



Dragons Abreast Sydney
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Dragons Abreast Sydney AGM 2010

The Annual General Meeting of Dragons Abreast Sydney was held at the Homebush headquarters of DBNSW on Thursday, 26th August. After a very interesting talk on the benefits of Pilates for breast cancer survivors from our guest, the assembled hordes made short work of some delicious pizzas before the business end of the evening began.

First up was outgoing coordinator Wilma Kippers with the annual report on the club's activities and achievements for the year.

This will be my final Coordinator's Report. I've been in the job for three years now and my term of office is up and it's time to hand over to the next Coordinator.

I can't believe how much we manage to pack into the paddling calendar. Recently I gave Kerry all the printed copies of the newsletters since the club began and I realised that Dragons Abreast Sydney has only been going for around seven years. We certainly haven't wasted any of that time and browsing through the newsletters it seems amazing that we've managed to fit in so many events.

But before I come to these I'd like to start by thanking the committee and the Coaches &

Sweeps subcommittee for the tremendous amount of work you put into keeping the club functioning at all levels, both in paddling and socially. Fortunately we've got a large number of people to spread the load, and our committee portfolio system gives everyone a specific DAS job, so all areas of the club's activities are covered. It's due to your efforts that our club runs smoothly and we enjoy being part of it as much as we do.

As well, there are other people who contribute significantly to our club. Cynthia Kuiper, my predecessor and club legend, is the Regional Representative for DAA, and works tirelessly, and it seems endlessly, to promote DAA and dragon boating generally. And Kerry Enemark, our wonderful newsletter editor, makes sure that all our club's activities are recorded in an interesting and entertaining way, providing also a fantastic historical record of our club. Kerry's looking for an assistant so if you've fancied yourself as a hard-nosed member of the press, or as an editor, let Kerry know. She's also willing to train!

This year sees the retirement from the committee of Pam Bell as PR Coordinator, Carol Fentoullis as Head Coach, Vicki McLean as Sweeps Coordinator and Kathryn Pineiro as Membership Officer. They've all volunteered hours and hours of their time in their DAS jobs and we've relied heavily on



Pilates expert Fiona Eakin, herself a breast cancer survivor, spoke to members about the benefits we could all enjoy from Pilates, including improving our paddling performance. Fiona is enthusiastic about developing an exercise program specifically for dragon boating, so we'll keep you posted on progress.

their expertise and their commitment to Dragons Abreast.

Pam spent a lot of time searching for opportunities to publicise the club and has raised our media profile over the years. Carol has been Head Coach for a number of years and has contributed to raising our paddling standards and working towards the best training methods. Vicki, as Sweeps Coordinator, worked out rosters, the training of new sweeps and kept us in line, literally, at training. Kathryn was the Membership Officer and has spent a lot of time in maintaining the club membership records in accordance with new procedures from DBNSW



How to attract a big crowd to the AGM – promise them pizza.

DBNSW Membership
Don't forget to fill out the form for membership of Dragon Boating NSW. Please either hand your form to Jo Jeffcoat or post to PO Box 133, Pyrmont NSW 2009 before **15th September**

Lots to report in this month's Paddles Up – the AGM, Club Awards and our first regatta for the season.

Paddles Up will now be moving to a bi-monthly format so you will receive the next edition at the beginning of November.

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and DAA. They have all put in more hours behind the scenes for the smooth running of the club than you'd care to think about. We are very fortunate indeed to have such committed people working in our club – those continuing, and those who are now passing on the baton to new team members.

And let's not forget either all you volunteers who give your time on specific projects. Without this committed team we wouldn't exist as a club – that doesn't bear thinking about! So, please join me in thanking all our hard working committee members and volunteers.

Over the last year we've been very busy – locally, interstate and overseas. Starting off the regatta season we paddled at Dobroyd. Hopefully the weather will be as good this Sunday when we're there for this year's regatta. Then in October we were in Roseville and at the end of that month we had the second DAA Corporate & Community Regatta at Darling Harbour. After months and months of planning, and Cynthia sweating blood, 68 teams registered for the event. The day started off fine and sunny but at midday an enormous thunder and lightning storm hovered over the city and the racing had to be called off, meaning there was no Hospital Challenge or Flowers on the Water, which was a disappointing finish to the day.

In November we were out at Penrith when Vicki Farmer and Sergio Pineiro had their first regatta sweeps. Also in November a large number of us headed off to Orange for its first regatta, and won the Mixed Team Trophy, and the Women's team came second. Everyone had such a good time in Orange that it was decided we'd go back there again this season to defend our title.

In December we were fortunate to be able to squeeze in the Hospitals Challenge Mark II together with a Flowers on the Water ceremony down at Blackwattle Bay, making up for having to cancel in October at Darling Harbour. Fortunately the weather was kind and even though not everyone

could come, a large number of people were able to, many competing in composite teams. As always, a good time was had by all.

In January we went to Tacoma, where Deb Hirst had her first regatta sweep, and in February we tried something different and entered a Twilight race around Scotland Island organised by Bei Loon. This was very different paddling from the quiet confines of Blackwattle Bay, with many people distracted by the houses on Scotland Island they'd like to live in!

Also in February we competed once again in Darling Harbour for Chinese New Year, both in the club racing on the Saturday and on the Sunday in the DAA Challenge. This year we had the first random selection of teams for the DAA Challenge and we did very well in the finals, coming in 3rd and 4th.

In April we were back out at Penrith for the State Titles when I managed to excuse myself from paddling by spraining my ankle on the way to car as we headed to Penrith. I had a good day watching you all work very hard. And also in April, 37 of us competed in Adelaide at the National Titles, amongst whom were 18 paddlers who had been selected for the NSW State Team and paddled in the sky blue in the State versus State races.

So that was the end of the official dragon boating season, but of course our club never stops paddling and this year with a large group going to Peterborough for the International Breast Cancer Participatory Festival, it meant the paddling program continued apace, with extra base building sessions. Peterborough was a very special occasion for those who attended. It's so fantastic being overseas together as a club, and then also to be amongst so many other breast cancer survivors and supporters from around the world.

So if paddling wasn't enough, Dragons Abreast Sydney also has numerous social events, some

Deb Read Award 2010

Each year a member of our club is presented with a special award named in honour of Deb Read. Deb is remembered with great affection and high esteem by all those who knew her and the recipient of the award, nominated by club members and judged by a committee, is held to reflect qualities of leadership, commitment and inspiration. This year, six club members were nominated (see below) and the award was presented to outgoing Coordinator Wilma Kippers.



Deb Read Award nominees (back) Di Williams, Vicki McLean, Rosie O'Donnell (front) Wendy Jensen, Carol Fentoullis



Happy recipient of the Deb Read Award Wilma Kippers

of which tied in with paddling. At the end of last October club members decided to celebrate Halloween by paddling wearing weird and scary outfits and scaring the life out of other paddlers by doing witches' cackles on the water. Paddlers at club training also cheered on the Yukon Buddies, the club members who were attempting to paddle non-stop for 24 hours to see if they could stay awake that long, in preparation for the Yukon River Quest.

In mid December we managed to fit in a Mums & Chums day to give our family and friends a taste of what we do every week. This popular event is always good fun. And we finished off the year with a Christmas party in the park at Glebe with

the usual fantastic food provided by all, great fun with the dancing competition, and Abi Benstead's wonderful Christmas dragon boat story.

Other social activities have also been held with group bookings to see "Wicked", and the "Not Going to Canada" dinner for those keeping the club running while so many of us headed off to Canada to paddle in Peterborough and the Yukon.

But wait there's more. As many of you know, Cynthia has been lobbying hard to get DBNSW to include a Great Grand Dragons category – that's over 60s – at the State titles so we can compete nationally, and ultimately internationally in this age category. It's a slow journey but inroads are being

The Have a Go Award

This year Dragons Abreast Sydney introduced a new award in memory of one of our founding members, Jenny Pettersen. Jenny was always ready to try the next challenge (and keep trying until she mastered it) so it was decided to reward a club member who was always willing to have a go and never give up.

Wilma Kippers and Ruth Turnell were hard-pressed to pick a winner from all the enthusiastic members in our club, but Elaine Hall's persistence in taming that timing devil and her behind-the-scenes work for Dragons Abreast won the day.



Winner of the inaugural Have a Go Award, Elaine Hall, with Jenny Pettersen's sister Jo and husband Geoff Eldridge.

made, especially as other clubs are also finding they're ageing (surprise, surprise) and also still want to keep competing. It's wasn't too long ago that the Masters category – the over 40s – was seen as really, really old. Grand Dragons – the over 50s – hasn't quite become totally established locally, but it is a category internationally, as our AusSquad members can attest.

In November Brenda Owen and Tracey Bowne attended a "Women in Sport" weekend workshop at the Sports Academy in Narrabeen. In December the Yukon Buddies and three other club members paddled in the Murray Marathon for 404 kms over five days in extreme heat. In March, 62 club members participated in our inaugural water safety session at Enfield pool. This was an excellent opportunity to find out exactly what it meant to swim 50 metres "lightly clothed", and to refresh our CPR skills. In fact, a large number subsequently did the CPR course at Enfield pool. In May the club survey results were released, which is providing some criteria for the planning and implementation of club

training sessions for the current season. And in May Rosie started the DAS Weight loss challenge, to encourage members to lose 5 kilos before September, now extended to October. If everyone in a boat lost 5 kilos that could represent 110 kilos less weight in a boat! This is still continuing, so you might have to do some extra exercise after the pizza!

And at the end of June the Yukon Buddies paddled 740 kms on the Yukon River in Canada in 68 hours and 23 minutes, with club members anxiously following their progress online.

As you can see, we are an exceptional club. Breast cancer is the reason we've got together and it's also what makes us more than just another sporting dragon boat club. We have an added dimension that lifts us out of the ordinary, which brings us together at every level of fitness, and accommodates that.

When I joined the club about a year and a half after it formed, I remember being very impressed with

the achievements of the original members. They had not only got themselves together to form a club, which in itself is a huge triumph, but had competed at the State titles in Perth and as a result were training to compete at the world championships in Shanghai.

Now these women have been quite self-deprecating about doing this, saying they were at the right place at the right time, and maybe this is so. But what an achievement! I was in awe of them. They looked fantastic out on Blackwattle Bay, paddling in unison and skimming across the water. Their training regime was huge and their commitment to doing their best was absolute. They were truly inspirational.

In the early years the Dragons Abreast philosophy was about inclusiveness and not about competition. Many people thought then that we weren't allowed to be competitive. That wasn't strictly true but did cause a bit of angst and certainly at the time, the Shanghai paddlers didn't get the recognition they deserved because of this prevailing attitude. In fact they largely kept quiet about what they were doing and what they achieved. This was a great shame. But I'd like the paddlers of that time, eleven of whom are still members of our club, to know that I was inspired by them, and because of their lead, and also their encouragement, I personally have travelled further (literally) than I would have ever imagined in my wildest dreams. And isn't it wonderful to have 11 of the original paddlers still as members, still participating and still standing up for awareness of a full and active life after the diagnosis of breast cancer.

And of course whilst this AusSquad team was away in Shanghai there was a sizeable group keeping everything going back in Sydney, and many of those also are still members of Dragons Abreast Sydney. And this too is inspirational.

So this says a lot about the sort of club we are, which has such committed members. As we

gain more experience, become fitter and better paddlers there is still room for all levels. Over the last couple of years there has been a lot of talk about the direction of the club, whether we should become more sporting, have separate streams for social and sports paddlers, and how this can work. Overwhelmingly members want to be able to enjoy dragon boating together at least some of the time and this is our strength. We are not an ordinary club; we have come together in an extraordinary way and grown together. New members are drawn in and gain from our experience, but also contribute their fresh perspectives so that our club can continue to evolve and remain relevant.

We have members who have paddled at the most elite level possible in dragon boating in Australia, competing in the green and gold both here and overseas. They still benefit from club training, and of course are expected to do many hours of extra training, as are all AusSquad members regardless of which club they belong to. The commitment to be part of the elite team comes from inside each individual paddler and they know, or are soon told, what is required to paddle at this level. What I'm trying to say, I guess, is that Dragons Abreast Sydney is a fully fledged dragon boat club with the sort of training programs and abilities that can help produce outstanding paddlers.

That's one level. A lot of us just enjoy coming to training for the workout it gives us, and for the social contact. We enjoy the local regattas, and a large number of us also like the travelling opportunities – going interstate for the Nationals, the Pan Pacs, the Masters Games and Dragons Abreast Festivals, and heading off overseas as some of us were lucky enough to do in 2008 to Penang, and more recently to Peterborough.

Being part of Dragons Abreast opens up paddling possibilities, giving us the chance to showcase our abilities and promote breast cancer awareness. Anyone who's been to a regatta with Flowers

on the Water, or for instance in Caloundra or Peterborough, will know how powerful the presence of hundreds of women (and men) in pink, can be. It is both challenging and life affirming as we realise just how many of us have been through this terrible disease and we are now the visible presence of surviving breast cancer. It's sobering for everyone who witnesses this, but also a celebration of continuing our lives, fully and joyfully.

I would like to think that as we move forward Dragons Abreast Sydney will continue to embrace its extraordinary-ness. We are breast cancer survivors and supporters. We are proud to show our abilities and provide hope to those who are being diagnosed now. We can be sporty and competitive. We can have fun and enjoy racing even if we don't win. We always come first in our lane and we enjoy beating "that other club", or improving our times, or completing a personal best. And of course we'll continue to enjoy each other's friendship, each other's cooking and baking, and be proud of all our achievements – large and small.



Dragons Abreast Australia Founding Director Michelle Hanton was in town for a fundraising event and was tempted by the promise of pizza to attend the AGM. Michelle took the opportunity to fill us in on future plans for DAA



Your new committee: (back row L to R) Mariann Evans, Di Williams, Sue McClelland, Jo Jeffcoat, Judy Dykes, Deb Hirst, Wendy Jensen, Ruth Turnell, Jane Trew, Sue Tolhurst. (front row L to R): Christine Mitchell, Rosie O'Donnell, Claire Hendy, Julie Grantham

Changing of the guard

A new committee for Dragons Abreast Sydney was announced at the AGM. Fifteen nominations were received for the 15 positions so the Dragons Abreast Sydney committee for 2010/2011 will comprise:

Rosie O'Donnell - Co-ordinator
 Deb Hirst - Assistant Co-ordinator
 Jane Trew - Secretary
 Judy Dykes - Treasurer
 Claire Hendy - Head Coach

Sue McClelland - Sweep Co-ordinator
 Julie Grantham - Volunteer Co-ordinator
 Jo Jeffcoat - Membership Officer
 Ruth Turnell - Public Relations
 Chris Mitchell - Team Captain
 Di Williams - Social Co-ordinator
 Mariann Evans - Fundraising Co-ordinator
 Wendy Jensen - Safety Officer
 Vicki Farmer - Merchandise
 Sue Tolhurst - Paddler Registrar

Club Awards 2009/2010

On Saturday 28th August, retiring Head Coach Carol Fentoullis presented the Dragons Abreast Sydney 2009/2010 Club Awards. (The nominees are listed below with winners of each category underlined)

I would like to take this opportunity to show my appreciation to all the individual members who have quietly and continually thanked me for their development and experiences at DAS. This support has helped me to enjoy every minute of my time, since 2005, in my role as Head Coach.

It has been an honour to be able to care for, guide and take on many responsibilities for our special members. Also to ensure that all paddlers reach their potential, achieve their goals or just have a laugh and develop friendships.

Thank You to Rosie (as team captain), Vicki McLean (as sweep co-ordinator), all the coaches and sweeps for your strengths and commitment.

I am grateful to our hard working committee, the backbone, thinkers and organisers of DAS.

Thank you to all the paddlers. Your laughs and fun loving approach gave me all the encouragement needed to do my job. I especially want to thank the supporters (partners, friends, paddlers and non-paddlers) in our club. Your presence and contribution is much appreciated.

All the best to our new head coach Claire Hendy. I have great confidence in Claire and know we are in good hands with her leadership. (And I am always happy to help at any time.)

Congratulations to all the nominees and recipients (underlined) of the following Club Awards. What a joy it was as my last task, to recognise and celebrate all the special people, for all the special reasons, of our club. Well done!

Most Consistent:

Susie Ingram
Rosie O'Donnell
Bob Smith
Jane Trew



Most Improved:

Elaine Hall
Deb Hirst
Beth Jacobs
Wendy Mann
Sergio Piniero
Colleen Smith
Carol Taylor



Star Stroke:

Angie Aston
Martin Hastings
Cynthia Kuiper
Eugenia Raftos



Super Sweep:

Carol Fentoullis
Cynthia Kuiper
Vicki McLean
Rosie O'Donnell

Drummer with the Best Beat:

Mariann Evans
Susie Ingram
Di Millgate
Jane Trew



Most Promising New Sweep:

Judy Dykes
Vicki Farmer
Martin Hastings
Christine Mitchell
Sergio Piniero

Paddler with the Most Potential:

Linda Bryan
Pauline Christie
Ian Evans
Julie Grantham
Martin Hirst
Mary Sheldon
Colleen Smith



Outstanding Great Grand Master:

Geri Hill
Cynthia Kuiper
Di & Neil Millgate
Bob & Sue Lawton
Robyn Sheather
Robyn Shoebridge
Margarita Spence
Eva Stern
Phil Trew



Special Recognition Award:

Tracey Bowne
Vicki Farmer
Aine Higgins
Wendy Jensen
Di Williams



Special Recognition:

(A special recognition award for all our men)

Bob Capes	Ian Evans
Martin Hastings	Martin Hirst
Michael Johnstone	Chris Kwong
Bob Lawton	Neil Millgate
Michael O'Donnell	David Owen
Sergio Piniero	Graham Sheather
Bob Smith	Eros Tessarolo
Phillip Trew	Ken Warr
Tony Williams	Peter Mitchell
Geoff Eldridge	Harry Cormack

Impressive Newcomer:

Sarah Dunn
Ian Evans
Julie Grantham
Heike Schuster



Team Captains Award:

Colleen Smith

Bob Smith



Head Coach's Encouragement Award:

Yolande Presland

Ian Evans



New paddlers on the Honour List

2009

Gael Ellis
Leonie Hunt
Christine Mitchell
Jane Trew
Ruth Turnell
Tony Williams

2010

Aine Higgins
Beth Jacobs
Chris Kwong
Brenda Owen
Yolande Presland
Carol Taylor

Sweeps, Accredited** & Club* Coaches:

Vicki Farmer
Carol Fentoullis**
Claire Hendy*
Deb Hirst
Cynthia Kuiper**
Rosie O'Donnell
Brenda Owen*
Vicki McLean*
Sue McClelland**
Sergio Piniero
Robin Shoebridge*
Fairlie Stanish**

Trainee Sweeps

Judy Dykes
Martin Hastings
Chris Mitchell

Strokes:

Angie Aston
Martin Hastings
Deb Hirst
Chris Kwong
Neil Milgate
Rosie O'Donnell
Eugenia Raftos
Di Williams

Drummers:

Angie Aston
Mariann Evans
Claire Hendy
Susie Ingram
Sally Lynch
Di Milgate
Christine Mitchell
Sally Oh
Jane Trew

Vicki Farmer
Claire Hendy
Cynthia Kuiper
Wendy Mann
Chris Mitchell
Yolande Presland
Sue Tolhurst

Ailsa Dunsford
Nicole Harper
Geri Hill
Sue Lawton
Sue McClelland
Meg Milne
Rosie O'Donnell
Yoland Presland
Di Williams



Carol presented all the participants at the International Dragons Abreast Festival with a laminated team photo from Peterborough.

International Dragons Abreast Festival 2010 Canada:

Angie Aston	Faye & Bob Capes	Judy Dykes
Marianne Evans	Elaine Hall	Aine Higgins
Geri Hill	Beth Jacobs	Jo Jeffcoat
Sue & Bob Lawton	Wendy Mann	Di & Neil Milgate
Rosie & Michael O'Donnell	Deidre O'Flynn	Kathryn & Sergio Piniero
Sue Tolhurst	Robyn & Graham Sheather	Jane & Phillip Trew
Di & Tony Williams		



The Dragons Abreast Festival at Darling Harbour is getting closer!
There's still time to get a team together to take part in this fun and exciting day.
Visit the website to find out how.
www.dragonsabreastfestival.com.au

Dobroyd 10s regatta

It was all chocolates and fashion designers for the 60 Dragons Abreast Sydney members who took part in the the first regatta of the season at Dobroyd Point on Sunday 29th August.

The Masters Women teams (Gucci, Dior and Chanel) and the Grand Masters Women teams (Chloe, Fendie and Prada) looked suitably elegant, but was there a message from our calorie-conscious coordinator in the team names for the Mixed teams (Old Gold, All Sorts, Freddo and Crunchie)?

As always, it was an extremely pleasant way to spend a Sunday (apart from the lack of coffee – what happened to the coffee cart?) and although it was a very cold start, some long-overdue spring weather made the rest of the day enjoyable.

Thanks for DA Sydney members Gael Ellis and Carol Taylor who spent the day as volunteers, helping to load and unload boats.

The “splash-and-dash” 200m races, with 10 in a boat, were exciting and all teams acquitted themselves well.

Now it's onward and upward for the regatta season with the next event scheduled for October 10th at Penrith. If you haven't already registered, contact Team Captain Chris Mitchell at chris_m@hotmail.com



A very happy Judy Dykes – our newest sweep.



Lovely weather, exciting racing, good company and great food – another day out for DASzlers.



“Virgin” racers at Dobroyd – Janine Leonard, Kerry Surace and Sarah Dunn



Above: Chris Kwong enjoyed his first racing experience as stroke, while others (below) took a more leisurely approach to the day.



Kerry Surace enjoyed her first racing experience so much, she wrote a poem about the experience.

The 5:30am alarm just chimed
Out of bed I must climb
Arriving at Dobroyd Regatta
Pushing myself you must, you gotta

Waiting for our race time to start
Then the call, nerves are off the chart
Down we went to the marshalling area
Nervousness now is near hysteria

Words of encouragement helping out
Then we are off, this is what it's about
There was Rosie with the crew
And our strokes Mariann & Sue

Without these wonderful ladies
Our race would have been disastrous, really
Then we hear the magic words
“Bring it home”, give it your all

The final line is in our sight
Just a bit more oomph, alright
Over the line with adrenalin pumping
I'll be back for sure, no stopping.

DRAGONS ABREAST SYDNEY CALENDAR 2010

Month	Date(s)	Event	Location	Details
September	19th	Inaugural DAA Conference	Franklin on the Huon River	Registrations now closed.
October 2010	Sunday 10th	DBNSW 200m Regatta	SIRC Penrith	Register with Christine Mitchell at chrissie_m_@hotmail.com
	Sunday 24th	Hospital Challenge training day	Bank Street	Volunteer to help on this busy day. Contact Cynthia Kuiper at cynthiakuiiper@yahoo.com
	Sunday 31st	Dragons Abreast Festival	Darling Harbour	To register to paddle contact Christine Mitchell at chrissie_m_@hotmail.com
November 2010	Saturday 6th	Christmas Shopping Trip	Leaving from Bank Street	Contact Angie Aston at aaston@nswcc.org.au
	Sunday 7th	Roseville Regatta	Roseville	Register with Christine Mitchell at chrissie_m_@hotmail.com
	12th-13th	Orange Regatta	Orange	Register with Christine Mitchell at chrissie_m_@hotmail.com
	Saturday 20th	Newbies Day	Bank Street	All newbies must register with Deb Hirst at mhirst@bigpond.com.au
December 2010	Sunday 5th	DBNSW 500m Regatta	SIRC Penrith	TBA
January 2011	Saturday 8th	Tacoma Regatta	Central Coast	TBA
February 2011	Saturday 12th	Chinese New Year	Darling Harbour	TBA
March 2011	Saturday 19th	NSW State Championships	SIRC Penrith	TBA
	30th - 3rd April	National Dragon Boating Titles	Canberra	Register with Christine Mitchell at chrissie_m_@hotmail.com
June 2011	12th-13th	Port Macquarie Regatta and Marathon	Port Macquarie	TBA

Birthdays

Happy Birthday to all those born in September:

- David Owen 5th
- Maria Serra Marco 11th
- Chris Egan 13th
- Cynthia Kuiper 13th
- Robyn Sheather 13th
- Colleen Henry 14th
- Claire Hendy 14th
- Christine Mitchell 16th
- Graham Sheather 18th
- Sue Tolhurst 19th

And October

- Katherine Koutoulas 3rd
- Susan Everingham 3rd
- Di Millgate 6th
- Jane Trew 9th
- Sue Lawton 20th
- Elaine Hall 22nd
- Robert Lawton 24th
- Ken Warr 27th



Regatta dates – put them in your diary now!