



Dragons Abreast Australia National News Bulletin

October 2006

Celebrating Life!



Hello again,

What a busy month everyone – lots of Pink Happenings around the country! I am very much looking forward to winding now after our frenetic October activities with the weekend at EcoPoint Myall Shores with my family. This is shaping up to be a great weekend (17th and 18th November) with a variety of activities including a coaching session with Gavin Godfrey, stretch and meditation with Darren Ma, sweep training and of course some social races and plenty of chance to just sit back and relax! If you'd like to join in the fun make your booking direct with Myall Shores resort and ask for the dragon boat rate – visit www.ecopoint.com.au to see all the resort has to offer.

Did you all see the Pink Ribbon magazine – attached to the Woman's Weekly from Woolworths? Our DAA stars on the back looked gorgeous! We are very pleased with the response and the calls to the 1300 number have increased quite dramatically since the magazine was published. If any DAA members, male or female would like a chance to be considered for future campaigns, please drop me a line with a nice head and shoulders shot, so we can have these in a library of photo's. Our thanks to Catherine Holland, Brenda Owen, Vivienne Gregg, Margot Case and Barbara Williams for donating their time to DAA for this photo shoot.

Our luncheon in Brisbane, held at Brett's Wharf on Friday 20th October marked the end of the Amazon Heart Thunder ride as well as introduced DAA to many new people in the business world in Qld. We were very fortunate to have had wonderful support from EcoPoint Resorts and Caloundra Tourism (www.caloundratourism.com.au) and of course Impedimed who rallied support from the Brisbane corporate sector to attend. A great time was had by all! On a personal note I especially enjoyed meeting all the Amazon Heart participants face to face – even though we did not have a great deal of time to chat as there was so much else to attend to – however, we were all delighted to have a chance to meet these amazing women in person and convey our thanks to them for choose DAA to be their partner charity.



Dragons Abreast Gold Coast – Singapore 2006

Congratulations to all DAA teams in Singapore – our teams did very well indeed and Gold Coast DA group scooped the pool. Interest from the overseas team in coming to Australia next September was very high and we are pleased to report that we have over 1200 registered and paidup participants for 2007 Abreast in Australia – how exciting! Our workshops are being put in place and the plans are coming together nicely now. Expect to hear more about this over the next month or so.

Michelle Hanton
National Coordinator

PINK SNAPDRAGONS, REDCLIFFE DAA, QLD

Jayne Coe writes:

While I was in Sydney in February, for the Chinese New Year Regatta, I climbed the Sydney Harbour Bridge and really enjoyed the experience. Afterwards I thought it would be great to do the Brisbane Story Bridge Climb with some pink ladies. With the help of Jo Parry, a submission was sent to the Story Bridge Climb organisation. They were keen to help us. So 12 paddlers (6 Pink Snapdragons and 6 Missabittitti) going to Singapore were able to do the 2.5 hr climb on Tuesday, September 19.



We were very excited and some were nervous before we started. It was a wonderful adventure and everyone enjoyed the experience. The weather was perfect and we could see for miles. Having lived near Brisbane all these years, it was interesting to see it from a different angle. The highlight, for me, was singing our team songs when we reached the top and meeting the Brisbane ladies in our Singapore team. I don't think our guide had ever had a group like ours before!

I would recommend this tour to paddlers who are coming up our way next year for the World Titles at Caloundra. Heaps of fun!



Rainbow Dragons Launch New Boat

After days of rain the sun shone brightly on us as we gathered at Lake Ainsworth, Lennox Head, on Sunday Sept 17th to bless and launch our new dragon boat. It was a day when Dragons and Lions came together to celebrate – our boat was bought for us by the Lions Northern NSW Community Trust.



Aunty Bertha welcomes us onto Bundjalung land

The ceremony was opened by Aunty Bertha Kapeen who welcomed us to Bundjalung traditional land. Then Lions Trust president, Tony Cornell, presented the new boat to our president, Laura Turner.



Laura accepts the boat from Lions Trust president



The traditional Buddhist blessing was given by the Venerable Bodhicitta from Bodhi Tree Forest Monastery before the dragon's third eye was opened by our founding president, Barb Pinter. The other eyes were then dotted by Ochre, long-term partner of Noni who was one of the club's original members. Noni lost her battle to breast cancer last year.

The boat was then launched into the smooth dark waters of Lake Ainsworth and was paddled out by a team of twenty survivors for a Flowers on the Water ceremony while the crowd stood silently on shore. Supporters formed an archway of paddles to welcome them back.

After that it was time to celebrate with pink champagne and a delicious spread of food including two big celebration cakes.



SAPPHIRE WATER DRAGONS

IN PAMBULA

An alternative venue was the preferred option on Sunday 8th October, when due to the strength of the wind and the size of the whitecaps Merimbula Lake was considered unsafe. Seventeen paddlers drove to the sheltered waters of the Pambula River for an adventure paddle.

It was windy on the river but the water was calm and flat as "Sukha Yana" made her way upstream. Gradually the water got shallower, and the trees edged closer to the boat. One voice was heard to say that this was just like aquatic four wheel driving!



"Sukha Yana" got within sight of the Pambula Bridge by a combination of paddling, then knees deep in the river easing the dragon boat over the sandbars or running to catch up as the incoming tide pushed the boat further up stream.

Eventually the dragon boat could go no further. It was time to turn back. This presented a few problems. To turn 11 metres of boat around in a river that is 10 meters wide is not easy. Half of the crew were out of the boat pushing and pulling, whilst the dry half stabilized the boat and gave orders.

The return trip was an excellent exercise in boat maneuverability. Orders flew thick and fast to "draw left", "back paddle", "port side only", "dig in" and once, very loudly **"DUCK"** as paddlers avoided overhanging trees, sand bars, mangroves, and other obstacles on the way back to the launching ramp.

The Sapphire Water Dragons Abreast can boast with certainty that they are the first dragon boat crew to get within sight of the Pambula Bridge.



Sunshine Coast Dragons Abreast - *Tittytittybangbang*.

October 2nd saw twelve months since our boat arrived on Lake Kawana courtesy of the Zonta Club of Caloundra City. Since that first tentative paddle we have come a long way – sometimes smoothly, and sometimes not so smoothly.

During the early part of this year serious consideration was given to arranging a make over for our boat, including the head and tail. Finally, a very supportive and generous airbrush artist undertook to mend and restore the head and tail, free of charge to the Dragons Abreast girls on the coast. The transformation from a green, orange and white head and tail, to gorgeous hot pink, the colour of our rashies, maroon of Zonta, with gold crest and decorated with pearlised scales, our 'new' head and tail emerged.



The next challenge was to get the boat painted. A great fund raising effort on our behalf at the Caloundra Classic Boat Regatta saw the necessary funds raised to have the job completed.

It was no small job to find a painter with both the expertise to paint the boat and have a spray booth big enough to take a dragon boat. The finished job can only be described as spectacular and very, very special – from ordinary to beautiful!

In between times members have participated in regattas, taken pride of place in a demonstration paddle-past at a 'row for cancer' regatta – resplendent in our newly decorated beauty - and generally spread the word about Dragons Abreast throughout the community.

Finally, in September, a wonderful 'blessing of the boat' ceremony was held with Geshe Jamyang from the Chenrezig Institute officiating. President Marilyn from Zonta Club of Caloundra City 'opened the third eye,' and Lynn 'dotted the eyes', before all went for a paddle.

We were also delighted to welcome ladies from Missabittatitti who travelled from Brisbane for the occasion. A wonderful morning was rounded off with a BBQ lakeside on the beautiful Lake Kawana, which we eagerly await to show you during the "Abreast in Australia 2007" regatta.



*Zonta Club of Caloundra representatives
President. Marilyn and Lynn and President.
Sunshine Coast Dragons Abreast , Lesley*

TITIVATORS DRAGONS ABREAST

Celebrated the marriage of their co-ordinator, Lee Millard and Mark Newton held in the beautiful gardens of Timberdale just out of Coffs Harbour. During the moving service, Maria



Maoni, a breast cancer survivor, sang three lovely songs. The Titivators who attended provided the guard of honour.



CONGRATULATIONS

Missabittatitti have their first baby. Rosy and Klaas had a beautiful 7lb 6 baby girl, Indigo Rose, on 4 October 2006. Mum, Dad and bub are doing well. Auntie Pete is ecstatic.

WHO DARES WEARS..... PINK



Neil, Martin, Sergio and Michael, that's who!! **Our Men in Pink** brave the comments, the looks, the whispers.... whenever they don their **DA Sydney** pink shirts. Nevertheless, they **are** noticed - what better way to promote our cause!! As well as being a wonderful support to their survivor wives, they encourage all both in and out of the boats and we are so very proud of **our Men in Pink**. To our great delight, they have become really keen paddlers and are all trying out for selection to the 2007 NSW State team.

DRAGONS ABREAST SYDNEY - NEWBIES DAY



Fifteen uninitiated women turned up to try their hand at paddling at our first Newbie's Day for the season. Their beaming smiles and happy faces as they came off the boat dispelled any

doubts about whether they enjoyed the experience. So we were really happy when most of them enthusiastically returned the next Saturday to have another go.



Flamin' Dragons Abreast Port Macquarie Inc

On Saturday 23rd September 2006, Flamin' Dragons Abreast Port Macquarie Inc held the official Launch and Blessing of their new dragon boat. This boat was purchased from Newcastle with funds donated by the Barefoot & Black Tie Ball Committee.

In perfect weather, the boat and crew were blessed by Brian, our Lutheran minister, Leanne, the Anglican Hospital Chaplain and The Most Venerable, Lobseng Gentpa, a Tibetan Buddhist monk.

Approximately 150 guests attended including MLA Rob Oakeshott and Mayor Rob Drew who spoke of our wonderful progress in less than two short years.

The "Flowers on the Water Ceremony" brought together some of our newest club members and the crowd were invited to spread petals upon the water to share with us our memories of Angels Abreast.

Morning tea was followed by a Come & Try session for interested visitors with 16 new paddlers giving it a go!



TROPHIES from SINGAPORE



Eric Chia, the photographer for the Gala Dinner, wrote



Here are the photos taken at the Gala Dinner. The black background in the photos was made possible by a brilliant lady who graciously went on her knees so that her velvet skirt could be used for that purpose.

I am so sorry that I did not get to know any of your names. So let me address all of you as "Ladies in the Dragons Abreast" with best wishes and may God bless you and keep you in good health.

Editor's note: Congratulations to all who competed in Singapore. You were **AWESOME**.

Flamin' Dragons Abreast

Port Macquarie Inc



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This project is fully endorsed by Dragons Abreast Australia.

