

Dragons Abreast Australia National News Bulletin

February 2007

Celebrating Life!



Hello all,

Another month has shot past and here we are almost in March! What a fabulous affair Chinese New Year in Sydney was! It just keeps getting bigger and bigger! Dragons Abreast Sydney put on a fantastic dinner and entertainment as well as a splendid effort on the water. For many members this was their first CNY – and what a ball everyone had! Congratulations to our composite teams and a big thank you to Judy Richmond, Moira Cannell, Cheryl Machen and Robyn Stephenson & John Turner who organised these teams. Lots of photo's out next issue and on the website soon!

HOT OFF THE PRESS!!! Wonderful news from the news people themselves! We are delighted to announce that Australian Newsagents Federation (ANF) and Bill Express have chosen Dragons Abreast as their charity of choice. ANF is the main Newsagency representative body in Australia and on behalf of its members Australia-wide they are supporting Dragons Abreast Australia. ANF members are clearly identified by the ANF "N" logo – as see here.



Bill Express is an off-line bill payments network that enables consumers to pay their bills in newsagencies across Australia.



Look out for the ads on the screens – they go to air on the 5th March and **are playing at over 1600 newsagents** across Australia!! When you see one, do remember to mention you are involved with DAA and that we are so grateful for their support!

We also encourage you to pay your bills via Bill Express and when you see the ANF logo, thank the newsagency for their valued participation in so generously supporting Dragons Abreast Australia whilst checking out the advertisement for DAA!!

PINK PENNIES - We are just thrilled with the response to the Pink Penny Appeal which has seen us receive many offers of assistance, small and large donations. The wonderful people of Bribie Island (where there is no DAA group!) have rallied to the call – not only with pink pennies, but also the pledge from Bribie Island Spiritual Church of masseurs and reiki practitioners for Abreast in Australia – thank you!!

Thanks also to Dragons Abreast Tasmania, Twin Titties, Missabittatitti, the Caloundra Visitors Information Centre and the lady Resort Owners in Caloundra for their donations – large and small – all of which are most gratefully received!

I hope everyone has had a chance to look at and navigate our new [Abreast in Australia](http://www.dragonsabreast.com.au) website –go to www.dragonsabreast.com.au and click on the 2007 logo to enter the site. It is very user friendly and contains a lot of useful information!

Michelle Hanton, National Coordinator

DASYDNEY – WE CAN DO ANYTHING!!!!

The informal Twilight regattas on Blackwattle Bay are wonderfully special events. The January Twilight Regatta was no exception. It was a beautiful evening with the sun slowly setting behind the city silhouette and the Anzac Bridge towering overhead. It's quite magical to be out there on the red and gold water in the middle of a fleet of dragon boats, even if we are paddling our little hearts out.

DASydney fielded a mixed masters team (4 men & 16 women) and a women's masters team. 2000 meters seemed forever when we were paddling but we all felt quite elated when we crossed the line and more or less surprised that we had made it.

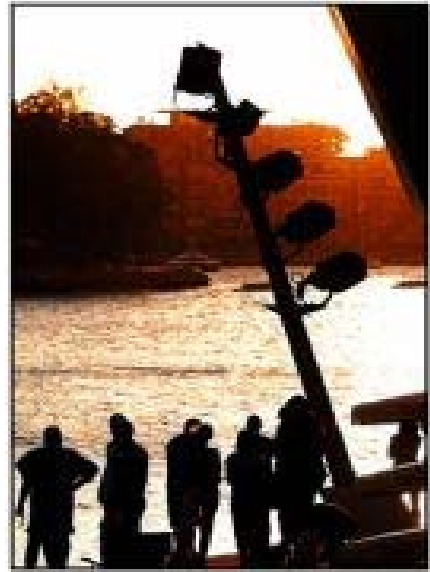


Photo: launching the boat – no wonder we're getting so strong!

encouragement and determination we need to make the distance.

While some of the other crews in our race may have dominated in terms of strength and experience, I felt we won the battle for style and panache. We completed the race in a great time, with the fantastic camaraderie between all of the other paddlers in the boat ensuring that "newbies" like myself always felt a part of the team."

Yes, Stephanie summed it all up; that's what paddling with Dragons Abreast is all about..... friendship, camaraderie, team work and supporting each other.



For several of the paddlers, this was their introduction to racing (and what a tough introduction!) Stephanie Barratt, a brand new paddler and virgin racer described her experience.....

"On Friday 19th January, I was lucky enough to be involved in my first Twilight Regatta. It was a beautiful night with the water being quite calm (which is always a bonus!). As I was sitting in the boat at the starting line, I thought to myself how I never before realised just how far across, the bay really was. Although the distance seemed daunting, there were plenty of inspirational words from our fantastic sweep to keep us going. She definitely gave us all the



Photo: Women's Masters crew backing out

Crafty Ladies



Photo: Sometimes there's more nattering than crafting

Not content with being passionate paddle trags, a small but happy subset of DAsydney members get together regularly as a craft group.

Originally conceived as a winter paddling substitute, the craft group now meets year-round - we paddle through the winter now too. Much of the time, our focus is on scrap booking (who doesn't have millions of paddling photos, and for the grandchild-endowed it's even more urgent to figure out ways to have an outlet for all those photos). However, some do the most exquisite embroidery and/or quilting. The one constant is lots of noisy nattering and laughter.

MARGARET'S VERY PINK SURPRISE WEEKEND

It looked like a pretty full week for me, Margaret Lynch, in Adelaide. The highlight was to be a dinner on Thursday with other Breast Cancer survivors interested in participating in the Abreast in Australia Regatta being held in September in Caloundra, Queensland.

By mid week however it had been decided by my home team, **Warriors Abreast Adelaide** that I should head for Port Lincoln on Friday to take part in a training session with Michelle Hanton and Alan Culbertson from the Northern Territory Institute of Sport. As I have paddled with this wonderful group before, I couldn't miss this wonderful opportunity.

What a fun and fitness filled weekend. It started with on the water training Saturday morning and again during the afternoon, when one-on-one instruction was included. Sunday morning saw us on the water once again, eager to put our new skills into practice.

Spare time was filled with technical instruction and of course that fabulous Pt. Lincoln hospitality, any wonder I fell into bed before 10.00pm exhausted?

Dragons Abreast Pt. Lincoln certainly knows how to pack the most into a weekend. I am so delighted to have had the opportunity to be involved in it all and look forward to paddling with the team in Caloundra.



DRAGONS ABREAST PORT LINCOLN



The Port Lincoln Marina was a “sea of pink” as paddlers were instructed in all aspects of dragon boat paddling on the weekend of 10th & 11th of February.

Members of Dragons Abreast Port Lincoln were put through their paces by Alan Culbertson from the Northern Territory Institute of Sport when he accompanied Michelle Hanton, National Co-ordinator of Dragons Abreast Australia on her visit to Port Lincoln.

Paddling between fishing boats of all descriptions and often accompanied by a pod of dolphins and their young is a unique experience not found in many areas of Australia.

Avoiding the many Tuna feeding boats based in the Marina that travel to feed the tuna currently in the farms outside of Boston Bay, was an experience for Alan that he will never forget.

The Port Lincoln “Pink Ladies” had a wonderful weekend which has been a bonus leading to our involvement in Caloundra for Abreast in Australia 2007.

Greetings from the National Capital!

Cranking up the new year hasn't exactly been “plain paddling” here. Our drought continued, our beautiful lake kept falling and unfortunately, so too did our assistant coordinator AND sweep, Robyne Kellett. Robyne fell and seriously damaged her ankle at work, rendering her out of action on the sweeping front (both house and dragon boat). To boot, most of our other dedicated sweeps were away overseas or tending sick relatives and the CDBA's new boats were still out of action for various complex reasons. Keeping training sessions afloat has been a major undertaking, requiring out-of-the-ordinary preparation, patience and planning by Coordinator Judy and Assistant Coordinator Robyne, who has now, incidentally, mastered the art of virtual sweeping from her living room with her foot in a moon-boot!

Caloundra is on all our minds. We've discussed how we can best fundraise through “Pink Pennies” activities and how to sell the balance of our pink M&Ms, the profits of which are earmarked for Caloundra. We'll be hitting Kingston Bus Depot markets on 4 and 18 March. Our Mary-Lou is thanked for her sterling efforts with the M&Ms last year. It is mainly through her efforts that we hope to be able to raise around \$2000 for the Caloundra event.

To date, the ACT has provided considerable support for Caloundra. DAACT forwarded \$2,000 to DAA from our successful Challenge Regatta held in October 2006. Also at this regatta, the Zonta crew and supporters raised \$3000 to be used to fund a workshop at Caloundra.

But we haven't forgotten how to have fun! With Gillian Styles as team captain, “the voice on the land”, we lined up at the Canberra Dragon Boat Association regatta on Lake Burley Griffin on the 17 February. The second regatta coming up will be part of the Canberra Day event (10-11 March). There will be 200 and 500 metre races over both days.

After that, we will focus on the Nationals at Penrith at Easter. We are currently determining member interest in competing as a Masters Womens' team in the 200 metres race.

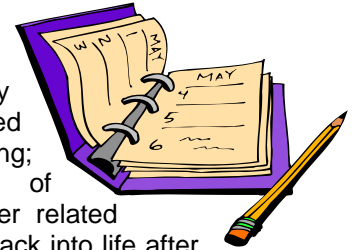
We know that volunteers are needed for regattas. All members have been asked to consider volunteering if they do not intend to participate as paddlers.



To Di Wright for the generous donation of \$500 as a contribution towards the purchase of a Cox Vox communication system for GoAnna. This is a wonderful gesture which will be appreciated by us all but most especially by the sweeps, whose voices will be less strained with this new system in place. Warm thanks also to Cindy Young, our PR diva. Cindy organised the purchase of the two Oxfam boats for Cambodia, just before Christmas using DAACT member donations. Her drive in pushing through this gift made us all feel better people at Christmas.

For your Calendar

ACT Cancer Council Forum is to be held from 9am to 3 pm on Saturday 24 March at the National Library Theatre. It is for people within the region with any kind of cancer diagnosis, their partners, families and carers and other interested people. The Forum program includes topics such as nutrition and well-being; pain management options during and post treatment; the role of complementary/alternative medicine in cancer treatment; update on cancer related clinical trials; sexuality and cancer; life and death; and survivorship: getting back into life after cancer treatment. DAACT will have an information table at the Forum. Bookings are essential as places are limited. You can register at chl@actcancer.org.



Relay for Life. This 24-hour event fundraises for cancer research support. It is to be held on 30 and 31 March in Canberra. (DAACT teams are currently being organised by committee members, Helen and Debbie.)

Regional News: DAA ACT and Southern NSW

In recent times we have had women from the regions surrounding ACT join us to paddle on beautiful Lake Burley Griffin. Prospective members from Goulburn, Burra, Queanbeyan and Wagga paddled with us in January and February, and we hope they join us again on March 4 and April 22, our designated days to welcome women from the Greater Southern area to paddle with us.



Jan Skorich – Regional Rep

Jan Skorich travelled to Wagga to help inspire the paddlers there to set up a new team, which is in the making, and we will hear more from them soon. In the meantime, the Wagga women are joining us at Chinese New Year. Several have signed up for Caloundra.

On Sunday 18 February, five ACT women travelled to Ulladulla to compete in the local dragonboat regatta, and to meet with prospective DAA paddlers on the South Coast. You'll hear more from this region soon. Teams are likely to start in Bateman's Bay, Nowra/Ulladulla and Moruya. The Merimbula and Illawarra teams were also in Ulladulla, A great big pink presence hit the town that weekend

Finally! - Some News from Victoria

WHAT A FABULOUS FUNDAY DA GEELONG PUT ON!!!!!!!!!

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE GEELONG GIRLS - WELL ORGANISED, FUN, GREAT COMPANY - A MIGHTY SUCCESSFUL DAY on 11/2/07.



Some 80 paddlers with reps from Ballarat, Bendigo, and Melbourne & Peninsula DragonFlies were in attendance - 4 composite teams were formed, well mixed so we could all socialise as well with our hosts from Geelong. A round robin of 200m races against each team was conducted plus the very exciting sweeps race. This was topped off by a delicious spread of food -with party bags handed out to all women.



These very sad photos are of "Lake Wendouree" - our valiant Ballarat team is certainly challenged - but is hopefully finishing their boat & enquiring about paddles - somehow I think a rainmaker is a priority!

Our premium event - the Melbourne International Dragon Boat Festival at Docklands will be held on Sunday 11 March. We will be joined by a welcome visitor - our National Co-ordinator!

The final event in our calendar over 31/3-1/4 is the Mile High Championships on beautiful Rocky Valley Dam at Falls Creek where Albury-Wodonga Bravehearts is anticipating a strong challenge from a combined DA Vic team!

NEWS FROM THE ILLAWARRA.....

We have had a very busy exciting start to 2007 firstly the weekend at Wyong where we paddled with Pittwater Pinks on the Saturday-thanks girls for having us- and we had a great training session on Sunday with our friends from Central Coast. On Australia Day we once again had our stall at the Shellharbour Council Breakfast by the Lake where we successfully promoted ourselves and our Support Group. Many people showed interest in what we do as well as buying raffle tickets and guessing the number of jelly beans. Here we are proudly in the pink.

Our next Regatta is at Ulladulla where we have our own Illawarra team entered and we are very happy to welcome Julie who has moved down from the Central Coast. Of course Chinese New Year. Then our own Shellharbour Festival of Sport, with Dragon Boating being held on 3rd March to which you are all invited-we'd love to see you.

This year we are raising funds to buy our own boat and have been busy organizing a Pink Dinner Dance to be held on 18th May at Dapto Leagues Club. If any of you are in the area and would like to attend we can guarantee you a fun-filled entertaining evening.



And From Twin Titties Townsville.....

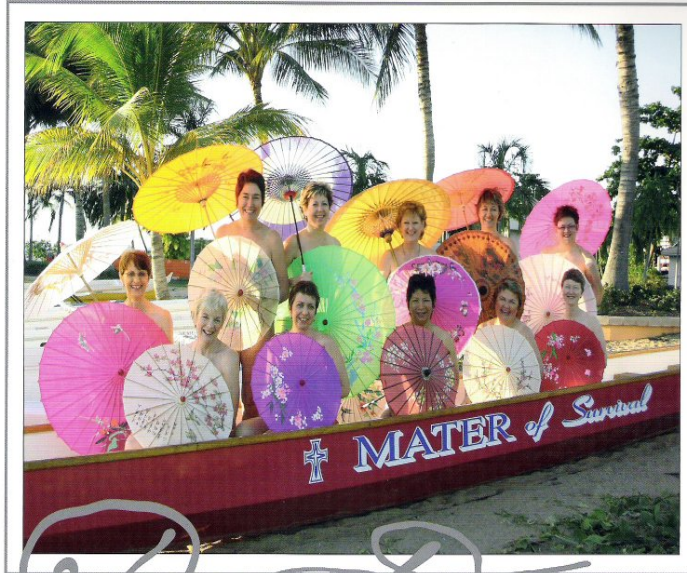
Happy New Year and welcome back to another year of paddling, friendship and fun. As we begin to dry out after our few weeks of good rain we can look forward to some serious paddling on the Strand. We have had a bit of a slow start to the year because of the rain however our paddling was also interrupted for a week when our two sweeps, Chris Billingsley and Cheryl Oats went to Brisbane to undertake some further sweep training and an opportunity for accreditation. While neither Chris nor Cheryl was accredited over that weekend they are well on their way. A special thank you to Janelle Gamble, National Coordinator Dragons Abreast Australia who arranged accommodation for Chris and Cheryl when in Brisbane. Janelle is known to most members and she has been a great support for our group.



While down south, both Chris and Cheryl attended a regatta on the Hinze Dam, in the Gold Coast Hinterland. At the regatta they both experienced what it is like to paddle in a dragon boat at full speed and really understand the power a dragon boat with twenty burly men can have. Chris and Cheryl both agree that the weekend was an eye opener and a fantastic experience. I feel it was a great opportunity for some of the clubs down south to realise that we are up here in the far north.

Painted Dragons Calendar

We are now wrapping up the calendar sales and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all club



Painted Dragons 2007



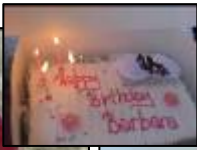
Twin Titties Breast Cancer Survivors and Supporters Calendar

members who have assisted in the production, distribution and sales of our calendar. It has been an enormous project, probably much bigger than we could have imagined and it required a great deal of time and effort on club members to sell at the markets, Harvey Norman, Sportscene and elsewhere and to monitor and collect monies for all of the outlets. Thank you to all those people who have supported us throughout this project. These include club members' families, friends and their many contacts and the Townsville community who purchased our calendar. I have been told by so many people that they think it is absolutely beautiful. I am sure you have all had similar experiences.

In Sydney on Darling Harbour on February 24 and 25, eight Twin Titties members will take part in the Annual Chinese New Year Dragon Boat Regatta. This year Townsville paddlers will join with a fairly large group from Mackay to form a North Queensland team.

Pendragons Ahead Newsletter

Pinks on Sunday 21/1, who sadly said goodbye to one of their paddling



Wow! What a lovely day we shared with Pittwater mates. We thank them most sincerely for their hospitality and hope to return the goodwill really soon. The sausages were delicious. Thanks to our Sharon, we celebrated Barbara's birthday with a yummy cake and a "bra" with a gorgeous dragon pinned to the front - for the undies drawer!

For the weekend of 17 & 18 February we



travelled to Ulladulla to participate in their summer games. Saturday included a training session on a rather windy, rough Lake Burrill and finished with a great BBQ at the holiday house of Julie's brother. Thank you so much for letting us stay at such a beautiful spot on the shore of Lake Conjola.



This AGM is riveting!

We held our AGM on the spacious verandah, much to the delight of our spouses, and vacancies were filled. Good luck for a great year girls!



Sunday started early, arriving at Lake Burrill at 8am. Our first race was after 9 and we powered home into first position with our trusty Jan C at the sweep and our drummer Lyn. We then shared our skills with Canberra Orphans, as they needed extra numbers - most of us paddled in 4 races!



We were competing against mixed teams and though we missed out on a trophy, we had a wonderful day. Thank you to Fiona, Julie, Toni, Robyn, Sarah and Joy from the Pendragon Sports crew for helping us have a great

day.



Jan G's Fruit Cake

- 1kg mixed fruit (include nuts if you like),
- Soak overnight in 2 cups of orange juice,
- Add 2 cups of SR flour, mix well and bake in a 180° oven for 1¾ hours.
- NO fat or eggs! Delicious – Enjoy!