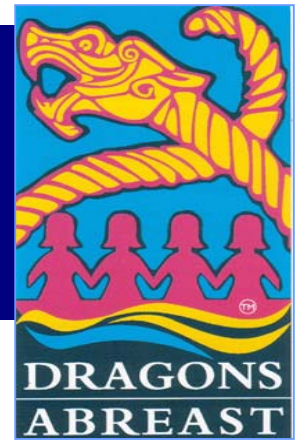




Dragons Abreast Australia National News Bulletin

Aug/Sep 2005

Celebrating Life!



Hello everyone,

It was lovely to be able to catch up with so many of our paddlers at our AGM held in Brisbane on Saturday 27th August. State reps and coordinators spend a very busy and intensive day together and DAA is poised for another very busy and interesting year.

We are now 27 member groups – welcome aboard to all our new members! For many of you, this may be your first newsletter and for those DAA renewals that now have email addresses – it means we can now send you the newsletters!

This is designed as an 'internal' newsletter and submissions are most welcome! The hard copy 'glossy' is designed for wider distribution but, due the financial restrictions is not sent to each member – you need to ask your coordinator for a copy of each edition if you require one, as we do send each coordinator a big bundle.

Please remember to keep those press clippings coming – we save them all and we'd hate you to miss out as we compile our archives.

All coordinators have now received their DAA Manuals for 05/06 – this contains the operating framework for DAA member groups across the country. If you would like to see a copy, ask your coordinator.

I'd like to say a big thank you to Dragons Abreast Port Lincoln & Abbey King for inviting and funding me to be their guest speaker at a fundraising dinner held on Friday 2nd September, and also for the opportunity to deliver DAA Workshops – it is through the workshops program that we are able to all stay connected with the national vision and mission.

Our Angel's Abreast team has gained two new members with the passing last week of DAA members Marion Johnson from Port Macquarie and Louise Woodruff from Hobart – they will be sadly missed but we are all enriched for having known them – I am sure you all join me in sending the condolences of DAA to their families.

Details of the 2007 logo competition are attached with this newsletter and I do encourage you to pass these details on to any talented members of your networks – this is a great opportunity for a budding designer to get their name out there!

Michelle Hanton

Amazons in the West...



It's September and we can bid farewell to winter and 'hello' to a new paddling season. No doubt all teams have been in the water and paddling hard for most, or all of the cooler months. While the regular dynamics of taking the boat out for training raises our individual heart rates and fitness levels, it doesn't provide much excitement to report to our Pink Paddling Partners around the country. So... its time to be a little creative in letting you know about the Amazons. With the start of a new season it seems fitting to share these thoughts with you, our extended **Pink Family...**

Pink Paddlers Rock On

Paddling with the Amazons is a lot of fun. *Peta*

I've made new friends, learnt new skills and had a lot of fun! *Chris*

New friends, camaraderie and support; this team has it all. *Jennie*

Kindness, listening caring and sharing; a team like ours can move mountains. *Averill*

Life... it's no dress rehearsal. *Yvette*

Amazons are a great bunch of women. The solidarity, fun and spirit are wonderful. *Catherine*

DAA is a great outlet for dealing with a breast cancer... it's no longer scary! *Kim*

Young or not so young; the Amazons give me encouragement, laughter and fun. *Anna*

Paddling gives companionship & positive involvement with breast cancer information. *Deb*

Awareness and opportunity, support, knowledge and participation paddling with the Amazons have it all. *Tanya*

Down times fade away every time I paddle with this amazing group of women. *Jill*

DAA's 'Australian Story' was the catalyst for me to phone around to find the Amazons and it's great. *Jude*

Love of water, exercise and being in the company of good friends is a wonderful way to get fit. *Rianne*

Exercising, to be in a team, to talk about breast cancer, or not! It's fantastic to be with this group of women. *Jackie*

Reading a research newsletter lead me to paddling. It gives me fun, fitness and friendship. *Margaret*

Similar experiences and positive attitudes show that people can survive breast cancer and still have fun. *Glenys*

Really amazing women paddle with the Pink Ladies. *Kerry*

Our team is terrific. We have a great bunch of girls. I find it such a buzz! *Jacqui*

Companionship through paddling gets people back into physical activity in a supportive environment. *Janette*

Keeppaddling for fitness while learning about breast cancer issues. *Barbara*

Our girls are terrific – they take me as I am. They mean so much to me. *Tatiana*

Not only I am proud to be part of such an inspirational group I love paddling with the Amazons. *Jan*

Greetings from Newcastle...

It was dragons mixing with reindeers when Newcastle Hunter Dragons Abreast gathered together with family and friends to celebrate Christmas in July.

Fundraising was part of the event with lucky door prizes and raffles, but the main game was to have some jolly good fun and consolidate the friendships of our growing group. The outfits as you can see ranged from sheer elegance to crazy, with that Christmas touch.

Robyn Gambrill and her husband John volunteered to host the night at their home and gathered their family together to make the whole night work. Their son, John took care of cooking the meat, while daughter-in-law, Michelle put the rest together. Jade and Dylan, their grandchildren were also part of the team, serving up an elaborate and beautifully presented repast.

Karen Hutchinson decorated the room and four huge tables for this festive occasion and Margaret McNaughton was fantastic, leading the way with her squeezebox and lively vocals with the inevitable sing-a-long of Christmas carols between courses.

Dele Gilmore welcomed everyone and Alison Matthews presented our sweep and coach, Rosemary Riley, with our best wishes and a gift for her efforts in the upcoming Berlin event. Several of the Newcastle Hunter Dragon Boat members were also there to enjoy the evening with all its "bonding" benefits. A Secret Santa concluded this wonderful occasion.

On the water, we are getting good attendances to training sessions through the winter months and are looking forward to challenging the Greater Lakes and Port Stephens Councils at a charity event in Tea Gardens on September 17. The following weekend we will be out on Lake Macquarie at the Westpac Helicopter Regatta hoping to inspire ladies from the Toronto area to give paddling a go. Then on October 16, we will be paddling on Throsby Creek in the Newcastle Corporate Regatta.



We are also busily preparing for our next fundraising event on October 22, our annual Fashion Parade, where some of our lucky ladies will tread the catwalk in wonderful spring fashions from Amy Reid Boutique at The Junction.

Happy paddling,

**Janet Kerr and
Alison Matthews**

Newsflash No. 1 from Down Under **Breast Cancer Survivor Regatta – 28 - 30 September 2007**

The Organising Committee met at the Sunshine Coast (temp. 26C) on Friday 26 August, 2005 and is extremely excited and confident of presenting an event to remember.

Some very preliminary facts:

- Race site – Lake Kawana is located on the spectacular Sunshine Coast, approximately one hour's drive north of Brisbane International Airport.
- The hub for ceremonies, entertainment and accommodation will be centred in and around the city of Caloundra.
- Attractions of the Sunshine Coast include:
 - ◆ Surf beaches patrolled by Aussie 'icon' lifesavers;
 - ◆ Australian Zoo legend, Steve 'Crikey' Irwin;
 - ◆ Underwater World – where you can dive with the sharks;
 - ◆ The famous (or infamous!) Ettamogah Pub;
 - ◆ Aussieworld Adventure Playground
- Women wishing to attend who are not part of a team, will be accommodated in composite teams
- **The important stuff.....Cost?**
This is currently being investigated and we plan to launch a dedicated webpage on 24 October, 2005, which is ABC Day (Australia Breast Cancer Day). This webpage will provide links to all you need to know such as accommodation, tourist information, transport from Brisbane to Caloundra, registration details which will include attractive 'early-bird' discounts.
- Guaranteed lots of fun, paddling and adventure.

We are excited! The Expressions of Interest have been most enthusiastic and encouraging. We want to welcome you everyone to Qld, Australia and encourage you to stay a few weeks for a great holiday. The slogan on the Sunshine Coast is: **"Beautiful one day, perfect the next!"**



COMPETITION:
A competition is up and running
– we are searching for the
*Official Logo for the 2007 World
Breast Cancer Survivor Event.*
Michelle will have attached the
entry form.
Come on ladies, put on your
creative hats and see what you
come up with.



Flamin' Dragons Abreast - Port Macquarie Inc held their 1st Birthday party last weekend 13.8.05 We had a windy early paddle on our river, followed by the AGM , a quick few hours at home to Glam up (& cook)

for a party at our social director's home Saturday evening. What a year we've had.



Robin, Gwen and Noelene

Mackay QLD Joins DA...

Welcome aboard to Mackay Dragons Abreast – North Queensland!

We are up and running in beautiful Mackay. Our first formation meeting welcomed 31 people, many of whom have signed up. It was agreed that we would accept the generous offer by Sunset Bay Outriggers members to teach us the skills for paddling and allow us to use their equipment. Our first paddle was held Sunday 21st August at Eimeo Beach. There is also an opportunity for members to participate in weekly swimming training and some gym work.

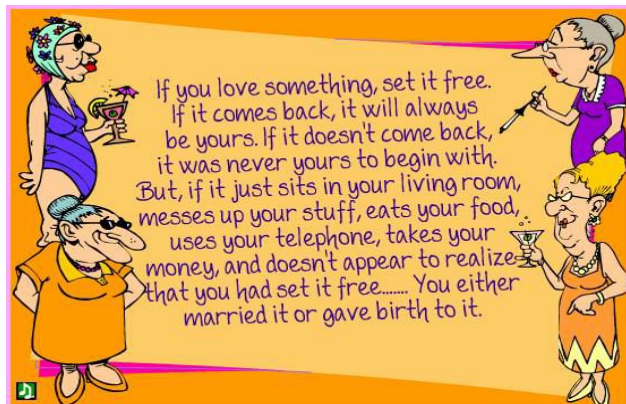


We are currently working on planning an event to be held during Australian Breast Cancer Week to publicly launch Dragons Abreast Mackay and increase awareness of early detection of breast cancer. More details about that at a later date.

We are pleased to welcome the husbands of some of the women and our many supporters as members of Dragons Abreast Mackay. Already we have had some very generous offers of help from the Mackay community. It is a very exciting time for us!

We had a wonderful afternoon at the Seaforth Bowls Club fun day and raised \$2000 which was presented to Dragons Abreast Mackay. None of us thought it would be as much as that so we were all very excited as you can imagine.

Cheryl Machen



A couple more from Canada...

Eight paddlers from Port Lincoln share their excitement.

When we all arrived at False Creek for our first practice session, 4 of our group had never raced before nor paddled with any other group and 7 of us had never travelled outside of Australia to a Dragon Boat Regatta. Excitement & nervous tension was evident as we climbed into a boat with the Adelaide girls & members from other parts of Australia, we were the **"Aus Abreast"** team. Elspeth was our sweep & Wendy our drummer, with much effort & concentration; we formed into a team & had a wonderful time. The whole weekend was a learning experience that the girls will never forget, racing against other DAA teams & sports teams from all parts of Canada and achieving a very good time for our last 500m race, we felt like we had won, even though in our final race we came 4th, that didn't matter, we had competed and proved to ourselves that we could "do it".

The following week we travelled around and had some wonderful experiences before heading back to be part of the Harbour Dinner Cruise, more practice but in different teams, paddling and partying. I paddled in the "Boobiella" team and the other girls were in a Supporters race in which they thoroughly enjoyed.

Saturday morning of the "Abreast in a Boat" 10th Anniversary Regatta arrived, the Pt Lincoln girls headed down to False Creek early to man the DAA merchandise stall. Weather was wonderful, paddling conditions great and an inspirational time was had by all.

Friday evening was the Welcome Dinner, it was truly incredible when all of our Survivors were together and with all our Supporter family and friends, the crowd was huge. The most spine tingling moment of the weekend was when Dr Don Mackenzie was introduced and in one movement, everyone present stood as one and gave him an incredible ovation. From a group of 20 Breast Cancer survivors in one boat to almost 1600 survivors standing before him, his feelings would have been very hard to describe.

Saturday evening was the "Biggest Pink Party" we have ever been to, music was great, and everyone wore themselves out dancing and enjoying themselves.



We all now have so many memories and souvenirs of the time we had with so many paddlers that we can't wait for September 2007 on the Sunshine Coast so we can encourage so many more of our Pt Lincoln paddlers to come with us and meet you all.

Sandra Sinclair

CENTRAL COAST IN VANCOUVER 2005

It is hard to know where to begin to describe the experience of participating in the Alcan Festival and the 10th Anniversary regattas in Vancouver.

The Alcan was a great warm-up event for us with eight CC ladies and our fantastic male supporter, Allan Quigley competing in the mixed races against some very strong mixed crews. We combined with the Illawarra, Newcastle, Armidale and Sydney ladies and our admirable steersperson (or 'sweep' as we call it), Michelle Hanton. We were thrilled to place third in one of our heats but didn't manage to place in the consolation final. The scale of the event was like nothing I have ever experienced before, with over 80 races over the weekend and 8 or 9 boats in each race. With such a monumental task at hand, I was really struck by the politeness and efficiency of the Canadian officials. We were well accepted by the other crews and definitely made an impact with our fluoro jackets and stand out uniforms. People were so amazed that we had come all the way from Australia!! We got some good TV and newspaper coverage as well.

The AIAB regatta was another experience altogether with 1592 breast cancer survivors representing 7 different countries and comprising over 60 teams. There was a very strong feeling of the shared experience of all these women with the strength, resilience and determination to live life to the fullest. If the Pink Party on the Saturday night was anything to go by, I'd say 'party animals' would best describe us. All the organised functions were fantastic and the sea of pink was really an awesome sight.

We did manage to paddle amid all the socialising and this time ten CC ladies combined with Illawarra, Newcastle, Armidale, ACT and Michelle once again. We gave it our all and were inspired by all of you who couldn't physically be there in the boat with us. You were definitely there in spirit, with little reminders like "Is Raelene in the boat?" and "This is for Kathy". We managed to get a first in the fun relay race and our supporters were elated in winning their event in the 'Rough 'n Ready Aussies' team.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who supported us to get to Vancouver, with every thought, word and deed. Every little bit was appreciated and we couldn't have done it without you!!

Claire McConaghy

