddleNSW events. She has been Race Secretary & Time Keeper. Not only has Carol worked endlessly for our club, she has also been instrumental in the timing and finishing of PaddleNSW events which CSKC has hosted. Thank you Carol for your remarkable dedication.

Margaret Ryall has also been a long serving member for over 20 years who joined CSKC after moving to Gray's Point. As well as club racing, she has competed in Australian Masters Games & World Masters Games representing CSKC. In 2014 she competed in K2 with fellow CSKC member Dianne Chellew, winning a Gold Medal at the ICF Masters Canoe Marathon World Championships held in Oklahoma USA. Margaret has been a dedicated Committee Member as Social Secretary & Club BBQ Organiser for many years. She also holds the prestigious honour of being CSKC's first female Club President. Thank you Margaret for your outstanding & unrelenting commitment.





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History of the PFD

Life jackets are one of the most popular forms of the personal flotation devices (PFD). You're likely aware that life jackets have been around for many years. After all, most of us have used them when going boating or rafting since our earliest memories. Thanks to life vests, we're able to safely explore rivers, oceans, and alpine lakes.

But did you know that early PFDs didn't resemble what we use today? Over more than 1,000 years, PFDs have evolved from bulky flotation devices used only in dire circumstances to sleek, comfortable vests tailored to specific water sports.

The Early History of the Personal Flotation Device

It's impossible to say when, and where, the first contraption was built to boost a human's buoyancy in water. Humans have been eating fish and seafood for tens of thousands of years. And current evidence suggests that we've been using boats for well over 10,000 years. With an intimate history between humans and water across the globe, it seems likely that we've used many tools to help us stay afloat over the years.

The first evidence of PFDs is found in the British Museum. Here you'll find an ancient gypsum panel dated to 860 BC, or nearly 3,000 years before today. In the sculpted artwork, Assyrian soldiers cross a river while holding onto inflated animal skins. These inflated skins are the first PFDs that we know of.

There's evidence that animal skins, animal bladders, and hollow gourds were all used before the creation of the first wearable PFD. It wasn't until the early 1800s that something resembling the life jackets of today was first sold in *The Sporting Magazine*. These early life jackets were made from cork, a naturally buoyant material. By the mid 1800s, cork life vests were used by lifeboat crews to protect them from storms or capsizing.

The trouble with cork was twofold. First, cork is heavy. Second, it's rigid, making cork vests rather uncomfortable. Over the years, countless innovations have been made to get us to the life jackets that we use today.

In the early 1900s, rubber and batteries were used in life vests for inflation and lighting. These early vests were able to send and receive SOS messages, playing a key role in search and rescue. Before man-made foam, a lightweight material called kapok slowly phased out cork. Kapok is a fluffy material that comes from the seed pods of a tree. Life jackets used



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in World War II were typically made using kapok for comfortable, lightweight floatation. Inflatable life vests were also used during the war.

The history of life jackets for white water rafting

Early Whitewater rafters weren't avid fans of PFDs. To safely manoeuvre churning rapids, you need full agility, and these life vests simply didn't fit the bill. As recently as the 1960s, most rafters were PFD-free.

Whitewater rafting back in the day was much riskier. Without proper safety equipment, a higher percentage of rafters became injured or died. As the years went on, continuous innovation led to vests that allowed greater movement and long-lasting comfort.

In the 1970s, Stearns founder Maurice Olink created the first Coast Guard-approved type III life jacket. It was lighter and more buoyant than its counterparts designed for ocean use. These vests just started a movement that made river rafting safer, allowing more people to get out and paddle through thrilling Whitewater.

It was during the 1980s that the first type V PFD was crafted in Europe. These vests are designed for specific water sports or purposes. For instance, there are rescue vests, and there are vests built for the commercial Whitewater rafter.

Today's Personal Flotation Device Over the years, the PFD has become safer and more comfortable. Adjustable straps, resilient fabric, and vests for infants, youth, and adults of all shapes and sizes now exist. There are different PFDs for different water sports, and every year there seems to be a new design or must-have material.



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