

# DRAGONS ABREAST TASMANIA – HOBART

News Bulletin

August 2011



## DATH joins big welcome for Deborah

We enthusiastically accepted an invitation to the big welcome home function for athletic Tasmanian breast cancer fund-raiser Deborah de Williams at Mures on Saturday 30 April.

The weather was exceptional with no wind and the calmest of water – perfect for a paddle across the Derwent into the Hobart docks. After a stop at the Regatta Grounds for lunch, we made our way into Constitution Dock after a well-timed duck of the head by Jane, our highly animated drummer. We made our presence felt, as only we can, and then tied up at Kings Pier. Deborah greeted us within hours of finally completing her Around Australia run to raise funds for, and awareness of, breast cancer. Maggie, her loyal canine companion, was tucked up for a well-earned nap.

Unfortunately Deborah had to go back out on the road to record enough kilometres to break the record – what a woman! She has recently been invited by the Lance Armstrong team to join them in the New York Marathon. Some members even made the social pages of the 'Mercury' – all looking glamorous in their pink PFDs. MAST, our state water safety authority, must have been impressed!

## Training revs up for Caloundra

With the Caloundra regatta in mind, a coaching plan has been developed, and training has stepped up a notch. Short and sharp sessions of reasonably high intensity have been conducted on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, with a small part of Saturday's session given over to training.

We will all feel the benefit when we cross the line in Caloundra, in a winning position, of course.

The coaches, under the direction of Head Coach Helen, are working well together to give a varied and interesting work-out. It's not an easy job!

## In this issue

- Olympian at BCNA forum
- MAST Water Safety Day
- Travelling Dragons
- Singing with Hui
- Paddle for the Planet

## Champion Raelene lends her support to BCNA Hobart forum

Breast Cancer Network of Australia (BCNA) extended an invitation for DATH to man an information table at the recent forum held at the Elizabeth Pier Function Centre.

This free forum attracted a capacity attendance of 200 delegates. Our information table fielded a number of enquiries, with some ladies showing quite a keen interest in 'giving it a go'. Our 'new kid' in the boat, Joan, or Brocky as she likes to be known, was one such enquiree, and has been bitten by the 'bug' ever since she stepped in the boat.

The list of keynote speakers varied from a psychotherapist and a medical oncologist, to a local Jane McGrath Breast Cancer Nurse and a breast cancer survivor Olympian, each giving an interesting presentation. As much as the audience craved answers on the pros and cons of alcohol, soy and other products, it was quite obvious that the jury is still out, with no conclusive evidence available as yet.



**BCNA forum guest speaker Raelene Boyle with DATH members Penny, Jan, Marilyn and Moira**

The stand-out on the day, in more ways than one, was Raelene Boyle. Raelene spoke with warmth and ease, connecting with all present in the room. Her commitment to BCNA was very evident in the manner in which she conducted herself throughout the day. Nothing was a bother. One star-struck paddler, who boldly asked her to pose for a photograph with our group, was rewarded with not only the photograph, but a lengthy conversation on how she fills her average day in her home town of Noosa. She even fessed up to being a big fan of the show 'Ready Steady Cook'. A very gracious lady.

### **Cold puts boat maintenance on hold**

Many thanks to Helen Mennitz and her family, especially Duncan and Rod Jnr, for the time they have given to boat maintenance. Unfortunately, they have been unable to complete all the work at this stage due to the cold temperatures interfering with products used. The remaining maintenance will occur when the weather improves.



## Pooling resources for crew safety

Coach Helen conducted the first of our Water Safety Days for 2011 on Sunday 26 June. The second is set down for Sunday 27 November.

We all had a go at the emergency jump into the pool, with mixed success. Doing the splits with your arms out as you jump in, with the aim of keeping your head above water, undoubtedly takes some practice to perfect.

The session was run with Helen's usual professionalism, together with her natural good humour, and fun was had by all. It was a very worthwhile exercise for all who attended. It was very pleasing to see the huge steps made by some members since their last session in the pool.



## Dragon snags a delicacy at annual BBQ

A handsome profit of just over \$1000 was made at our annual Bunnings Barbecue in May. According to the Bunnings staff it was a slow day with the weather cold and wet, but with many willing helpers we made the best of the day. It was a nice little earner for the club as well as raising our profile in another district. A big thank you again this year to Joe Csaki.

# MAST water safety day goes off with a big bang!



Acrid orange smoke and sizzling showers of red sparks marked the finale of a great water safety display hosted by DATH on August 6.

More than 80 paddlers and other local boaties attended the demonstration by Marine and Safety Tasmania which highlighted the importance of not only having the right safety gear but making sure it is serviced and in good operating order.

He said inflatable life jackets are very popular but, alarmingly, only a very small percentage of owners have them serviced.

“MAST urges all owners of inflatable jackets and vests to read and follow the maintenance instructions,” Peter said.

“Check the cylinder. It should be kept dry and plastic wrap will stop corrosion.

“If you want to test that your jacket or vest is air-tight, blow it up manually and watch for any leaks. Jump into the water and test its buoyancy.

“When storing your inflatable, make sure you repack it along different fold-lines so as not to weaken the fabric.”

He stressed that traditional-style lifejackets should fit snugly.

Peter said the compliance with the carriage of safety gear by the Tasmanian boating public is high but few people know how to operate it properly, particularly radios and flares.

For instance, red flares are for night use and can be distinguished by the large ‘X’ on the lid. Orange flares, marked by an ‘O’ on the lid, are for day use.

Fearless DATH members Marilyn, Kevin and Helen G demonstrated the launch of the flares taking Peter’s advice not to pussyfoot around but to really yank the release cord for a clean, safe launch of the flare material.



**MAST’s Peter Hopkins and DATH president Marilyn Percey** MAST recreational boating manager Peter Hopkins presented a slick, informative show emphasising the need to take safety precautions at all times, even in good weather.

He said 77 per cent of boating fatalities occur in relatively calm conditions during daylight hours. The two most important safety devices on the water are a clear-headed skipper and a seaworthy boat with appropriate safety gear.

Peter emphasised the need for common sense. If the water conditions are unsuitable for sailing, paddling, jetskiing or fishing – stay on shore! And when you do venture onto the bay, river, sea or lake, ensure the safety gear is in good condition and has been recently serviced.



Thanks to chief sausage sizzler Clarrie Brock (pictured left) and his helpers in the kitchen, DATH netted a tidy \$101 from the sale of snags – all donated by MAST with some help from Sandy Bay’s Bayview Butchery.

## **DATH adventures abroad**

**DATH paddlers are well known to “value-add” to paddling trips abroad. But the taste for adventure is not just restricted to international regatta add-ons. Ila and John Rundle are “on the road” in their caravan, Annette has spent time with Gaelic-speaking relatives on the remote island of Lewis in Scotland, Sue Downer has been with her family in Canada, Jane and Andrew have been cruising the Kimberley coast and Rosemary and Paul have left on a sailing trip of a lifetime. More of us have travel plans for the next few months to Caloundra and beyond.**

**But it’s Moira who has been on a real cultural bender in the Caribbean, sampling rum cocktails and swilling beer from the most unusual glassware!**

### **To the Caribbean with Moira**

The highlight of our three-month trip overseas, besides visiting our grandkids and their parents in San Francisco, was Havana, Cuba. Peter and I flew from London to Barbados to join the cruise ship “Discovery”, a ship we had cruised on twice before. She is a 40-year-old former “Love Boat” of the TV series and because she is relatively small (600 passengers), she specialises in going to the more unusual ports of call. The happy and friendly crew remembered us from previous cruises. We sailed from Barbados to Portsmouth in UK, calling in at 15 ports in the Caribbean and Azores. The Caribbean lived up to our expectations, with (mostly) white beaches, waving palms and turquoise waters, especially Grand Turk, where we went ashore in bathers in one of the ship’s tenders, landed at a small wharf and went swimming straight away.

Havana was like stepping back 50 years and, as the ship stayed there three days, we managed to have a good look around and talk to a few of the locals. Due to the American trade embargo the country is quite poor, and foreign goods are very hard to come by. Some of the locals asked us for our T-shirts, shoes and socks. The kids were asking for lollies. Despite this, most of the people seemed happy and we felt safe. Their accommodation and education is free but the wages are low, so very few can afford to leave. There is a two-tiered currency system - for tourists and locals. We did the usual touristy things, horse and buggy ride around the city and outskirts, seeing local markets and Revolution Square with huge neon icons of Fidel and Che. We went ashore at night with some friends who’d been at sea school with Pete, and with whom we had sailed before, and drank beer from a three and a half litre chilled tube.

The Havana architecture is fantastic but economic restraints have meant a lot of them have fallen into disrepair. Fortunately they are slowly being restored.

The big, old American cars, along with the Russian Ladas, are tourist attractions but a number break down and are abandoned where they stop, sometimes up on blocks. Spare parts are hard to come by. Besides all this Havana has a great feel about it, and I can understand what Hemingway found there.

Horta, in the Azores, was another interesting place, where a volcanic eruption in the 1950s covered part of the island with ash 5 to 6 metres deep. This area is slowly emerging from the ash like a ghost town. Some rooves are becoming visible through the ash, and the lighthouse now shows two more storeys than immediately after the volcano. Some land was added to the island by the volcano as well and is dubbed “the newest land on earth”. We saw some amazing sights and met many interesting people, and have started planning next year’s trip.

### **Travels closer to home with Ila**

Since I last saw you dear friends we have covered a lot of territory. We flew back to Sydney then drove to Yass to restore our van. This took a couple of weeks and became cold, so we skedaddled north.

At Dubbo we checked out Western Plains Zoo where we watched the animals coming out to be fed. They retreated when it got hot and so did we. The next day it rained and rained so I made pumpkin soup mmm.

Along the Newell Highway we passed through Gilgandra and Coonabarabran and settled at the Warrumbungle National Park ... just love those names. We saw emu, wallaby, lots of birds and checked out an observatory there.

We sheltered at Tamworth during Easter for six days before continuing to the very Celtic Glen Innes where I found references to my father’s family in Scotland. Passing through Stanthorpe we then stayed a few days at Warwick, then drove to Toowoomba and witnessed some remaining signs of flood devastation. A 15,000 litre water tank which had featured on news coverage was still wedged behind a tree. The sight of the devastation in the Lockyer Valley made me heartsick. I have heard the residents are being offered blocks further up the mountain to rebuild, if they want to.

In Brisbane my heart sang because I was with our daughter and family. She works at the Brisbane Entertainment Centre and gave us free tickets to an Andre Rieu concert. We settled halfway down the lower floor and an usher then offered us front row seats. More skedaddling by us!

We checked out Surfers Paradise again and took a Quack-r-Duck cruise on the river to wave to the rich and famous in their luxurious homes

We fulfilled a boyhood dream on Johnnie’s to visit the Longreach Historic Qantas Museum.

**Continued next page...**

## X-ray guard protects thyroid

TV medic Dr Oz recently featured a segment on the fastest-growing cancer in women, thyroid cancer. He mentioned that the increase could possibly be related to the use of dental x-rays and mammograms. He showed the apron for patients having dental x-rays feature a little flap that can be lifted up and wrapped around the neck.

Many dentists don't bother to use it. Also, there is something called a 'thyroid guard' for use during mammograms. Mammogram technicians may have these but don't use them routinely. It might be an idea to request that it be used.

## From previous page....

Saw the 'Tree of Knowledge' symbolising beginnings of the labour movement in Australia which was poisoned in 2006 but beautifully and cleverly architecturally preserved.

At Mackay we stayed with friends and I had a sunset paddle with DA Mackay. They were very welcoming and I enjoyed their company.

Travelled the Overland Highway via Ayr to Charters Towers and attended a couple of functions to raise funds for Flying Doctor and Cyclone Yasi victims.

I celebrated my birthday at Cloncurry and enjoyed real barramundi for my dinner after visiting the John Flynn Museum detailing the establishment of Flying Doctor Service and invention of pedal radio.

Mt Isa was dry and dusty but we toured the underground hospital built into a hill during World War 2. After this we spent a few days beside a billabong on the Georgina River, the best time, watching the water birds from morning till dark, catching red claw lobster, but no barra, darn.

Daly Waters was a funny, old, historic pub with make-do amenities out the back, but oh they are famous for their barramundi. It was really yummy and there was a concert and comedian thrown in for \$27.50 a meal. Mataranka's lovely warm spring called Bitter Springs was very restorative.

Katherine was an eye-opener. We climbed the very steep Katherine Gorge and took the easier way down, toured the fascinating NT School of the Air. It has operated via satellite since 2006 and is now called Interactive Distance Learning.

After camping and swimming at Edith Falls (brrr that one was cold) it was on to Kakadu with its fabulous rock formations and rock art. We climbed Ubirr Rock with a magnificent 360 deg view of the wetlands.

The daily temperature is still approx 36 deg falling to just under 20 at night, though in Kakadu we were lucky if it fell below 26 at night – phew !

**At the time of writing, Ila was at Corroboree Park where she and John enjoyed a sunset billabong cruise. Safe travels Ila.**



## Paddling for the planet

Paddle for the Planet, with sanction from AusDBF, was set up to bring together as many paddlers in every possible discipline of paddling in all time zones around the World, to paddle together on June 5.

The idea behind this event was for people to make a stand for the preservation of waterways around the globe, and to influence more countries to set aside marine reserves, as well as to encourage the banning of the inhumane practice of catching and maiming sharks for their fins.

Unfortunately, the best laid plans don't always come off, and we woke that morning to wild weather, with huge waves breaking at the base of the Tasman Bridge. There was no way we could paddle into the Hobart docks, as planned. Even the outriggers, whose craft are so much more stable and able to withstand reasonably rough water, had to withdraw from the event, as they could not cross the Derwent.

Not to be outdone, with a full crew in Dragon Fly, accompanied by a crew from Derwent Storms, we braved the conditions and paddled around Lindisfarne Bay. Even the 'old sea salt' Coach Helen almost came off the back of the boat while sweeping. The coffee afterwards never tasted so good!

According to the feedback, there were large numbers of a wide variety of craft participating throughout the world. This may become an annual event.

## On the social scene

Over the past months we have attended the Royal Wedding at the home of Sue Downer, been surrounded by Hui's gospel choir in a flashmob experience in the Elizabeth Mall, and toe-tapped and hummed along at the 'Dusty' stage show, with Penny's son Alex part of the orchestra.

Among the many birthdays, we have celebrated a couple of milestones for Leigh and Maree Sargent.



## Hui keeps us singing in tune

Hui kindly offered to run singing 'classes' for those of fine, strong, soft and even out-of-tune voice after our Tuesday evening paddling sessions. The wintry weather and unpredictable water conditions, coupled with seasonal coughs and colds, have meant we have had to cancel some sessions.

Despite these challenges, the learner songsters have attempted to harmonise their voices with some lovely tunes and simple lyrics such as "down by the banks of the hanky panky" with its raspberry finale, the highly suggestive "telephone man", and the slowly enunciated "mag-nif-i-cen-ce".

Hui has written a special rendition of 'There is Nothing Like a Dame' with words tailored to our group. With a bit of luck, and a great deal of practice, it could be presented at our Christmas Dinner. Singing sessions are worth attending just to hear Hui sing. She has the most beautiful voice and luckily she is a very patient teacher. Stay tuned for an update!



### **After so much fun on the water, it's hard to imagine a life before paddling**

Here's something to ponder....BP (before paddling) and in most cases BBC (before breast cancer) whatever did we do with ourselves? Just think about it, if you weren't paddling, you would have a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 14 hours more spare time each week. This is without taking into account any half-day and full-day events, and of course intrastate and interstate events – not to mention overseas regattas. The mind boggles!

Were we better wives, parents, grandparents, workmates or friends back then? It has been suggested that our houses were certainly cleaner, our gardens more weed-free, we were more available for grandparent babysitting duties, we spent less money on petrol and coffee and our wardrobes weren't full of all things pink. But we can now lay claim to being fitter, more engaged in our community and having a wider and more varied circle of buddies, learning the art of when to be silent and when to speak up, and maybe one of the best lessons learned would have to be tolerance and acceptance of ourselves and our team mates. We have become avid weather watchers and don't hesitate when the choice is between a state of the art new paddle or a new set of saucepans. We certainly have our priorities right these days!

Yes, we have the right to aspire to be more competitive, paddle faster and stronger and 'race for medals', but at the end of the day, what brought us together will keep us together, and that is the wonderful thing about being a member of DATH. You could almost say that having been diagnosed with breast cancer was a good thing, when such a positive outcome is the result. We are very fortunate. Paddles up!

**Marilyn**



We thoroughly enjoyed a change of scenery when we headed across the Derwent to Sullivans Cove to celebrate the home-coming of round-Australia runner Deborah de Williams.

## DATH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### August

Friday 19 Lymphoedema Seminar, University of Tasmania

Saturday 20 Helping at Cancer Council Gala Ball (TBC)

Monday 22 DATH AGM at LRC

### September

Friday 9-Saturday 10 DAA Regatta, Caloundra

### October

Friday 7 Sunday 9 Masters Games, Adelaide

Sunday 16 Apple and Salmon Festival, Huon River

Sunday 23 Seafarers Festival, Bellerive

### November

Saturday 12-Sunday 13 Seafest, Triabunna (TBC)

Saturday 19 Christmas Pageant (TBC)

Sunday 27 Water Safety Day

### December

Saturday 19 DATH Xmas Dinner and last paddle for 2011

### January 2012

Saturday 14 First Paddle for 2012

Saturday 21 Pittwater paddle (TBC)

Make a note  
in your diary

**DATH AGM**  
**Monday 22 August**  
**7.30pm**

**Lindisfarne Rowing Club**

### Congratulations to new sweep

Julie Davidson was recently awarded level 3 Sweep Accreditation – well done Julie! Watch out for Julie at the helm at night and in races!



### A great excuse to eat cake

Jan Burgess and Sue Court organised a very successful pink morning tea on 21 May. Sue Downer offered her lovely home as "Cake HQ" and as always was the gracious 'hostess with the mostest'. \$320 was raised for the Cancer Council – a magnificent effort once again. Well done everyone!