

# DRAGONS ABREAST TASMANIA – HOBART

News Bulletin

DECEMBER 2010



When the wind is howling and the rain is pouring, what is a girl to do? Despite the appalling weather at the inaugural Dragons Abreast Australia Convention, these delegates still got their paddling exercise. Read about the convention on Page 2 of the newsletter.

## Another great year on the Derwent and beyond

We say it every December: What a year it's been. But 2010 has thrown some tremendous challenges our way from hosting the inaugural DAA Convention to competing in Canada and on the Gold Coast. We have had a great run on the water despite some blustery spring weather, enjoyed many a laugh and lots of coffee and drummed until we were numb. We have welcomed new members, provided much-needed support to some of our paddlers with health issues, and with much regret and sorrow farewelled our cherished friend Helen Taylor. The Corporate Race Day earlier this year established a good relationship with the Derwent Storm Club and this continues to develop with the formation of DB Tasmania.

Some of us are enjoying the opportunity to take paddling to a higher level but whatever our capabilities and desires, we are still part of Dragons Abreast Tasmanian-Hobart, the organisation that prides itself on participation and enjoyment.

Proudly sponsored by  
Rosny Park branch



### A Big Thank You to Bendigo Bank

The Cox-Box Sound System purchased for the club by the Bendigo Bank, Rosny, will soon be installed and operational. This will enable instructions to be heard clearly throughout the boat, and should prove invaluable in ensuring the safety of all paddlers, especially when immediate action needs to be taken. We are very grateful to the Bendigo Bank for their support.

## Inaugural DAA convention

The weather gods threw all they had at the inaugural Dragons Abreast Australia convention held in Tasmania in September.

200 delegates arrived at Hobart's Old Woolstore on a wet, cold, snowy Thursday September 16 and the conditions did not improve for the three-day event. Unfortunately the much-anticipated 9km paddle from Huonville to Franklin for seven dragon boats had to be cancelled on the first day. Instead the ever resourceful DAA arranged workshops.

Saturday saw many take advantage of a free morning to attend Salamanca Market. Mt Wellington was also a popular choice where a good coverage of snow made it possible for many to see, feel and throw snowballs for the very first time.



During a brief break in the weather one boat hit the water

Tai Chi in Parliament Gardens at noon was a good lead up to afternoon workshops with a laughter session providing plenty of good humour and happiness. On Saturday evening a formal dinner was held at the Royal Yacht Club, with Jane Hall as our inspirational speaker.

Nine singers from DATH gave a rousing rendition of some of our folio of songs sparking much fun and frivolity. Sunday dawned and buses took delegates to Franklin in the hope that we might all paddle. Alas only one boat managed to get on the river with a very strong wind and current creating dangerous conditions.

Again DAA came up with an alternative program of great team games highlighting the true spirit of Dragons Abreast. The closing ceremony of short speeches and formalities was followed by the Nourish Choir entertaining us with many delightful songs.

Despite the shocking weather and forced "shore leave", delegates were very positive about their Tassie hosts and the concept of the convention.

**Rosemary Kerrison**



Feeling good is easy with freestyle drumming

## Drumming dragon style

Some non-paddling sessions have been included in our activities so those who are out of paddling action due to various reasons can still enjoy the camaraderie of DATH.

On Saturday, 4 September, paddlers and those out of paddling action enjoyed a drumming session led by Wanasai. This proved a great Rhythm and blues ... not exactly but great fun success with all asking for more sessions.

The beat from our variety of drums and percussion instruments, ranging from authentic drums from Africa, Mexico and our dragon boats to plastic and tin buckets, drew observers from outside. We were not too sure where they came from but they were certainly 'ringins'. We drummed to the beat dictated by Wanasai then to our own beat. We drummed as directed and then with gay abandon. We drummed seriously and with great concentration and then with a freedom that resulted in the most amazing music beat you could ever be privileged to be part of or hear.



Drums, buckets, tins ....we hit 'em all

Wanasai pirouetted, swirled and jumped back and forth as she led us through duets and quartets. She had us swapping from one side of our drumming circle to the other with a precision only an expert dragon crew could muster.

Did we sound great? Did we feel great? Did we have fun? Sure did!

**Helen Mennitz**

## Padding the Pan Pacs Games a mighty personal challenge

DAT Hobart was well represented in the Tassie team competing in the Pan Pacific Masters Games in November on the Gold Coast. Held every two years, this was the seventh games this time attracting 34 different sports, with more than 11,200 competitors from 26 countries. Dragon boating was the fifth largest sport represented with 750 paddlers competing.

Never having competed in a composite representative team in dragon boating, I was curious to see if I could measure up to the competition, and whether I would enjoy the experience.

33 paddlers from Derwent Storms, DAT Hobart and one lone representative from DANWT (Devonport) combined in the Masters (over 30's) and Grand Masters (over 50's) races, held over 500 metres and 200 metres.

As well as training three times a week with your own club, the expectation was to train for 1 ½ hours on Sunday morning and a one hour 6am session on Friday morning. Additional off-water exercise was also encouraged.



Our girls at the Pan Pacs;

Coach Alison Mourant set a program that was achievable, building up fitness and stamina to a good, competitive level.

Slotting into a new combination was not difficult, and everyone was made welcome and to feel at ease. I heard nothing but positive comments throughout the boat.

The two days of racing were full on. We were on the bus at 6.30am and at the course until the presentations at the end of each day. This meant, for those in both teams, racing seven 500 metre races on the first day, and eight 200 metre races the second day.

We didn't bag any medals, but managed to win two races, one being a minor final. We certainly proved that we were competitive, especially in the over 50 category.



John and Ila Rundle enjoy the Pan Pacs

It was a bit daunting in the over 30s to look over at the opposition and know that 80% of the opposition team was younger than one's own children!!!!

Lyn Gough was sweep for the over 30's team, and as usual, did a marvellous job under very trying conditions.

We couldn't muster enough enthusiasm, and energy, to attend the Party Night (even though we had all packed our 'party frocks'). A nice meal and a few drinks at the local pub, along with a few good laughs, was the go.

It was great to catch up with Ila and John Rundle who were in the area on their caravan odyssey. They attended both days of racing and Ila paddled with one of the DA teams. You couldn't wipe the smile off her face – she was in heaven! Miriam, Maree and Danielle were also welcomed into a DA race. All the DATH survivors were lucky enough to be involved in the Flowers on the Water ceremony, with Donna hanging on for grim death on the drummer's seat. Sunday morning we attended the Pink Breakfast, held by DA Gold Coast, which rounded off the weekend nicely.

I enjoyed the experience, and came back feeling that I had achieved what I set out to do. Apart from a few twinges, the old body stood up to it pretty well, which shows that if you put the effort in, it can be done.



The Pan Pacs breakfast turned pink

I would encourage everyone to take up any opportunities to be part of a representative team. You will never know whether you can do it if you don't step outside your comfort zone and 'have a go'.

**Marilyn Percey**

## Farewell Helen Taylor

After some gentle persuasion, Helen Taylor joined our club in January 2007.

Helen competed in Caloundra later that year, but after suffering complications from a previous melanoma, and finding it difficult to paddle, Helen later took on the role of drummer.

This was a role she relished, quietly admitting that she preferred drumming to paddling. Perhaps it the school-teacher resurfacing in her but she certainly looked at home in the position.



Helen loved her time at Peterborough

With ongoing health problems in the lead-up to Peterborough, it was only a last-minute 'green light' by her medico that meant Helen could share the drumming role for our team.

As one of our representatives in the Sandy Smith Global Race and Flowers on the Water, the quiet pride on her beautiful face to be sitting up there as drummer, was unforgettable. She was truly in the moment.

Unbeknown to us, Helen had suffered a recurrence when she first arrived in Canada, and endured the festival in great discomfort.

Her gentle nature, optimism, steely resolve, stoicism and determination to make the best of everything coming her way will be long-remembered and continue to inspire us. Helen will not be forgotten. Rest in peace dear friend.  
14/3/1947 – 25/9/2010

## 2011 Calendar

### Dragons Abreast Tasmania – Hobart

**18 December 2010** – Last Paddle/Club Xmas Dinner

**15 January** – Saturday paddling resumes for 2011

**18 & 20 January** – mid-week paddling resumes for 2011

**12-13 February** – Lake Barrington Dragon Boat weekend

**5 March** – Club Open Day

**6 March** – Glenorchy Regatta (to be confirmed)

**26 March** – Corporate Day training morning

**26/27 March** – Focus on Franklin

**31 March** – 3 April – Nationals in Canberra

**10 April** – Corporate Day

**17 April** – Corporate Day (back-up day if 10/4 cancelled)

**1 May** – Bunnings BBQ

**22 August** – AGM

**10 September** – DAA Event in Qld (to be confirmed)

**16 October** – Apple and Salmon Festival, Franklin

**23 October** – Seafarers Festival, Bellerive

**19 November** – Christmas Pageant (to be confirmed)

- **Coffee on the Boardwalk**

Saturday 6 November, saw a full boat paddle around to the Bellerive Boardwalk for coffee. The conditions were quite trying, but the effort was worth it. A nice hit out after so many event cancellations due to bad weather.

- **Visitor from Canberra**

It was nice to have Jillian from DA Canberra join us for a few weeks. Jillian was a delight, and we hope she returns when next visiting Tasmania.

## Pink pool party

A pink beach party held indoors provided a whole lot of fun for a Girls' Night on Tuesday 26th October at Clarence Joint Therapy. Antics in the pool and spa were supplemented with 'Wii' fit games.

Whether getting wet or watching, it was great fun in and around the pool especially with our Clarence Cup of Noodle Races.

Helen Mennitz dominated the "Wii" penguin fish catcher game and Marilyn was the champion downhill skier. Sue Sanderson also showed great skill in catapulting our president into the air off a tightrope!



**A must have. Where did you get that apron Annette?**

We raised \$300 for the Cancer Council, including 10 bucks from a male passer by who popped in perhaps to see what all the noise was about!

**Miriam Fletcher**

- **Ruth a medallist**

Congratulations are in order for our Ruth Gooding, who was awarded the Courage Medal in the Pride of Australia Medals for 2010. She is a worthy recipient to be sure.

- **Donna is assistant state coach**

Well done to Donna, who has been named Assistant Coach of the State Team to compete in Canberra in March/April 2011.

- **Lyn is the "big sweep"**

Also congratulations to Lyn, who has been appointed a sweeps accreditor for DBTasmania.

## Relay For Life quiz night

Dragons Abreast and Friends Relay for Life team held their very first Quiz Night on in November. The night was very successful \$1297 was raised for the Cancer Council.

About 90 people attended and teams got right into the spirit of things as competition became intense during the evening. The singing after the last round was impressive and reflected the talent of team members keen to earn bonus points at a critical stage! There are many people to thank for their contribution to the success of the evening including the fantastic members of Dragons Abreast who were very supportive and willingly helped in many ways including bringing along their friends and providing the sumptuous supper.

We were also generously supported with raffle and prize donations from: Kylie Pietling (the beautiful Christmas cake); Elouera Hair Salon; Rosie's Gluten Free Cafe; and team members. A special thanks to Geoff Cashion our Quiz Master, Sue Court for her hard work preparing for the Quiz Night; and Lindisfarne Rowing Club for the use of the venue.

Our next fundraising effort is our Christmas Raffle to be drawn on 19 December. Great prizes! See Jan for raffle books and help to make this a big success as well.

**Jan Burgess**

## Apple and Salmon Festival

Conditions at Franklin were ideal for the Apple and Salmon Festival on 10 October, where we participated in three 300 metre races against the Derwent Storms.

Thanks must go to the starters' generosity in the last race, awarding us a very nice handicap, which allowed DATH to cross the finish line in front.

Congratulations to Hui and Rebecca whose first experience in paddling a dragon boat was the day before the festival. Little did they know that they would be racing the very next day!

The Club received a cheque from the Rotary Club of Huon Valley, being part proceeds of the festival, and an invitation to return in 2011.



**Sunny skies at Franklin made for enjoyable paddling**

# MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE

MAY YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES  
ENJOY A SAFE  
AND  
HAPPY FESTIVE SEASON



Fabrizio  
Sudani

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