

Dragons Abreast Sydney

Sydney Coordinator – Cynthia Kuiper
13 Telegraph Road, Pymble, NSW 2073
Ph: 9449 6855
Email: cynthiagkuiper@yahoo.com



Lining up on the winners' dias at the State Titles at Penrith on April 2

News Flash

WOW! Awesome! DAS took out 1st and 3rd places in the DA Challenge at the State Titles last weekend in Penrith. Passion and Power crews (latter including four Newcastle girls and a Canadian) all came home jingling medals. DA Challenge Final times were: First: Passion at 2.27.27; Second: Central Coast at 2.50.596; Third: Power at 2.58.034 and Fourth: Flaming Dragons at 2.58.440 (how close was that!).

Interestingly, our winning time this year was 18 seconds faster than we did last year in the same race.

Plus Passion earned a place in the State Women's Open Final (ie against the young and immortal) – the first time ever! Had we been allowed to compete in the Women's Open Final, and done the time we did in the DA Challenge, we would have come fifth – not too shabby, eh?

Right, Team captain Anne Gates with the trophies and (below) DAS Passion makes the leader board.





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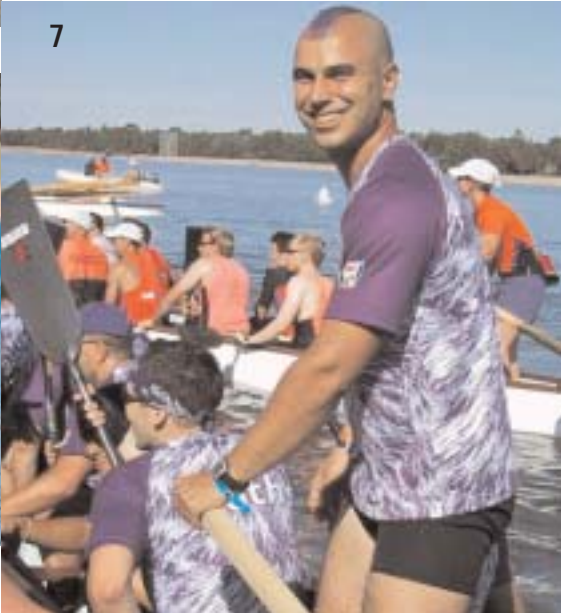


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(1) The triumphant Passion on the water.
 (2) Lining up and ready to win!
 (3) Deb Read revs up DAS after the first heat
 (4) Happy faces after the race.
 (5) What an honour to have Abreast in a Boat paddler, Janet Warren, paddling with us at the State Titles in Penrith. Representing the founding club of our BC survivor paddling movement worldwide, Janet was in Sydney at just the right time to paddle with us. A music teacher at home in Vancouver, she was touring in Australia with a Canadian schoolgirl rugby team as one of the chaperones. Together with Jenny Longland, Janet stroked Power to victory at the State Titles
 (6) Power racing at top speed iwth Nancy Sage drumming and Rosemary Riley (Newcastle) sweeping)
 (7) Sweet victory indeed for crowd facourites, Sloths, beating Snatch – Zeus deservedly over the moon!



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Gourmet Goodies on the Gravel for Newbies

Our second DAS Newbies day for the year was originally scheduled for the end of February, but at the last minute we realised every one of the sweeps was tied up elsewhere and so we had to postpone the paddle for a week.

Seven brave new souls (plus two offspring and a husband) were able to make the alternate date and seemed to enjoy the morning despite the white-knuckled (but properly supervised) first-time sweep trainees on the back of the boats.

Post-paddle we shared the usual DAS-special homemade morning tea of gourmet goodies on the gravel with the Newbies in our salubrious parking lot.

First-timer, Anne Poppelwell, a supporter friend of Sue Gibson, was an immediate convert and hasn't missed a practice since (she had a birthday in March and we didn't know it – happy belated birthday, Anne).

DAS's Quiet Achievers

It's been a month of quiet but substantial achievements actually. You've all paddled time and again with Jo Petterson sweeping expertly for us at practice and in races. Jo started sweep training when she used to paddle with Port Hacking, before DAS started, and she was certified shortly after. But our first DAS paddler to start training as a sweep was Carol Fentoullis. Carol got the hang of sweeping remarkably quickly under Chris Alexandrou's expert tutelage. He said she is "just a natural!"

Well I'm delighted to announce that she passed both the practical and written exams in March and gained provisional sweep certification. Now it's just a matter of putting in the hours and sweeping a number of races before she's fully certified.

On top of that, building on her existing Sport & Rec. coaching certification, Carol undertook DBNSW's Level One Dragon Boat



Coaching Course and passed that with flying colours too. Jo Petterson had just been appointed NSW Women's Masters Coach and she did the coaching course and exams at the same time as Carol. So now DAS can be justly proud of having grown two of its own qualified sweeps and two of its own qualified coaches. (Not that we didn't already have expert coaches in Mel Cantwell and Chris Alexandrou both of whom have patiently nursed DAS paddlers along week after week since early 2003 – but they aren't actually members of DAS – they are just unbelievably kind to DAS and generous with their time).

Learning to Sweep

Learning to sweep is challenging but also a lot of fun. The sweep's position is one of responsibility for the safety of the boat and all the paddlers and is a natural progression from learning to paddle. I enjoyed learning all the calls to get the boat moving and stopping.

Having Zeus (Chris Alexandrou) and James Whisker share their expertise and experience was a real help.

The sweep test (for provisional accreditation) was not hard at all. After 10 hours on the water of practical time you can book in for the accreditation assessment. It is a 20 multiple choice questions paper (for which all the theory is printed on the web) followed by a short "hands on" in the boat with some paddlers. So the paddlers are very sympathetic and cooperate with the sweep being tested. Simple skills such as starting and stopping the boat, reversing and a head count are asked of the sweep candidate.

I am looking forward to obtaining my full accreditation. This happens after sweeping in two races in two separate regattas. Thanks to all the girls for supporting me through my training. I definitely recommend learning to sweep. Go for it!!! It's a real buzz!!!

Carol Fentoullis



Media Tarts Again

Golly, we've been in overdrive promoting DAA/DAS and breast cancer awareness lately. We were thrilled with the coverage given to us in the March 4 edition of Australian Doctor magazine. It read:

Paddling up to fight cancer

By Kirsten Fogg

Last Sunday marked the inaugural Doctors versus Patients Dragon Boat Race at the Chinese New Year Dragon Boat Festival in Darling Harbour, Sydney, which saw breast cancer patients take on their specialists.

Dr Martin Lee, a solo GP in Hurlstone Park, Sydney, joined the crew of medical oncologists and other specialists in one of two doctors' boats. They raced against the women's Dragon Abreast team, which included Dr. Lee's wife Margo-Lynne, who had breast cancer eight years ago and started training with Dragons Abreast in 2003. She admitted there was a bit of rivalry with her husband: "When they beat us, he had a great big grin on his face."

The event was organised to boost public awareness and to debunk misconceptions that upper body exercise after breast cancer treatment can cause lymphoedema.

A lot of girls, when they come out of treatment, think life will never be the same – they can't seem to get back the confidence in their bodies," says Cynthia Kuiper, the event organiser. That changes when they're with others who've had similar experiences. And it doesn't matter if a woman is feeling strong or weak, all are welcome aboard.

The idea was started by a doctor in Canada who called it Abreast in a Boat. It celebrates its 10th anniversary later this year in Vancouver.

The money raised from the Sydney event will fund a 1300 number that breast cancer survivors can call from anywhere in the country to inquire about Dragons Abreast, which has more than 600 members Australia-wide.

Eugenia Raftos pulled off some great coverage in the April edition of the Strathfield Scene newspaper (the reporter made a bunch of factual errors, but they don't matter too much):

Dragons Abreast are cancer survivors on a mission

Eugenia Raftos is one of thousands of Australian women who have suffered from breast cancer. This no-nonsense woman sees other women and labels them as "amazing" without the thought that perhaps she is exactly that – amazing!

As part of the Dragon Boat team, "Pink Passion", Eugenia helped her team of 20 ladies to not only reach the finals of Breast Cancer Challenge in the Chinese New Year Dragon Boat Festival at Darling Harbour last month, but to win. Every woman in the Breast Cancer Challenge event has experienced breast cancer of some type and the boat race attracted 12 entries – or 240 ladies, from NSW and the ACT. And they are good at their chosen sport.

Since being diagnosed

dling a go. I've been addicted ever since and I've have been lucky not to have suffered from the swelling in my upper arms."

Dragon boats are just over 12 metres long and the "pink ladies" as they are known in the boat world are serious about their boating and their health.

Together with Jenny Petersen (sic), whom Eugenia describes as "absolutely amazing", both women were selected for the Australian Master's team last year to compete in Shanghai, China, the obvious home of Dragon Boat racing. The average age of the Australian team was 50 years old and the Aussie women did us all proud, reaching the finals and coming in 6th overall.

We did damn good," Eugenia explained. "We train three times a week with our regular teams at home, but for the Australian Master's before we went to China we only got in two training sessions, se we were really happy with our result."

Pink Passion with Eugenia and Jenny on board with eighteen other cancer survivors will compete in the Australian Dragon Boat Championships in Canberra on April 9th and 10th. Both ladies will also take up their paddles and leap into the Masters NSW boat going for selection to the Australian Master's team.

If you would like more information on Dragon Boats, please call Cynthia Kuiper on 9449 6855 or Mob: 041 449 6855.

In addition to the aforementioned print exposure in March, a number of us were involved in presenting DAA/DAS to various community service groups. On International Women's Day Margot Case, Jenny and Jo Petterson received a rousing reception as guest speakers at a huge VIEW club meeting (150 ladies). Pam Bell did a great job as a guest speaker at the March BCAG (Breast Cancer Advocacy Group) meeting and I was able to speak at both Middle Harbour and Botany Bay Zonta clubs. Plus Lyn Tyson kindly arranged two great sessions for me – addressing the volunteers at the Sydney Adventist Hospital.

It would be great if you would all keep an ear out for opportunities like this where we can provide guest speakers and spread the BC awareness message and the good news about DAA/DAS. If you aren't comfortable speaking to a group yourself, please pass the details to me for follow up.



nosed with breast cancer three years ago and the resultant surgery and drug treatment, Eugenia, who is now 58 years old, took up paddling in a dragon boat after she read an article by Dr McKenzie recommending women with lymphoedema would benefit from exercising their upper arms.

I'd only ever been in a boat twice before in my life, said Eugenia, "But when I read that it was common for women to experience their arms swelling after lymph nodes were removed, I thought I'd give dragon boat pad-

Crafty Ladies to tie themselves in knots

Is there no end to the talents of our DAS demoiselles? Seemingly not! After having knocked over calligraphy last month, on April 22nd they (the BOOBS Exchange) will be teaching aspirants some intricacies of embroidery - how to make perfect grub roses, French knots and candlewicking (which I'm reliably informed has nothing to do with wax). Being a sucker for punishment, yours truly will be showing up with the usual two left thumbs and sheepish grin. See, if they put up with me, that proves you don't have to be a craft wizard to come along and enjoy the day.

Everyone is welcome to attend - no experience necessary! Bring: basic sewing kit/scissors; \$5 to cover costs; and your own lunch & coffee mug. Please ring Margo-Lynne Lee for more details and to "reserve" a seat under the grapevines - Ph: 97644720 or 0409 462 426

To recount the details of our calligraphic contortions, I leaned on someone who prefers to remain anonymous:

I have been asked to write an article for the "MAG" on the BOOBS Exchange's latest craft day.

The dictionary states - "Calligraphy the art of beautiful writing" and if any of you have been lucky enough to get a card from the twins it is just that - so beautifully done in such a professional manner.

We all turned up at the Twins home, Jenny and Joanne had everything ready for us, pens, paper, and ruler - we were primed and ready to go and we started with all the enthusiasm of little kids at school

Attending with Joanne and Jenny were Robin Shoebridge, Margo-Lynne Lee, Cynthia Kuiper and myself who shall remain anonymous for reasons disclosed below.

The chatter stopped as we all honed in on our lesson, using a pen with a wide tip we had to write all the letters of the alphabet - the faces made whilst this was going on was fun to see, one has to get their tongue in the right spot! I should explain this is an EXACT craft,

and the expertise given by the twins was excellent - they know their stuff, more than I can say for yours truly as my pen had a mind of its own! Then we switched to the smaller tip and it was so hard to do what was required. When I sneaked a peek at the others their work looked good, all going in the same direction and soooooo neat!!

It was only after we all oohed and ahned over Margo-Lynne's work that she confessed to having done it before - traitor!!

I decided I was better? at the Border "stuff", this was different designs that one can use around cards etc but I certainly have to do a lot more practice before I attempt to do one. We were given a card with a design stamp on it of our choice, and we had to WRITE OUR NAME ON THE BACK!!!! neatly of course - I wimped out, but Robin took to it like a duck to water and produced a lovely script - (don't you hate people who do things better than you). Robin has had previous experience in card making and designing and her work was excellent. Cynthia also produced some nice script, even though she says she has never done it before, it looked great, so keep it up Cynthia, like the patchwork class you are finding it not that difficult to be "CRAFTY".

All in all we had a fun day, lots of laughter and talk being banded around, we really do have a nice time, so if any others want to join in - do so - you learn something new (like me - well you can try anyway) there is always scope to learn new craft. As Margo-Lynne stated if anyone wants to do a night class let her know and she will try to arrange it - just watch for the "Smoke Signal"!

The anonymous writer of this article has decided to stick to the things she knows she can do well - after all - you cannot be good at everything can you? Beautiful writing indeed!!!!!!!!!!!!

Just a little correction to make to the above contribution - Margot Case's calligraphy was just fine - she simply has a problem with the impossible standards she sets for herself!!

Ask Deb- our very own paddling Naturopath

Fingernails and Health



Your fingernails grow at a rate of approximately 0.1mm per day, and are primarily made of keratin, a protein that is also in your skin and hair. If you don't eat enough protein your general health will suffer and your nails will reflect that. Protein is found in meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, dairy products, legumes and pulses and small amounts in nuts and seeds. You need a gram of protein for every kilogram of body weight and you must have a minimum of 50grams a day to be healthy. A serve of fish, meat or poultry provides about 20 - 30 grams of protein, a cup of legumes or rice is about 15 - 18, 100g of tofu is 7 grams, a glass of milk or soy drink is 6 grams and a handful of nuts 2 grams. To make it easier for you, as a rule of thumb, eat some protein food at every meal.

Apart from protein you need to ensure you have enough minerals. Most nail problems reflect deficiency of some kind.

Soft nails - Calcium and/or magnesium. These minerals add strength to nails.

Split, peeling nails - Folate deficiency - eat more leafy green vegetables; Essential fatty acids - eat more seafood and drizzle olive oil on food. Can also be under active thyroid or poor digestion.

Brittle nails, spoon shaped nails - Iron deficiency. This is very common and because iron transports oxygen around your body, deficiencies affect circulation which is important for nail health.

White spots - Zinc deficiency, (or you might have bumped them), eat more seafood as the best sources of zinc are shellfish.

Vertical ridges - Silicea deficiency, drink nettle or horsetail tea; eat stringy foods such as celery, rhubarb, green beans, cabbage and squash.

Horizontal ridges - form during times of severe illness or malnutrition

Rough skin around nails - possible vitamin C or B vitamin deficiency. Eat fresh fruit and vegetables every day.

Other tips:

- Keep nails moisturised.
- Cut them when they are soft, such as when you get out of the bath or shower.
- Don't push the cuticles back, they protect your nails.
- Don't wear false nails they encourage infection and leave the nails soft underneath.
- If you develop a fungal infection apply patchouli oil daily.



Photo calligraphy craft day:
The copperplate example in hand was the copy sheet, not the end result!



Milestones

Birthday wishes are due this month to Nancy Sage (1st), Helen Rabone (2nd), Anne Gates (15th), Janice Cave (22nd) and Wendy McLeod (24th) – hope I haven't missed anybody or mixed up the dates.

Last Thursday was the twins' birthday and Sally Lynch cooked up a pair of delicious cakes to help us all celebrate with them after the paddle. Given our wonderful club facilities, the cakes had to be served from the boot of the car but that didn't stop the wee candles from singing out the Happy Birthday tune as they burned.

You'll all be delighted to know that Anne Popplewell, a friend of Sue Gibson, was an instant convert to paddling and became a member of DAS straight after her newbies paddle. We hope you love it as much as we do, Anne.

Cautionary Tale for the Vancouver-bound

You have probably all realised that our paddles, the fancy carbon fibre ones and the lovely Grey Owls, are imported. If you are thinking that you might like to purchase a paddle while you are over in Canada, please be very sure you know what specifications you need – there are strict rules for what paddles are approved for use at regattas by IDBF and also by AUSDBF.

You don't want to come home with a love-

ly new paddle that you are not allowed to use in competition. (Do you remember seeing some clubs having to present their paddles for inspection before racing at Chinese New Year? Some were disallowed because they didn't conform.)

All the paddles we source through AUS-DBF (via Melanie Cantwell) are approved for use anywhere in the world – that makes it easy and there is no argument.

Weekly Coffee/Brekkie at Starkey's

Don't forget that, after paddling each Saturday, whoever can make it heads off to Starkey's for post-paddling coffee/brekkie. After all, we deserve it after all that hard work out on the water! It's easy parking there, nice clean loos and much cheaper than the Glebe coffee shops. It's very informal, just show up if you can and everyone is welcome. It's so relaxing and friendly, just sitting around with everyone and chatting! If you haven't found your way there yet, ask if you can follow someone, or cadge a ride – but do come along!

Whaddya think of these ideas?

Our ever-inventive Social Coordinator, Margo-Lynne Lee, has come up some great ideas for off-water DAS events later this year. Keep your ear to the ground for further developments regarding a bike ride; a games night; the Spit to Manly walk; lunch at The Little Snail; a Pizza and Movie night; and a market/garage sale fundraiser.

If any of you have contacts or information that would help in planning or staging these

activities, please speak with Margo-Lynne or offer to lend a hand.

Re the market fundraiser – start sorting through your cupboards now for those things you are unlikely ever to use/want again! Just put them aside waiting for our Grand Trash and Treasure Market Day – see DAS even helps you keep your house tidy!

Postcard from abroad

Chinese New Year saw us farewell Helen Pallis, who left Oz the following day to go home to New Zealand to live. She sends this greeting to all:

Helen Pallis here. I got great footage of the races on Chinese New Year and when I get settled I will send photos and videos through. I am just in an internet cafe at the moment. Hope all is well with you all. Thanks for being great people and we did have fun.

I haven't caught up with the "Pink Gals" here yet but hope to soon.

Big hugs and look after yourselves

Helen Pallis

DAA needs our help!

We've all gained so much from our involvement with DAA, and now it's time to give something back! As a totally volunteer-run organisation DAA is growing rapidly. Individual clubs around the country, like DAS, are blossoming due to the positive national program. However, whilst our member groups are growing, the financial support at the national level is more or less static. DAA does not wish to increase fees for paddlers but phone, postage, printing, promotion and office expenses are rising dramatically and DAA desperately needs more financial support -- so we can continue reaching out to even more breast cancer survivors.

As you know from the email, all DAA clubs are being asked to run a DAA fundraiser in May. Other clubs have already committed to Pink Parties, themed events etc and we need to come up with something. However, because we've just had such a big fundraising push over Chinese New Year we are reluctant to lean on you to sell more raffle tickets to your friends or to have a profit-making party and lift money off the membership that way. So instead of asking you each to have individual fundraising parties we thought perhaps we could raise money from the community in a way that would see the donors getting some benefit too.

So as a club we've decided to get behind the Entertainment Book concept. This is an annual publication offering great discounts at zillions of restaurants, resorts and services like dry cleaners, and a range of fun activities. People really do get great value out of Entertainment Books so they are fairly easy to sell. Each Entertainment Book sale will generate \$12 for DAA, as our nominated beneficiary, so it would be great if each of use could sell multiple copies.

Stay tuned for word from Brenda Owen, our Mistress of Merchandising, who will be launching this program the week after the Nationals. With the usual DAS enthusiasm driving it, I'm confident we can show our appreciation in this way and make a great contribution to the continued success of DAA.

Thanks to those who contributed to this month's newsletter – it's the only way to keep it readable. Special thanks again to Kerry Enemark for making it look so beautiful. Please remember, all interesting tit bits (poor choice of words there?) and photos always gratefully received.

Paddles Up!

Cynth...

DAS CALENDAR 2005

Month	Date(s)	Event	Location	Details
April	Tues 5th	Nepean Zonta	Penrith	Guest speaker: Cynthia Kuiper
		North Sydney Zonta	North Sydney	Guest speaker: Pam Bell
	Wed 6th	Sydney Secondary College Mothers & Daughters Breakfast	Balmain	Guest speaker: Cynthia Kuiper
	Fri 8th - Sun 10th	AusDBF National Titles	Lake Burley Griffin Canberra	29 DAS girls competing
	Fri 22nd	DAS Craft Group (BOOBS Exchange)	Strathfield	Embroidery: grub roses, frenchknots and candlewicking. Contact Margo-Lynne Lee for more details
	Sat 30th	Young Women with BC Seminar	St George Hospital	Guest speaker: Cynthia Kuiper
May	Sun 29th	DAS Champagne Picnic Breakfast	Lane Cove National Park	Contact Margo-Lynne Lee
June	Sun 12th	Ord River Dragon Boat Marathon	Kununurra, NT	http://members.westnet.com.au/billh/kdbc/marathon.htm Surely there has to be one of these in every dragon boater's life? Maybe '06?
	Fri 24th-Sun 26th	Abreast in a Boat 10 Year Anniversary	Vancouver, Canada	Contact Michelle Hanton on hanton@ozemail.com.au
August	Sat 6th- Sun 7th	IDBF 6th World DB Racing Championships	Berlin/Hamburg, Germany	TBA
October	Fri 7th-Sun 16th	10th Australian Masters Games	Adelaide	www.AustralianMastersGames.com
	Wed 12th	Hornsby Zonta	Hornsby	Guest speaker: Cynthia Kuiper