



# St Ayles Skiff Community Rowing ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

## SASCRAA Newsletter.

April 2025

### Future Skiffing events around the country 2025

April 7th -12th - The Denmark Rowers of WA, are hosting the 4th **'Australian 5km row'**  
A most prestigious award to reward & recognise a very social & fun national participation event.  
The Australian 5 Results are now posted on the SASCRAA website: [http://sascraa.org/index.php/upcoming\\_events/australian-5/](http://sascraa.org/index.php/upcoming_events/australian-5/)

April 12th & 13th - 12 x Lake Macquarie members are taking a skiff & several smaller wooden boats down to the Canberra BoatFest, with the highlight being an afternoon tea on the lawns of The Governor General's residence on Lake Burley Griffin. Congratulations to the first Skiff to participate in the Australian 5km on Lake Burley Griffin.

April 25th & 26th - South Australian Wooden Boat Festival in Goolwa. Anybody participating ?

June 7th, 8th & 9th - Monarchs Holiday Weekend - National Celtic Folk Festival Celtic, at Portarlinton, Victoria. Coastal Rowing Geelong & Warrnambool Community Rowing Club will be participating with a St Ayles Skiff hard stand display plus community rowing. If you enjoy Celtic music, this is one event for you.

July ?? - Tin Can Bay's Coastal Rowing Club's proposed Launch of two skiffs.



**July 6th to 12th - 5th World St Ayles Skiff Championships in Stranraer, Scotland. For all details on the World Championships check out the Stranraer Coastal Rowing Club website.**

We have two crews from Royal Freshwater Bay YC, Western Australia entered this year, plus our two friendly Scottish expats Sally & Sandy from Denmark CRC, who are joining their old crew during their visit to Scotland. We wish all our Australian skiffers a most enjoyable & rewarding time in Stranraer.

September this year.

Sept 28th - Denmark CRC are hosting the Denmark Classic Boat Festival. Contact Dave Cliff.

The three week Birarong Marr, River Keepers Yarra River Festival in Melbourne. The invitation will be out to as many skiffers visiting Melbourne to experience a row on the famous Yarra River.

### 2026

Australia Day 2026, the Augusta, WA crew will again host a traditional Australia Day Picnic Row. Augusta are renown for their fabulous Picnic Rows, don't miss this one if you are in the area.

February 23rd to 27th 2026 - Steamers Run 26, - 4 to 5 days of adventure rowing 80 to 90 km along Victoria's welcoming inland Gippsland Lakes & river systems. Interest has already been shown from two Tasmanian & one WA crew. A call out to all Victorias 9 skiffs, we may need you. Finalised details TBA.

2026 - There has been a call for an adventure row along the picturesque Mallacoota Lakes & feeder rivers from the Great Dividing Range. Located on Victoria's eastern boarder with NSW. Looking for interest from Vic/NSW crews to coordinate this event.

We are trying to set up a national calendar, do contact SASCRAA to help promote your own crews events.

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## Around the clubs

### **Twofold Bays 'Kudingal' launch - 16th March, 2025.**

We congratulate Twofold Bay on the recent launch of their skiff 'Kudingal' earlier in March. Australia's 32nd skiff on the SASCRAA register.



Their build commenced in February 2021 by students at Eden Marine High School. After a fire at the school the build was ably completed by the Merimbula Mens Shed with support from the Boydton Shipyard. A donation from the local Bendigo Bank, a second trailer was purchased, with modifications from the Pambula Historic Car Club & the High school students, they are now ready to explore the waters of Twofold Bay. The Community group Bega Sea Wolves will be the first crews to row Kudingal.

A great example of community support conforming the St Ayles Skiff motto "Communities Build Skiffs & Skiffs Build communities". Keep your eyes out for Eden's Regatta, established in 1868, planning has begun to re-establish the once long running

local boating festival based around their historic connections with the Whaling industry. The last Eden Regatta was held in 1935.



### **Lake Burley Griffin Hosts Lake Macquarie's 'Australian 5' row.**

### **Never a dull moment! At the Canberra Boatfest 12th & 13th April 2025.**

It was always going to be a logistical challenge to arrange for four different crews to take part in our one St Ayles Skiff, Catalina, in the Australian 5 in the same weekend as the Canberra Classic Boatfest. I had every confidence in Catalina's resilience but co-ordinating the movements of 18 disparate rowers had the potential to out-do herding cats.

The first crew, Ratpack, met on time on Tuesday evening but decided not to row because of adverse winds. They made a start, in ideal conditions, early on Wednesday morning but soon returned as one of the crew was unwell. The third attempt, on another halcyon morning, was successful with a creditable if not record threatening time of 36m 31s.

Friday was always going to be a challenge with an early morning heat on home waters on Lake Macquarie and an afternoon heat on Lake Burley Griffin.

After a dream run from Rathmines to Canberra Catalina became the first St Ayles Skiff to grace the waters of Lake Burley Griffin. The ACT responded to this signal honour by laying on perfect weather, sunny with barely a breath of wind all weekend. A scratch crew, Skiffie All Stars, achieved a creditable time of 45m 32s. Even more impressively the cox hit the start and finish buttons on run keeper at exactly the right moments. The touring party of 9, no names no packdrill, were suitably bouyant that evening and pleased not to need a second, early morning, run.

Saturday's activity for the Boatfest centred on a voyage from Lotus Bay westwards towards the Governor General's House, for which we divided ourselves between Catalina and Bill's 70 year-old fishing dinghy. GG wasn't in, or was wise enough to stay out of sight so we returned to Lotus Bay for lunch and entertainment with sea shanties and a jazz band.

A Saturday afternoon siesta may have been on the agenda for some, but Skiffies are made of sterner stuff so our final crew, Ratpack on Tour, ventured out into the roughest waters the lake could produce on a still and sunny afternoon. Our time of 39m 5s was a little disappointing but attributed to the boat sitting lower in fresh water than salt rather than any short-comings in the crew themselves.

Saturday afternoon also gave an opportunity for members of the public to inspect the various boats. Several were already well versed in the beauty and practicality of Iain Oughtred's designs but it was an opportunity to spread the word about the pleasures and benefits of Community Rowing.

One of the boats in action at the Boatfest was "Enterprise", thought to be the second oldest paddle-wheeler in Australia and perhaps the fourth oldest in the world. An after-dinner speaker gave a fascinating account of Enterprise's career on the Murray and her various modifications and restorations, raising questions about how much repair and restoration is allowable whilst still retaining "originality".

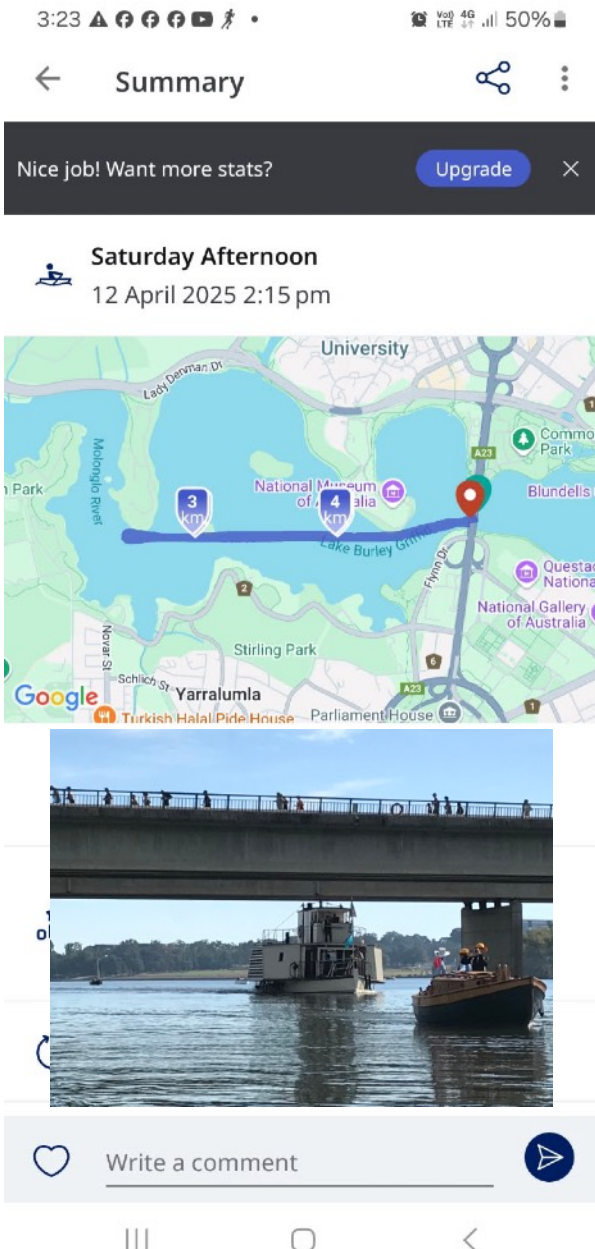
After dinner

conversation continued long and late.

Sunday's schedule was a procession to Kingston Harbour with the rest of the Boatfest fleet, then ventured a little way up Molonglo creek before returning along the Northern shore.

All in all a marvellous but busy weekend. We really enjoyed being involved with both the Australian 5 and Boatfest but hopefully next year we can arrange for them to be run on different weekends, Keith

NB the distant but distinctive skyline of Questacon in the first picture



If any club would like to send through a report on your event, we will try to include it in the SASCRRA News letter. Hope you enjoy reading about whats happening around Australia. Feel free to circulate this newsletter within your club.

