



DRAGONS ABREAST

A Project of the Breast Cancer Network Australia

WEEKLY UPDATE

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Hello everyone!

Lots to report this week but let's start off with an account of the wedding last Saturday in Canberra - I believe this is a first for Dragons Abreast - guards of honour at a wedding!

ACT News - Katherine and Ted were married late on the afternoon of 21 September, a perfect Spring wedding. The bride looked stunning, the groom looked handsome and the couple were encircled by loving family and friends.

Eight other members of Dragons Abreast ACT formed a guard of honour outside the church, complete with either pink lady T-shirts or bright pink rashies, paddles held high in jubilation. Some wonderful photos were taken, which we will bring to you next time.

Dragons Abreast joined the happy couple at a champagne reception in the rotunda and garden of Katherine and Ted's home. The Equinox moon appeared in the sky and even the light clouds turned a brilliant pink in honour of the occasion.

Katherine and Ted are flying to Europe to celebrate their new life together, returning to Canberra (and to paddling we hope!) in a month or so. We wish them well. *Jan Skorich*

SA Media Coverage - thanks to a friend in the library, I received the attached cutting which, although is a little out of date, I thought everyone would like to share!

Our Dragonboat ladies win gold

SOUTH Australia's Pink Ladies have won their division of the World Dragonboat Championships in Rome. Dragons Abreast, a team of 22 SA breast cancer survivors aged 29 to 70, took gold in the 250m World Breast Cancer Division last week, winning by 4.18 seconds. The team will compete in the 500m final today.

Competing was a challenge in itself, with the team raising \$50,000 for the trip in less than four months. The team will return to Adelaide on Sunday. "We want to thank everyone for their support in our journey to celebrate life after breast cancer," team spokeswoman Lynn Hill said.

The Advertiser www.theadvertiser.com.au Monday, September 9, 2002

ASSA ABLOY Henley on Todd Regatta - was an absolute hoot! Amongst a host of Scandinavian backpackers, Korean documentary makers, German tourists, American defence personal and South African 'Vikings', Dragons Abreast managed to stand out in the crowd!

Members of **Bosom Buddies**, **Alice Springs** and Dragons Abreast from **Darwin** and the **Central Coast NSW** joined together to put on a fantastic display, illustrating how we can all live full and active lives despite having faced a breast cancer diagnosis (and despite the fact that most of us have never run before!!)

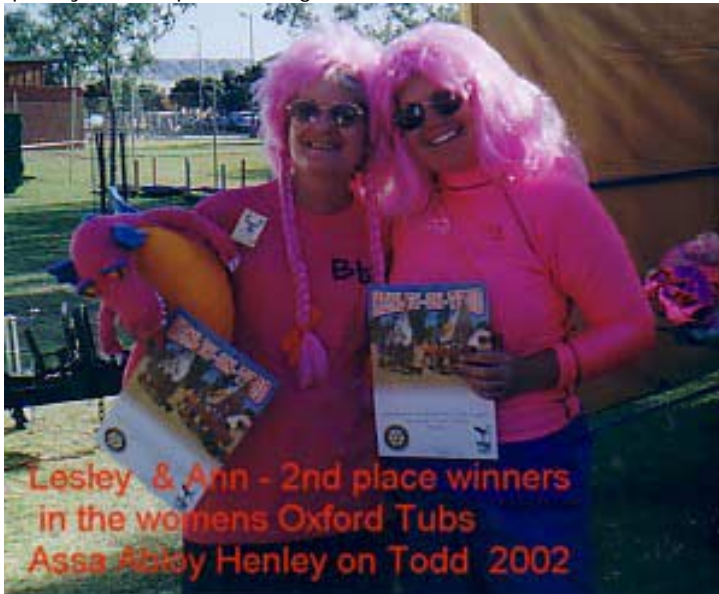
The weekend started with dinner on Friday night, where **Liz Locke** - Chairperson of Bosom Buddies - presented us with our 'boat' all neatly packed in a plastic Target carrier bag! What a sight to behold as we quickly opened the bag - the other patrons of the restaurant did not bat an eyelid! Even though our magnificent craft more closely resembled a giant pink petticoat! It was HOT pink and resplendent with frill round the bottom!



Saturday morning rolled around and saw us anxiously assembled at the designated car park ready for the march through the town! We were very fortunate that the team had come to the attention of **ASSA ABLOY** - major sponsors of Henley on Todd I can hear you all muttering - ASSA who? What do they do? They are the world's leading lock group with more than 100 companies, with **Lockwood Security Products** being the most well known from the Australian Pacific region.

Lockwood very generously **donated \$1,500** to Bosom Buddies in Alice Springs to help spread the message! This also meant Dragons Abreast, was placed towards the front of the parade, just behind the ASSA ABLOY team - we marched through the Todd Street Mall, being 'shot' at from various angles by the crowds and other competitors all packing water pistols! As we chanting our "We're Pink Ladies" song, we made sure everyone became aware of our presence and message! They could not miss us in those hot pink rashies, our bright pink boat, Dragons Abreast banner and BCNA umbrella's and pink silhouettes!

The races were a sight to behold - we had no idea what we were in for, but were game for anything! Our team actually came 2nd in the Oxford Tubs - where you 'paddle' what is a sort of canoe on rails through the sand! A shovel is used as a 'paddle'! At the end of the rail track, you quickly stand up and change direction!



AUSTRALIAN MASTERS GAMES 2003 - CANBERRA
 I am delighted to report that the organizer has been in touch today & confirmed they will include a Dragons Abreast race and the Flowers on the Water Ceremony. It is still 12 months away - but wonderful that the organizers are already consulting with us! It makes a nice change for them to be approaching us!

The team was photographed and video taped widely! We appeared on the ABC National News - albeit rather briefly - but I've had messages from across Australia saying we were spotted! There were also local radio interviews in Alice and Darwin.

In terms of a PR exercise, this was a wonderful success. We met several survivors from various parts of Australia and indeed the world. Many approached our stall to chat & it was just wonderful to get to know our 'sisters' from Central Australia a little better. They have promised to join us next year at some of our Darwin regatta's on real water!

UPCOMING WORLD EVENTS - the hot topic that everyone wants to know about! New Zealand in March 2003 & Shanghai in August 2003.

Mr, Zhang announced in Rome that breast cancer survivor teams will be warmly welcomed in Shanghai! There will be a complete category of racing for us - which is absolutely fabulous news! It means that as a survivor team we will get several paddles over both the 250 and 500m distances! Our Canadian & American sister are very excited & this is bound to be another fantastic PR exercise for breast cancer!

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The BCS Races in Rome and Shanghai are just ordinary races that happen to take place at the same time and venue, they are not BSC World Championship races.

The IDBF provides a platform for us to race internationally - but that is all!!!! These races are not World Championships for BCS!

In no way should they be promoted as a BCS "representing their country at the World Championships!" The crews do not need to be 'selected'!!!!

Shanghai will be a wonderful event. I am told dragon boat racing in China is really spectacular. This is sure to be a fantastic trip & I encourage all members to consider going to either compete or to spectate and cheer on the premier Aussie crews - let's show how we can support them as they have so wonderfully supported us over the last few years!

NEW ZEALAND - March is fast approaching! There are several USA and Canadian teams planning to attend, so this should be a wonderful opportunity to interact with these amazing women - without having to travel too far from home!

The organisers have advised they will provide paddles and their boats are somewhat different to ours - I believe the gunnels are a lot higher and that one needs to kneel to paddle! Another experience to add to our repertoire!

There is not a lot of difference between these and the Grey Owl and you shouldn't notice any change when paddling. Graeme Rountree - Coach, Busting with Life, NZ.

I have today received a copy of the races Rules & Regs. I've not had time to read them yet! If anyone else who would like a copy let me know and I'll be happy to pass on!

We are just finalizing some prices for accommodation etc & I'll get back to you soon! Pink Phoenix, Hope Afloat from the US are planning to attend as are Sistership from Calgary & Dragons Abreast Toronto from Canada.

PENANG - 25th Anniversary Races 7 to 8th June 2003. We have not put this on the Dragons Abreast but those not going to Shanghai may want to give this consideration. Races are 500m and they run to IDBF Rules. A Dragons Abreast team could enter either or both of the two categories below. Note that as an IDBF event you would have to have an all female crew which includes the steerer (sweep).

Penang International Women Race In Big Boats (20 crew: 18 paddlers, 1 drummer & 1 steerer)

Penang International Women Race In Small Boats (12 crew: 10 paddlers, 1 drummer & 1 steerer)

If you would like further details I'll be happy to forward on the accommodation packages and full information from the organizers.

Michelle Hanton
National Coordinator