

DRAGONS ABREAST TASMANIA – HOBART

News Bulletin

APRIL 2011



How lucky are we to have such a beautiful home for our club? Lindisfarne Bay was picture perfect for DATH's 2011 Corporate Regatta? This set the scene for a great morning's racing which hopefully encouraged more to take up dragon boat paddling.

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CORPORATE PADDLERS RISE TO OCCASION AT NOVICE REGATTA

The sun shone and the competitors smiled on 10 April – what more could we ask for? Memories of last year's forced postponement due to bad weather were at the forefront of our minds when our heads hit the pillow the night before. After heavy overnight rain and a bleak weather forecast predicting rain and high winds we all arrived at Lindisfarne on Sunday at 7am to calm and still conditions. We couldn't believe our luck.

Thirteen 'almost complete' teams of paddlers - from lawyers, bus drivers, health workers, university staff and public servants, to council workers, teachers and physios - signed on for our second Corporate Race Day. Many paddlers were back for a second dose after paddling in our inaugural Corporate Race Day in 2010.

Read more about the regatta and some great photos on following pages.

Corporate Regatta

from page 1

Practice Day, a fortnight earlier, had revealed this year's competitors looked impressive and on Race Day, once they had a paddle in their hand, they were keen to let the opposition know they meant business.

Many teams sported uniform caps, headbands and t-shirts, and most had given quite a bit of thought to their team name.

Hats off to the Sweeps with the unenviable task of controlling crews whose experience and strength were totally unknown to them. It was a huge learning curve, and an experience they are sure to remember. They all did a fantastic job and, on the odd occasion, provided quite a bit of nervous excitement for the spectators and officials, not to mention the paddlers themselves.

Announcer Andrew Lovibond delivered his usual high standard of 'chatter'. It was half expected he would turn up wearing a long blonde wig and rather sheer white soccer shorts, going on past outings in Canberra.



Andrew and Helen keep the races to schedule

The good natured rivalry between the teams was infectious, with some resorting to comical sledging to try to get the upper hand. Many of the races were closely contested, with the Firies (Habitual Line Steppers) proving victorious in the final event of the day.

Sweep, Helen Mennitz, was one very proud Mum of her boy in the victorious crew! One Firies member was overheard saying they will be conducting selection trials for next year's crew – although I think that might have been said with tongue in cheek. If not, look out everyone!

Some of the teams are already talking about our next Corporate Race Day, and it is pleasing to hear the positive feedback. As a fundraiser, it was very successful, with funds helping with entry fees and accommodation for the upcoming DAA Regatta in Caloundra in September.



Frank, Warren and Mike talk procedures

We were extremely fortunate to have so many helpers, and a big thank you must go to everyone who came forward and offered assistance. Many were family members, whose help is invaluable. Members of Derwent Storms also stepped up to help out.



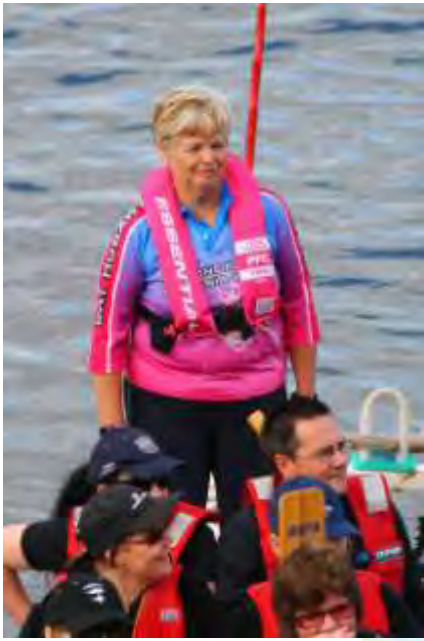
Roll call: Frank and Al call up the crews

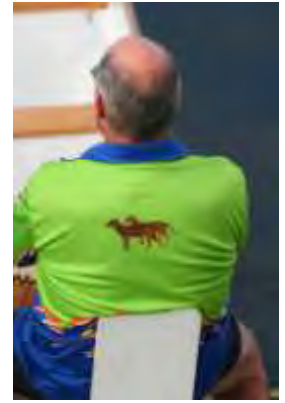
So many bodies are needed to run an event of this size, and we could not have contemplated tackling it, without our loyal 'army' of volunteers. Thank you one and all.

Keep an eye out for the DVD coming soon!



Anchors aweigh for race starters Paul and Kevin







Four dragon boat clubs hit the water at fabulous Lake Barrington

The weekend at Lake Barrington in February marked an important milestone for dragon boating in Tasmania. It was the first time the state's four clubs hit the water together. Sincere thanks must go to DANWT (Nipples on Ripples) for making it happen and extending the invitation.

We met at the Sheffield Hotel on Friday night for a counter meal before the 'singles' headed to their accommodation at the Lake and the 'couples' to a rented house in West Kentish. The house, once the general store and old bootmaker's cottage was expansive with ample room to house a large number. The only drawback was that the wood heater needed to be burning to supply hot water for showers. Ever reliable John Rundle made sure this happened, much to everyone's relief. It was nice to see some of our newer members along for their first competition and they quickly learned to bend the rules with some of the 'older' dragons leading them astray to break the curfew.



Geoff Cashion assumed an official role with a bell and flag at the race finish line

We all assembled at the lake for breakfast early Saturday morning and it was not long before the drums reverberated across Lake Barrington for a series of races. The surroundings were stunning and the lake picture perfect.



Paddling in Lake Barrington's fresh water was a novelty
The final race was based on handicap and Nipples on Ripples were victorious, thus becoming the inaugural holders of the Winner's Trophy. In the afternoon, all four boats ventured on a 10.5km round trip to Forth Falls. What a fantastic sight that was with the falls as the backdrop to the dragon boats. After a wonderful dinner, we were entertained with the sounds of Abba at the outdoor cinema featuring 'Mamma Mia'. Sunday saw a state training session, followed by some on-water training for all clubs. After lunch it was time to head home, but not before putting in our request to please come again next year. The DANWT club worked tirelessly to present an excellent weekend, with a perfect combination of on-water paddling and training, and off-water socialising. A great effort! Special thanks to Paul and Rosemary Kerrison for towing our boats all that way.

DRAGONS AT RELAY FOR LIFE

Dragons Abreast & Friends were represented in the 2011 Relay for Life by 25 registered walkers with others joining us throughout the day and night.

It was certainly a great February weekend at the Domain Athletic Centre and we were lucky with the weather. Everyone enjoyed themselves and really got into the spirit of the event.

A big "Thank You" is extended to all participants. It was wonderful to have so many at this special event. We would really like to thank the many "walkers" who represented us so well especially those of you who trudged through the wee small hours despite sore feet, aching legs and weary bodies. Many thanks also to the crew who helped to set up our site and pack up at the end. The crowd loved our dragon which really sparkled and entertained the crowd. Our final tally was \$5,427.90. This was a fantastic effort helped by a couple of major fundraising events.



As always the DATH Dragon received great applause at the Relay for Life

The Quiz Night raised \$1,297 and the Christmas Raffle \$1,114.

We have already registered DATH for next year and look forward to any suggestions for ideas on fundraising.

Once again, a big thank you for your great support of the Cancer Council and its work, to all those who assisted, walked and donated.

Sue Court and Jan Burgess



The Dragon completes its circuit of the Domain track

SWEEP ACCREDITATION

Congratulations to Lyn Gough and Rosemary Kerrison who have gained accreditation as Level 4 Sweeps – great job! And Leigh Becker, who after Lake Barrington, is now a Level 3 Sweep. Well deserved Leigh! Our trainee sweeps are continuing to clock up their "water miles" and working towards their assessment. Paddlers and drummers are easily replaceable, but without a sweep we would be left high and dry sitting on the ways.

TRAILER MODIFICATIONS

We now have a user-friendly boat trailer which makes loading and unloading our boats a breeze. Special thanks go to Kevin Robinson who generously gave his time and materials free of charge and Paul Kerrison for instigating the modifications.

GUIDES ON THE WATER

A group of Girl Guides attending their annual state camp at Orana tried their hand at dragon boating in January. They were a pleasure to have in the boat and were very attentive. All seemed to enjoy the experience.

ST HELENS REGATTA ADVENTURE FOR MAREE, MIRIAM AND DANIELLE



The Dragons Abreast salute on Georges Bay, St Helens

DATH paddlers Marea, Danielle and Miriam joined the Tamar Tittilators in their boat at the St Helens regatta in January and returned with stories of adventure on the high seas and even the arrest of an errant sailor!

The weekend started with a song. Picture the three DATH paddlers wandering the local caravan park in the dark trying to attract the attention of an encamped Tittilator by softly singing *Women in Pink*. They weren't arrested but nobody claimed them either!

Fortunately they found their Launceston buddies quay side the following morning ready for a training run. Miriam reported some new experiences such as ducking under a low bridge, doing stretches in the boat (oops) and setting sail with the blades of the paddles up!



Pretty in pink on Georges Bay, St Helens

"Some of the calls were different but it kept us on our toes," she said. "As the day got busier we pulled in a few times to let people 'come and try.' Chris Curran, a former Tittilator now resident in St Helens, is working with the local Rotary club to start a local survivors/ sports team."

Three ladies and three male supporters entered rowing boat races which proved to be fairly hazardous as vessels (paddling backwards, no sweep and not seeing where they were going) missed turning buoys, crossed each other's paths and nearly got hit but a sailor who repeatedly steered his yacht across the course. "We were yelling at him to move and he thought we were encouraging him!" Miriam said. "When he did jump out of the yacht and ran to speak to the announcer he was arrested! The excitement of St Helen's! Luckily the Dragon Boat was resting on the beach during this incident." The DATH members were made thoroughly welcome by our Launceston buddies and were invited to a dinner at Chris Curran's at which Marea got a spot prize, Miriam got a "twisted thinking" prize and Danielle won the lotto!



Food for all occasions at Chris Curran's St Helens home

A slightly blowier early morning training session the following day was followed by a wonderful breakfast at Chris's again!

Thanks to all our Launceston buddies who made us part of their crew and wishing a speedy recovery to Sue and Ros.

DATH PADDLERS JOIN STORMS FOR CANBERRA NATIONALS



From pinkies to greenies, DATH paddlers are kitted out for the Nationals. Front: Donna Fittock, Penny Zucci, Lyn Gough, Marilyn Percey, Julie Davidson, Super Sal Newlands from DANWT; back, Steve Burgess, Andrew Lovibond, Mike Percey, Miriam Fletcher and Sue Sanderson.

Seven members from DATH, along with three male members of the DATH family, competed in the Australian Dragon Boat Championships from 31 March – 3 April in Canberra.

The event was massive with over 2,300 paddlers participating, from school crews through to Grand Masters. What other sport can you think of where you can participate from age 12 to 70 years of age and over? And it's an opportunity to meet up with old friends, such as Sue Houghton who is now paddling with a club in Perth, WA. The Opening Ceremony was held on Thursday evening under stormy skies at the championship site at Lake Burley Griffin. Our very own Lyn Gough was selected to be flag bearer for Tasmania and she carried it with great dignity and aplomb.

Friday featured State v State racing over a 500 metre course. Tasmania competed in the Mixed Masters with a crew of 16 women (14 paddlers, drummer and sweep) and six men. After a great effort, our team made the final. We were just so excited to be racing off against the top paddlers in Australia, and we all rose to the occasion. It was a huge adrenalin rush.

Saturday and Sunday saw the Club Championships where we competed in crews of

10s. We were certainly competitive in all categories, with the Masters Women and Grand Masters Women winning their repechage and the Grand Masters Women making the final. No medals this time round, but next year is looking very promising.

Many thanks must go to Ali Mourant as Head Coach, Donna Fittock as Assistant Coach and Alison Le Bis (Team Manager) and Ian Mourant (Asst Team Manager). It was a great effort by all concerned, particularly controlling such a group!

Sue Sanderson's Canberra experience.....

I had a great deal of fun at the Australian Dragon Boat championships in Canberra. I had wanted to be part of a great grand masters team but unfortunately there wasn't enough interest to make a team. Derwent Storms invited me to be a sweep and I had an exciting experience sweeping both the Masters and Grand Masters women's 10 teams. I didn't deviate from the lanes either! There were six other "Pinkies" (as we are affectionately known to DS) in the teams. We had some very close races (see attached photo). The weather was superb - thank goodness - and the company was terrific. Mike P, Steve B and Andrew L also participated in both the Tassie State team, the Masters and Grand Masters mixed team races.

These events are open to us all at DATH. Potentially we could have club teams at these and other championships or otherwise be part of DS or state teams. I know Donna has issued the challenge to us all. It is great fun and well worth the effort to be part of it. So I reiterate that challenge - Melbourne next year - make a plan to be there!



The Tassie Grand Mixed Masters In the mad dash for the finishing line in the interstate competition

FOCUS ON FRANKLIN

Combine the sounds of splashing paddles and light-hearted chat with the cosy glow of headlamps and the scene is set for the DATH crew preparing for a night-training session on Lindisfarne Bay.

It's a familiar picture particularly in winter, except this time it's early autumn. The boat is shimmering like a Christmas tree and the paddlers are literally glowing with fluorescence for the annual Focus on Franklin regatta evening boat parade.



Stretches to start and there is plenty of room to swing those arms on the riverbank at Franklin

And this year spectators are enjoying a triple treat because the irrepressible Dragons Abreast paddlers are joined by their colleagues from the Derwent Storms club in another beautifully decorated dragon boat and a lone kayaker, also festooned in brilliant coloured lights for the occasion.



Lyn calls the shots as Jan, Donna and Steve weave their magic with the Xmas lights

It is a glorious sight and makes for a restful and fitting conclusion to a very full day for the DATH paddlers who have hosted a practice morning for corporate paddlers on Lindisfarne Bay before making the trek south to Franklin in the Huon Valley for a mini regatta and after-dark parade.

The racing against Derwent Storms has been spirited with Stormy sports crew taking out two races against the Pinks Ladies' one. But it's the fun of decorating the boats with lanterns and twinkling Christmas lights that has



The Vietnamese lanterns and Xmas Lights area beautiful combination

lured many paddlers to Franklin. Lyn Gough's gorgeous Vietnamese lanterns have made a second appearance and Donna Fittock's meticulously coiled Xmas lights have yet another outing on the boat. Together they are nothing short of brilliant.

Steve Burgess has provided the technical know-how with his bow-mounted bumper battery powering the light show. And not content with his efforts on the dragon boat, Steve has ensured his kayak won't be overshadowed by the larger illuminated craft. It looks fab.

Many thanks to Lorrie and Warren Harrison for encouraging us to attend the event, organising our lovely fish'n'chips dinner and being great ambassadors for their home town of Franklin. And of course thanks to photographers Leigh, Chris and Alan. Good work!



The DATH dragon boat and Steve's kayak are a glowing combination on the Huon River

DATH OPEN DAY

We had a very successful Open Day on 5 March with six prospective paddlers taking part. Two have now become members and it is hoped others will follow. Sue Downer graciously hosted morning tea where we viewed the DVD made by Save Our Sisters Miami about their club's participation at Peterborough last June. It was a case of 'spot the Tassies', catching fleeting glimpses of ourselves, hearing our club song and smiling on seeing and hearing our dear departed friend Helen Taylor with her cheeky comment.

XMAS SEEMS SO FAR AWAY

In a departure from the norm, our catering experts stayed out of the kitchen for the DATH Christmas dinner. Caterers were brought in and a band provided some great background and dance music. An enjoyable evening was capped off by an extremely generous donation from Marie Goodall of \$2000 and a beautifully hand-crafted quilt. Marie explained that she greatly admired what our club represented, and that her family had also been touched by breast cancer.



Marie Goodall with the quilt she donated to DATH

'OLD' DATH DRAGON SUE MAKES THE CANBERRA CONNECTION WITH TASSIE REPS



There was no keeping Sue Houghton (centre front) off the water when she headed home to Perth, WA, after helping to get DATH off to a wonderful start. Sue has joined a Swan River dragon boat club and met up with our Tassie reps at the nationals in Canberra. It was a happy reunion. Sue took this pic on her mobile phone. Many thanks Sue.

DATH CALENDAR

Sat 30 April – Run Girl Run: Welcome home to Deborah de Williams at Victoria Dock, Hobart

Sun 1 May – BBQ at Bunnings, Derwent Park

Mon 22 Aug – DATH AGM at LRC

Fri 9 – 10 Sept - DAA Regatta, Caloundra

Fri 7 – 9 Oct – Masters Dragonboat Titles, Adelaide

Sun 16 Oct – Apple and Salmon Festival, Huon River

Sun 23 Oct – Seafarers Festival, Bellerive

Sat 19 Dec – DATH Xmas Dinner

**WHOEVER SAID LIFE IS DULL
CERTAINLY DOESN'T WEAR PINK
AND CARRY A PADDLE !**