



DRAGONS ABREAST AUSTRALIA

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NEWS BULLETIN No. 4 - February 2004

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Dear Fellow Paddlers

In the interests of bringing you all the results and gossip from Tunarama and this edition of the newsletter is being brought to you by the National Coordinator, Michelle as well as Maxine Barker and Sandra Sinclair from Port Lincoln. This is because I have been absent from my desk for a few weeks, a combination holidays and a work trip to Sydney (which sadly did not coincide with Chinese New Year). Thank you ladies. I will return the favour at any time. *Pat Hancock - Top End Editor*

New Years Greetings from your Southern co-editor! We appear to be experiencing similar temperatures to the Top End but that is a feeble excuse for my not forwarding the **Victorian** news to Pat for inclusion in the last newsletter. I even responded to **Pru Menzies** congratulating her on their membership numbers and said what a great newsletter it was. Victorians all - please excuse my senior moment!

There have been some great newsletters from various groups and it's inspiring to read what everyone is doing. If you send me news for the national newsletter would you please copy it to Pat Hancock (Pat.Hancock@nt.gov.au) as well? That way I will know it's meant for the National newsletter and not just for my enjoyment! Dragons Abreast Australia continues to grow and, on behalf of you all, I send congratulations to the girls in Pt Lincoln for their success at the Tunarama Festival. Being a born and bred 'crow-eater' I would have loved to have been there to support Dragons Abreast Australia (SA). The founder of the original group, **Carlene Butacivius** was a great woman – I miss her dearly. I'm sure she would have been proud of the efforts of this new group.

On your membership form you indicated whether or not you were happy for photos of yourself to be on the website. As this information is confidential perhaps those who do not wish

individual photos to appear should let Jan Skorich know (webmaster@dragonsabreast.com.au)

Pat, Michelle and myself would welcome any feedback on the newsletter – your suggestions and/or input are what makes it worth reading!

This Swedish proverb could be a good New Years resolution?!

*Fear less, hope more,
eat less, chew more,
whine less, breathe more,
talk less, say more, love more,
and all good things
will be yours*



Love and peace *Anna Wellings Booth, Southern Editor*

Update from the Executive

There is a special magic about seeing a new team come together and I feel very privileged that over the Australia Day long weekend I was able to participate at the **2004 John West Tunarama Festival** where dragon boat racing featured for the very first time, thanks to the hard work put in by **Maxine Barker, Sandra Sinclair** and **Chris Jettner**, founding members of Dragons Abreast Port Lincoln.

Our thanks must go to **Dragon Boat Association of South Australia** for transporting 3 boats from Adelaide including 'Carlene's Dream'. It was very special to have her boat in Port Lincoln as several of the paddlers knew Carlene personally. Carlene was a very dear friend to Maxine who had worked with her over a numbers of years on BCNA and Action on Breast Cancer business.

Extra special thanks to **Water Warriors** for taking our Adelaide group under their wings and for all the support given to DAA during the Tunarama weekend.

Dragons Abreast Port Lincoln already boasts 20 members. The fact there is no boat is

absolutely no deterrent, but rather a small obstacle to overcome. Port Lincoln will be mirroring Tasmania by signing up members and organising community support in readiness for the day when their boat becomes a reality! The founding members are confident that will be able to have their boat on the water by September 2004 if not sooner!

The hospitality displayed by the local organisers was just fantastic – each event, from the members only Friday and Saturday night celebrations, through to the farewell BBQ dinner for all paddlers & friends were a great success! We were very honoured to have the newly crowned **Tunarama Ambassador – Christine Sherry** – join us on Sunday night.



The entire weekend was a wonderful experience, the media coverage fantastic and, best of all, I had the opportunity to get to know many of our South Australia sisters that little bit better and to meet others for the first time. Port Lincoln is indeed one of Australia's best kept secrets!

Michelle Hanton, National Coordinator

TUNARAMA REPORT

A most successful weekend after months of planning by a very small committee, numbering 3 members originally! Encouragement and support from the local community has been overwhelming and we could not have achieved so much without their help.

Membership of DA Port Lincoln has now grown to 20 members.

The DAA members only, drinks and nibbles held at Maxine's place on Friday night set the tone for the rest of the weekend as we kicked off with Pink Champagne, Pink Flowers, Pink Chocolates all laid up on a beautiful Pink tablecloth & members were greeted with 'Welcome Packs' containing special little goodies. It was wonderful to meet the girls from the newly formed Adelaide group – **Warriors Abreast**.

Saturday morning saw us up bright and early. For many this was the first close up look at a 'real' dragon boat. The organisers divided the DA

teams into three groups, Pink, Green and Blue Dragons. The morning races drew great interest from local spectators who had never seen a dragon boat before, and many rushed to sign for the afternoon "Come & Try Sessions"

Lunch time saw a quick dash to the local primary school to make the final adjustments to the 'float' - an 'upmarket'(Mark 2) of the Henley on Todd version of the Dragon Boat



Tunarama Float – Maxine Barker & Sandra Sinclair lead the troops!

The crowd was huge as well as very loud and enthusiastic in their support for our float. We certainly made a 'splash'! Many of the girls mentioned they had not been in a street parade since school days & what a wonderfully exciting and fun time it was!

Saturday night saw DAA members gather in Sandra Sinclair's garden for a fabulous feast & continue to get to know each other – especially Beth & Richard! Lots of fun and laughter peppered the evening before it was time to make our way to the foreshore to watch the fabulous fireworks display.

Sunday morning saw us all enthusiastic for the final races! Port Lincoln members did themselves proud as we paddle to victory in the Green team and also the "Come & Try" trophy was won by another local group featuring two of our members, **Chris Jettner** and **Di Grocke**.



The winning "Come & Try" team

The fabulous response to the Come & Try sessions held over the weekend – when 91 people registered to have a try – is a clear indication that we are on the right track with our determination to see a boat become a permanent fixture on Boston Bay

The weekend was capped off with a BBQ held at Flinders Park attended by over 80 paddlers and supporters. We ended the evening with a group hug and a promise to see Dragons Abreast back at Tunarama next year – bigger and better!

Our work was still not over – Monday morning saw the inaugural public meeting. .

We were delighted with the roll up of 20 keen and enthusiastic women. We agreed to meet fortnightly for further discussion, gentle exercise and fundraiser planning. Our target date is Sept 04 – maybe sooner! Sponsors are already coming forward & further details will be published in future newsletters. *Maxine Barker*

AROUND THE DAA WATERWAYS

Lake Burley Griffin in the ACT:

- Sylvia Flaxman organized a fundraising event which may be of interest to other groups. An opportunity arose whereby Dragons Abreast were invited to marshal at an Australia Day Triathlon for which we were paid. If all members had been free to participate we would have raised over \$1,000 but it was still a healthy \$400 plus.
- Also on Australia Day three Dragon Boat crews showed off their skills on the Lake while Canberrans were gathering for the Fireworks. Put a camera on our media tarts and they really flaunt the pink!
- A full team will be participating in the Chinese New Year and many will be entering the “Mum in a Boat” race.
- A bus is being organized to take the crew to Lake Illawarra for the Shell Harbour Festival on 6 March.
- Multicultural and Canberra Day regattas are coming up.
- Lenyss Snellen has begun a Dragons Abreast quilting group under the direction of her daughter Carol and we should have a magnificent quilt to raffle.
- A proverb from China: The front boat is eyes for the one behind!

VICTORIA

This season the **Melbourne** International Dragon Boat Festival will be part of the Melbourne Moomba Riverfest long weekend on **Sunday 7 March, 2004**. Crowds are expected to be huge!

To date we have about 50 paddlers/supporters registered, with approximately 20 new to the sport plus the **Bendigo** team consists of 30. We expect to enter 3 or 4 boats in the Melbourne International Dragon Boat Festival.

Our boat, the “**Judy Costello**” has been painted and looks fantastic- & now permanently at home on the Yarra river. The group became incorporated recently. Thanks also to **Marjie** for her great effort with the raffle.

Latest news is that 25 completed the VDBA accredited Safety Drill in Geelong on Wed night, so Tracie, Linda etc. now have enough BCS paddlers & supporters to train on the Barwon! Just need a coach & to organize finances for hiring the boat from the Canoe Club. *Pru Menzies*

SOUTH AUSTRALIA – Warriors Abreast -

Adelaide’s newest team & only member of DAA, had their first outing in Pt. Lincoln with four of their paddlers being original founding members of S.A. Dragons Abreast when the late Carlene B. first formed the team. We have 17 registered members and another 7 potential members. Warriors Abreast are affiliated with the Water Warriors team who have kindly taken us under their wing. We train at West Lakes on Saturdays at 1p.m. sharp. It was great to see how everyone pitched in at Pt Lincoln and got things done when needed.

Thanks must go to Michelle Hanton for her help and encouragement in getting the team ready for Pt Lincoln. The team integrated well with the Pt. Lincoln paddlers and much partying [and some paddling] was done. We are looking forward to next year and what will their Float look like ??? I’m sure this years will be hard to beat!

Happy Paddling Everyone – *Jan Davies*



DAA Members from Adelaide, Pt Lincoln & Darwin

CHINESE NEW YEAR RACES – DARLING HARBOUR – Sydney girls are flat out arranging everything for what is going to be a fantastic weekend! We are kicking off with filming at Glebe

on Thursday afternoon for the TV station, dinner on Saturday night & then a full days racing on Sunday where 5 Dragons Abreast teams will compete! Members from VIC, ACT, NSW, NT and QLD will all be participating.

GO PINK LADIES!

NORTHERN TERRITORY - AUSTRALIA DAY CORPORATE CHALLENGE

The day was hot but what a day it turned out to be! The Darwin Dragons Abreast girls and their intrepid supporters gathered together to make up 3 teams of paddlers. We "travelled" under the name Breast Friends, since none of the groups were entirely survivors.

Following the traditional dotting of the eye ceremony, a Buddhist Monk blessing and Chinese Lion dancers performing, the day got off to a very competitive start for the Corporate Women's Premier team. We didn't win the race but certainly held our own against the Copz team who have been very competitive for the last 2 years – pretty much wiping the field clean in all categories. Several of us then moved straight into the next race - Corporate Mixed Premier team. Once again we didn't win but held our own against another Copz team.

In the Novice section there were 14 teams competing. Our Mixed Novice group paddled very well – especially considering many had not paddled for some time due to injury, extended holidays etc. Several members had only competed in a regatta once prior. It was fantastic to see the hot pink coming down the straight abreast of the other boats.

The 2nd round of races proved to be much the same but when it came to the finals we were given the opportunity to rationalize our strategy for the day. Following discussion we decided to withdraw from the Women's Premier final and focus on the Mixed Premier event as we figured we could pull out all stops and give it a really good shot. We paddled with 4 blokes and 6 women.

The strategy paid wonderful dividends as we came home with the trophy for that event!!! It was a close race the whole way which made it exciting for the spectators and the caller of the race. What really paid off for us though was all the hard work we have put in under our coach **Alan Culbertson's** guidance and his faith in us. We competed against a team half our age and who considered themselves to be quite fit. As stated earlier they have been tough competition over the last few years so we came away absolutely over the moon! I am sure none of us have lost the winners grin yet.

More importantly however was the fact that we were able to advertise our cause in the public eye and put much more credence to the fact

that there definitely is life after a breast cancer diagnosis - and it can be pretty damn good. For me personally, I have certainly been challenged to extremes I would never have thought possible through dragon boating, since my initial and subsequent diagnosis.



Dragons Abreast NT – Darwin 2004

Paddling as a "Pink Lady" and knowing that in our own way we are advocating and educating others about breast cancer awareness makes it all that much more special. As we all agree we are already winners in our race because we are here to tell the tale but it is pretty damn good coming away with a trophy for your efforts as well. And when you have the influence of Michelle Hanton, our wonderful National Coordinator as your role model and inspiration at your fingertips how could you not achieve wonderful things!

Judy Smith, Team Captain Dragons Abreast NT

PERTH - NATIONAL TITLES UPDATE

Vivienne Gregg reports that so far we have 6 from Central Coast, 2 from Canberra, 5 from Newcastle and 15 plus from Sydney, 1 from Qld, 3 from Tassie, 1 from Perth and 1 from Darwin! Details of the nationals were in the last edition of the newsletter – you can check it out on the website or request a back issue from us.

COOKS CORNER – very apt that this new segment is being started off with a slice, which we dubbed *TUNARAMA SLICE* – courtesy of **Sue Cooke** from Warriors Abreast, SA

500gms Mixed fruit – any sort you like
½cup chopped nuts – any sort you like
3 beaten eggs
2 tablespoons flour

Method: Mix all above ingredients together. Spread into a greased and lined slice tin. Bake at 160C for 20 minutes. Cool and place in the fridge before slicing.

Always live your life with one dream to fulfil. No matter how many of your dreams you have realised in the past, always have a dream to go. Because when you stop dreaming, life becomes a mundane existence.

*Sara Henderson, Outback Station Manager,
Writer & Breast Cancer Survivor*