

# Dragons Abreast Sydney

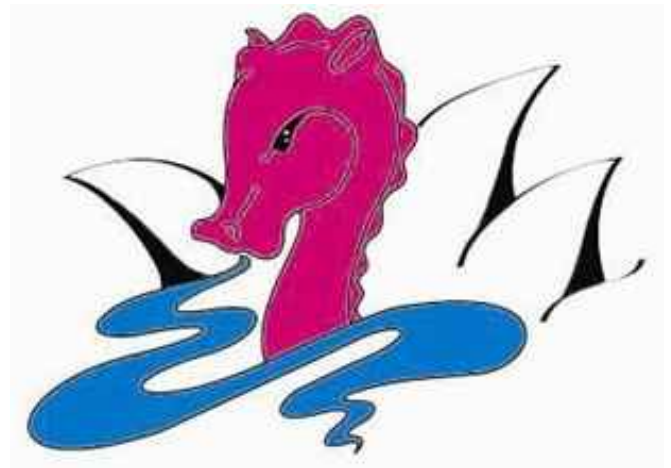
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Hi all,

Well, it was a bit of a shock to the system on our first 2005 paddle last week having to paddle all that residual plum pudding around the bay. I keep trying to believe all those Christmas yummys go into a secret holiday stomach never to be seen again – (maybe next year it will be true?). Isn't it awful how quickly that hard-earned fitness disappears – especially with Chinese New Year is just around the corner – and, of course, we need to be at our paddling best for that!



## Christmas Party at Eugenia's

Well eat your heart out if you didn't make the DAS Christmas party at **Eugenia Raftos's**. We had a ball - it was hard not to - there was a great roll up and you should have seen all the delicious food. Irene was the only one who went for a swim because the rest of us were too busy eating, looking at photos, eating, admiring Eugenia's stained glass work, eating, admiring **Margot Case** and **Robin Shoebridge's** scrapbooking, eating, chatting, eating.....

Well it was just great and Colin and Eugenia were the most perfect hosts. Did I mention **Deb Read's** BBQ'd haloumi and **Brenda Owen's** christmassy sweet chilli, cream cheese and coriander dip? Salads and fruit platters were yummy too - no conscience worries scoffing all the fruit, esp on a long hot evening but we all swore if we ate another thing we'd burst. Well, thank goodness for that special extra Christmas stomach so magically we found room for cheesecake and **Margot Case's** pecan pie, oh, and yes, how about **Sophie Marinucci's** chocolate ganache - just the sight of it generated a stir, with the thick, rich choc oozing out the sides. That really did it - no more, we vowed! That was until the **Petterson twins'** marvellous Christmas cake was unveiled and somehow that vanished in a flash too. Hoo boy! – hope we don't sink the boat at Chinese New Year - lotsa paddling's gonna be needed to work all that off.

Margot had arranged to have all the trophies there on display - for inspiration - and particularly the big perpetual Dragons Abreast trophy from the NSW state championships. It has two plaques on it already – 2003 (inaugural) winners were Newcastle DA – actually it was a composite boat because **Fairlie Stanish** and I helped make up the numbers in their boat. In 2004 Sydney Pink Passion (that's us!) were the winners – I think Margot wanted to make the point that the 2005 plaque needs to read Pink Passion as well! We sat out

by the pool under the evening sky and a lovely time was had by all. Think we even persuaded a few more of the partners to try their hand at paddling (well, after a few drinks they agreed)

But the best bit was just cruising round chatting with everyone - such a happy evening! Special thanks go to Eugenia and Colin for so generously opening their home and their immaculate garden to us all (the garden was so well-behaved that not a leaf dared to be out of place and Eugenia had even planted petunias before leaving for China!).



*Margot Case trying not to look guilty as she nicks off with the pecan pie at the Christmas party, while Kathryn Davis looks on knowingly*

Thanks also to the girls who helped with the washing up, cleanup etc. We were really sorry that **Melanie Cantwell** and **Chris Alexandrou** couldn't make it to the party – they were tied up in another of the endless, thankless DBNSW tasks – this time delivering a new boat to Merimbula.

## Media Tarts Again!

The Cancer Foundation Annual Report for 2004 featured our Social Co-ordinator, **Margo-Lynne Lee** in its patient stories section. It read:

Margo-Lynne and her family. Now clear of cancer for seven years, she was treated at the Sydney Cancer Centre at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital with a lumpectomy, followed by chemotherapy and radiotherapy. At the time her eldest daughter was doing her HSC, while her two other children were in years 7 and 9. "My eldest daughter, Samantha, wrote an article about the experience which was published in Dolly with the headline – 'What if Your Mum got Breast Cancer?', it was a very honest report of the emotions we went through at the time as a family," remembers hospital and study while I was having the treatments."

## Woronora Regatta

This was the first time DAS had ever co-hosted a regatta – and what an initiation it turned out to be.

**Brenda Owen** turned in this report on the day.

"We can all be extremely proud of our efforts last Sunday both on the water and as co-hosts of the event at lovely Woronora. It was a most successful day in every respect. The Dragon Boat community now have a greater appreciation of our considerable talents both in the boat and in the kitchen.



*PenDragons paddler, Julia Ryall, sent us an email after the Woronora regatta saying "the Pink Ladies had the best cake stall ever" – a nice pat on the back for all those who slaved in the kitchen.*

"As we all know these events don't just materialise, they take a lot of careful planning. Our thanks must go to **Tracey Bowne** (and her family) for her amazing organisational efforts.

"The cake stall was a credit to everyone who contributed. We could not have managed it without Tracey's daughter, Brooke and her friend Samantha who just kept on selling while we were paddling. The stall raised an amazing \$491 and not a crumb was left at the end of the day. I think you will all agree with the decision to present Brooke & Samantha with two movie passes each as a way of saying 'thanks' for their fantastic efforts. Samantha is also doing her Duke of Edinburgh and hopefully this experience can contribute towards her award.

"The raffle was equally as rewarding. Thanks must go to everyone who helped out selling tickets before and to those who helped on the day with both the cake stall and selling the raffle tickets – **Brooke Bowne & Samantha** (again), **Sophie Marinucci, Carolyn New, Wilma Kippers, Cynthia Kuiper, Carol Fentoullis, Margot Case, Jenny Longland** and everyone who supported by buying the goodies. The raffle raised

\$494 and was drawn just before the prize giving by **Margaret Cantwell** - Mel's Mum.

“First prize - the beautiful pink pearls donated by **Clare Harris and Ian Renshaw of Dragonfly at Home** - were won by a very happy Linda Barney of Pen Dragons. Second prize - **Claire Hendy's** most sought after Xmas cake - was won by Paul Webster of PD's. Paul whisked it away very quickly, resisting offers to sell it to Sally R (& me). Third prize - the amazing, all singing, pink dragon with the X-factor - was won by Michelle Ward also of Pen Dragons. The



*Our Mistress of Merchandising, Brenda Owen hawking tickets to our super raffle at the Woronora regatta – prizes were the lovely pink pearl necklace donated by Dragonfly at Home; Claire Hendy's superb Christmas cake; and the “all-singing all-dancing” dragon.*

dragon has been packed up & sent to her and I bet she will really enjoy cuddling up to it, listening to 'You Light up my Life'. I'm just very pleased it has finally left our house! Fourth prize - the very pink apparelle (apron) was won by our very own **Geoff Eldridge**. I think Geoff also gets the prize for single handedly buying the most raffle tickets on the day, but then he has a reputation to uphold. Apparently he always wins

something in the DA raffles.

“The racing was fun (even though Mel said our timing was terrible in the first heat) and both DA teams that entered in the demonstration paddle (DA Challenge) were presented with a trophy at the prize giving.

“Our thanks must also go to **Margot Case** for nominating DAS as hosts for the day (giving us the opportunity to raise funds for DAS) and to our co-hosts Corvu and in particular, Kit, who was most welcoming and supportive. The great DA contribution to the marshalling effort should also be acknowledged, as this was a significant and most responsible (& sometimes dangerous) part of the proceedings. Our thanks to **Mick Bowne** (Tracey's), **Martin Hastings** (Wilma's), **Martin Aston** (Angie's), **Bob Stewart** (Irene's), **Geoff Eldridge** (Jenny's) and of course **David Owen** (mine) for their great efforts. Finally enormous thanks must go to **Mel** and **Chris** for their overwhelming, tireless & continuing efforts in support of our team, and **Akal Khalsa** too.

“After arriving at the regatta and locking my keys in the boot of my car, I knew the day could only get better and it did. I had a great time. The location was beautiful (lucky Margot) and so was the weather. Sincere apologies if I have inadvertently omitted anyone. Thanks to everyone for making the day such a success. We definitely gave the other teams a run for their money!”

**Margot Case, Fran O'Brien** and **Fairlie Stanish** enjoyed swimming in the river between races at Woronora, but I don't have any photos of that.



## One to think about

While in DAA we have a great deal in common with our fellow paddlers, the breast cancer experience remains unique for each of us and touches each of our lives differently. A number of our girls have drawn strength from Petrea King's book "Quest for Life" but not everyone knows that Petrea's Quest for Life Centre can offer practical assistance at a deeply personal level. So when **Tracey Bowne** told me she was going there I asked her to write about it for us all:

"Cynthia has asked me to write about my recent experience in the five-day "Spirited Women" program at Petrea King's Quest for Life Centre in beautiful Bundanoon in the Southern Highlands. I am more than happy to do this as I highly recommend it for women who have had a diagnosis of cancer and their female family members, partners or friends who are also welcome to attend.

"The centre is a wonderful place to relax and unwind with Petrea, her partner, Wendie, and their staff and volunteers there to ensure that everyone feels as comfortable and welcome as possible, while providing sessions each day of guided meditation, group counselling and valuable information, as well as beautiful surroundings and delicious, healthy meals.

"I decided to attend to learn how to move on from my experience with cancer with as much confidence as possible with the help of Petrea's advice as a naturopath and counsellor, having herself been diagnosed with leukaemia 20 years ago after being given only weeks to live, and her subsequent dedication to helping people facing life-threatening illnesses and other challenges. 14 other women attended and we became close in a short space of time as we shared tears and laughter and felt comfortable enough in the atmosphere of the centre and with each other to bare our souls about why we were there and our hopes and fears about facing the challenges of the different lives we are now living.

"We learnt about the importance of diet, exercise, meditation, "fluffing ourselves up", making time for ourselves, doing the things we love and bringing peace into our lives by trying to live in the present, rather than worrying about the future or dwelling on the past.

"We also spent time one day putting together our own collage of photos or pictures and words cut from magazines, of people, places and things that are of importance or significance to us. I think most of us were surprised at how much we enjoyed doing this and what an effective way it was of expressing our feelings

and what really matters to each of us. It kept us quiet for hours! I even managed to find the words "PINK POWER!" to add to all the other positive words on my collage. It is a great record of this time in my life and something to look at each day for inspiration.

"At the end of the five days I think we all felt quite sad to leave each other and a bit apprehensive about going home to face our own situations and stresses again but also felt empowered by everyone's support and by what we had learnt and glad to have made so many new friends. I feel very lucky to have been there. I have just turned 44 and, for the first time in years, I am really happy to be another year older! I also feel very lucky to have met so many supportive and inspirational women through Dragons Abreast and other groups. 43 wasn't all bad!"

## Caring for your Grey Owl Paddle

All paddlers are encouraged to buy their own paddle once they decide to join the club and the Grey Owl is the only wooden paddle which DBNSW endorses.

If you don't have a paddle yet, then you need to speak with our Mistress of Merchandising, **Brenda Owen**, who can get one for you (also rashies and other DAA stuff). So once you have taken possession of this wonderful key to paddling fun it seems fitting that we mention the care instructions issued by the manufacturer.

### Do:

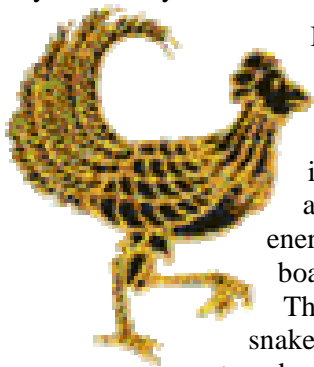
- Wash your paddle with fresh water after use
- Remove wax buildup regularly
- Lightly sandpaper scratches and dents (use light grade wet & dry); Finish off with 1500 or 2000 (w&d); Completely seal with marine varnish; lightly sand again with 2000 w&d; polish with linseed oil (veg oil will do).

### Don't:

- Don't leave it where it can be stood on
- Don't dig it into the sand (acts like sandpaper)
- Don't push off from other boats or rocks with the blade end (use T-bar handle)
- Avoid slapping it down hard on the water
- Warranty covers manufacturer's defects only.

## Chinese New Year Dragon Boat Festival

The Chinese New Year Dragon Boat Festival at Darling Harbour is the highlight of DAS's dragon boating year. This year, the Year of the Rooster, it falls on the weekend of 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> February and you'll kick yourself if you miss it



In case you are wondering about the rooster bit, I have it on best Chinese authority that those born in the year of the rooster are high-powered and energetic but they do tend to boast and to bully others. They are compatible with the snake and ox, but do avoid the cat and rabbit. Furthermore I am reliably told that the Resilient Rooster is YANG – “I Know Better”. Now I'm not going to tell you who's born when, but these are the rooster years: 1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005 and 2017.

Well, we DAS paddlers are going to need all the energetic and high-powered roosters we can find for the DA challenge at Chinese New Year this year. The Canberra girls are running two intensive paddle practices a week, according to their website, and a further four regular practices a week – yikes! Entry forms for the Chinese New Year races will be out soon, so watch for them and **book in quickly**.

## Hands Up for Helping at CNY

It's great having these races laid on for us – but they only work with a lot of volunteers. Since our races will be on the Sunday, (when other clubs' volunteers help) that leaves all of us free to lend a hand on the Saturday. It's good fun and easy – last year I was at the end watching out for boats which veered out of their lanes. Margot Case was in her element blowing the hooter on the finish line. The jobs are simple but necessary – so please put your hand up as a volunteer, and partners and family are gratefully accepted as volunteers too. Please email me the times you will be available.

## Put your Mum-in-a-Boat Race

This popular race is running again this year – entry forms will soon be out for that too – so crash tackle your mothers or children and get them to join you in this fun race – you might both win a medal but for sure you will both have fun!!

## Taking on the Doctors

This will be a hoot! The BC Specialists vs the Patients Race at Chinese New Year. Already we have nearly a boatful of BC specialists who have agreed to race us and no doubt by the time you read this there will be more (**Pam Bell** is verrrry persuasive).

Please could you all send me contact details for your surgeon, medical oncologist and radiation oncologist so we (or you) can talk them into this wonderful, quirky event. We figure it's a great way to educate those specialists to understand a little of what we have to offer their patients. We are also hoping it will catch some media attention and help us in our ongoing quest to raise breast cancer awareness (and DAA awareness). If you have any media contacts please also contact me urgently with that information as I have no pull in the media at all.

## Chinese New Year Banquet

It simply wouldn't be Chinese New Year for DAS without out a CNY Banquet. **Margo-Lynne Lee**, our social coordinator, has booked a room for 60 people at the Regal Restaurant (walking distance from Darling Harbour) on the Saturday evening – that's Feb 19<sup>th</sup> (you will have need a banquet after the hungry work of volunteering at the race venue on the Saturday).

## Chemosavvy Visitor

At our first two paddles of the year we were fortunate to be joined by a visitor, **Diane Perry**, from the Chemosavvy Team in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Isn't that the most wonderful name – Chemosavvy?

Diane is a very experienced sweep and told us some of the challenges of sweeping a dragon boat in the rushing icy waters of the Red River in Winnipeg. While they are obviously off the water when the river freezes in the winter – when that ice melts apparently the spring



*Our Canadian visitor Diane Perry, from the Chemosavvy team in Winnipeg, Manitoba with Jo and Jenny Peterson,*

been a doddle for Diane, sweeping for DAS on Blackwattle Bay.



*This is the Thursday twilight paddle gang (at least the ones last Thursday) – with Chemosavvy visitor, Di Perry, front right.*

We are hoping those DAS girls who make it to the 10-year anniversary in Vancouver this year will invite more breast cancer paddlers to join us for a paddle here in Sydney when they come DownUnder on vacation.

## 2007 World DB Titles in Sydney

Another reason for volunteering at Chinese New Year is to get in practice for volunteering at the 2007 World Dragon Boat Championships here in Sydney. This will be totally awesome – like volunteering at the Olympics – and there will be paddlers coming to Sydney from all over the globe.

There is a 2007 volunteers meeting on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> January at 3pm at 7 Underwood Rd, Homebush. I'm putting together a list for Mel so she can know how many to expect – so far I have **Pam Bell, Margot Case, Carol Fentoullis, Anne Gates, me, Margo-Lynne Lee, Eugenia Raftos, Robin Shoebridge and Lyn Tyson**. Seriously, your calendar can't be full for 2007 already - so let me add your name to the list.

## The Ord River Paddle Marathon

Did you see the Darwin DA girls on the "Australian Story" when they did the Ord River Marathon last year? I reckon it's something every paddler needs to do ... at least once! This year it's on June 12<sup>th</sup>, if you are going to be in the Top End, well, Kununurra WA actually. If everyone's taking their holidays to Vancouver for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, then maybe next year we could get up a contingent from DAS – let's have a think about it!.

## National DB Titles in Canberra

**Fairlie Stanish** is already taking bookings for people who want to be in on the accommodation for Canberra this year. Before long the race entry forms will be out and you will want to get your entry in quick smart (think it has to be in by the beginning of March). So hope you have marked Friday 8<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April in your diaries already?

It was so much fun last year – a bit like a school excursion, having car-pooled down to Canberra together and all traipsing off to the events together, going out in huge groups for dinner etc.. Some girls came with their partners and some even brought their kids – and most of us stayed in the same apartment complex so we could stay tuned to who was going where.

## BOOBS Exchange

That's what our crafty ladies are calling themselves – it stands for "**B**uilding **O**n **O**ur **B**eautiful **S**kills". The next BOOBS Exchange meeting is Friday January 28<sup>th</sup> and everyone is welcome.

This month, **Kathryn Davis** will host a "Patchwork Surprise" day at her home at Concord West. No experience is necessary!

When : Friday, 28th January

Time : 10am - 4pm

BYO

- lunch & coffee mug
- \$5 to cover costs of materials
- Basic sewing kit - needles, cotton, pins, scissors etc.

(if you have one - if not don't worry!)

Please ring Kathryn on 9743 5174 to "reserve a seat at the table" and she will give you her address and further details.

*You won't be expected to make anything nearly as complicated as the quilt Margo-Lynne and Kathryn are showing off here*



## Welcomes and Birthdays

Since the last newsletter several new people have taken the plunge and joined up as full members of DAS. A very warm welcome **Neil Millgate** (Di's husband, who actually joined when she did – sorry, Neil), **Margaret Cantwell** (Mel's Mum), **Jo Fizell**, **Helen Pallis**, and **Helen Rabone**. Plus I am delighted to welcome back **Kay Gailey** who, due to work commitments, was unable to paddle all that time we practiced on Sundays (we missed you, Kay).

So who's ticked over another year in January? It's happy birthday wishes to **Sally Lynch**, who is the only one on my current list (apologies to anyone else, I don't have the latest members or their birthdays yet)

## For That Little Extra Help

...when you need it!

**Dear Lord,**

So far today, I'm - doing all right.



I have not gossiped, lost my temper, been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or self-indulgent. I have not whined, complained, cursed, or eaten any chocolate. I have charged nothing on my credit card.

But I will be getting out of bed in a minute, and I think that I will really need your help then.

## Your January To Do List

Well that's about it for this month. Don't forget to:

- Contact your surgeon, med oncologist and rad oncologist because we need you to persuade them to sign up to paddle in our Specialists vs Patients DB race. Contact me for more details.
- Sign up and pay your Chinese New Year race entry pronto
- Sign up and pay quickly if you want to come to the DAS Chinese New Year Banquet – it's limited seating and bookings only taken with payment
- Sign up and pay for your Mum-in-a-Boat race entry.
- Sign up for the Nationals in Canberra before March or you will miss out
- If you are going to Vancouver remember that you will not get in a boat if you have not paid your race entry to DAA as race entries close off any day now – just showing up there will leave you on the sidelines, unfortunately.
- Give items for Pamper Pack in CNY Raffle to Margo-Lynne Lee - any other raffle-able items welcome also
- Post-Christmas reorganisation – check through your cupboards and unwanted Christmas presents and set aside things for our stall at the Rotary Trash and Treasure market later this year

Cynth...

## DAS CALENDAR 2004/2005

Month	Date(s)	Event	Location	Details
Jan 05	Th 27 <sup>th</sup>	DAA talk at Blacktown Zonta Club	Blacktown	Guest speaker: Cynthia Kuiper
	Fri 28 <sup>th</sup>	DAS Craft Group – BOOBS Exchange	Kathryn Davis' house in Concord West	10am - 4pm Ring Kathryn on 9743 5174 to book and she will give you her address and further details.
	Sat 29 <sup>th</sup>	Meeting for 2007 World Titles Volunteers	7 Underwood Rd, Homebush	At 3pm – pls let Cynthia know if you will be attending.
Feb 05	Sun 13 <sup>th</sup>	Chinese New Year Parade	Sydney	Team entries required by 28 <sup>th</sup> January
	Sat 19 <sup>th</sup> & Sun 20 <sup>th</sup>	Chinese New Year Regatta	Darling Harbour, Sydney	Race entry forms now out, prepayment essential – must also be financial member to paddle in DAA race.
	Sat 19 <sup>th</sup>	DAS Chinese New Year Banquet	Regal Restaurant at 347 – 353 Sussex St	Limited seating – bookings only accepted with payment. Email Margo-Lynne for booking form -
	Tues 22 <sup>nd</sup>	DAA talk at Middle Harbour Zonta Club	Middle Harbour	Guest speaker: Cynthia Kuiper
	Sat 26 <sup>th</sup>	DAS Newbies Paddle	Banks St, Pyrmont	Registration essential
Mar 05	Sun 20 <sup>th</sup>	NSW Corporate Games	Nepean Rowing Club, Penrith	
Apr 05	Sat 2 <sup>nd</sup>	NSW State DB Titles	SIRC Penrith	
	Fri 8 <sup>th</sup> - Sun 10 <sup>th</sup>	AusDBF National Titles	Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra	
	Sat 23 <sup>rd</sup> to Sun 24 <sup>th</sup>	Dragon Festival	SIRC Penrith	
Jun 05	Fri 24 <sup>th</sup> - Sun 26 <sup>th</sup>	Abreast in a Boat 10 Year Anniversary	Vancouver, Canada	Contact Yvonne Dolman or Michelle Hanton
Jul 05	29 <sup>th</sup> Jul - 7 <sup>th</sup> Aug	IDBF 6th World DB Racing Championships	Berlin, Germany	TBA
Aug 05	7 <sup>th</sup> - 16 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup> Australian Masters Games	Adelaide	<a href="http://www.AustralianMastersGames.com">www.AustralianMastersGames.com</a>