



ABREAST of the NEWS

DRAGONS ABREAST CANBERRA under the umbrella of Breast Cancer Network Australia

PO Box 7191, Yarralumla ACT 2600 • DRAGONSABREAST.COM.AU • ISSUE 50 • JUNE 2013



DAA Convention delegates, welcome reception, Parliament House, 17 May 2013 *Image:* Wes Forrest

DA Canberra is certainly a class act.
Rosalie Thomas, DAA executive member about the DAA Convention

DAA Convention Healthy clubs presentations and images

<http://www.dragonsabreast.com.au/other-documents/>
http://www.dragonsabreast.com.au/wp-content/uploads/canberra_conference_evaluation_results.pdf

Coordinator's report

DAA Convention

What a national Dragons Abreast Australia (DAA) Convention it was! All I can say is a very big thanks to everyone who helped out in any way and that was most members. I was very humbled when the whole Convention stood and clapped thanks for our Convention. That was for all of you! I think I can safely say that things went to plan (except for the windy weather on Friday afternoon which was out of our control). Speakers were right on target to our interests and needs, delicious food was provided at every venue including the afternoon tea at the lake on Friday. The official photographer, **Wes Forrest** was superb as usual, **Parliament House** was beautiful thanks to our patron **Senator Kate Lundy** and her lovely staff. **The Terrace** plus the Magical Tour, **Jim Styles'** band and guest speaker the inspirational **Michael Milton**, were well received on Saturday night. We all made new friends and caught up with 'old' friends! And 'our' **Frances Heaney** gave a funny and heartfelt speech from a new member's perspective of DAA on Sunday morning. **Lauren Montagnese**, daughter of **Mark and Christine Sproat**, owners of **The Brassey of Canberra**, was our own Angelina Jolie with her story on Sunday morning at the breakfast so generously provided by The Brassey. Thanks to all of YOU for the help and encouragement you gave to the DAA Convention Committee!



Unity quilt launch, Boerge Alexander, Marion Blake, Lee Moyes and Gillian Styles, 18 May 2013 *Image:* Kerrie Griffin

Several delegates who stayed at the **Forrest Hotel and Apartments** said they were touched by the BCNA pink lady silhouettes showing the path between the two supporting hotels (planted early by **Elspeith Humphries** and **Lyn Moore**, DA Brisbane).

International Breast Cancer Survivor Dragon Boat Festival in Florida, USA in October 2014.

Teams are limited but thanks to **Di Bradshaw** DA Canberra's participation and accommodation are confirmed so all we have to do is keep training. Di is awaiting acceptance in the popular biannual **Ord River Paddle** in June 2014.

DA Canberra Challenge Corporate Regatta

Project Manager **Frances Heaney** is busy planning for another successful day on **Sunday 20 October** at a new venue **Grevillea Park**. Please volunteer to share part of the action before or on the day. I have organised some paddles for the regatta which is generously being run by **CDBA** this year.



Senators Trish Crossin (1st left) and Kate Lundy (3rd from right) with Dragons Abreast Australia Board members, Sue Bowen Chair, Genevieve Carruthers, Marion Blake, Anne Stowe, Jo Parry with Brett Mason DAA CEO, DAA Convention welcome reception, Parliament House, 17 May 2013 *Image:* Wes Forrest

Check out this training paddling link

<http://www.dragonflyers.net.au/training/newbies.htm>



Michael Milton inspired the DAA Convention delegates, The Terrace restaurant, 18 May 2013 *Image: Wes Forrest*



Brett Mason DAA CEO paddled with us at 6.30am on Tuesday 21 May on a crisp morning on beautiful Lake Burley Griffin. We look forward to positive changes and a great future for DAA.



Pasty Sheales, Senator Kate Lundy and Brett Mason DAA CEO, DAA Convention welcome reception, Parliament House, 17 May 2013 *Image: Wes Forrest*



DA Gold Coast, Queensland, The Brassey of Canberra, DAA Convention, 18 May 2013 *Image: Wes Forrest*



Lotus Bay, DAA Convention, 17 May 2013 *Image: Wes Forrest*



DA Pdragons, Penrith, DAA Convention, 18 May 2013 *Image: Wes Forrest*

Handmade Markets

It is a fantastic opportunity to promote breast cancer awareness and also collect donations for local charities. We thank **Julie Nichols** and her team and encourage members and friends to support the Handmade Markets and [Shop Handmade Canberra](#). Thank you to **Karen Visser, Bea Brickhill, Gigi Lungu, Di Bradshaw, Frances Heaney, Donna Lennon, Annette Dean, Julie Kesby, Denise Brown, Kerrie Griffin** and **Marion Blake** who collected \$1500 on 9 June. www.handmademarket.com.au

Thank you to **Di Bradshaw** and **Anne Baynes** who are sharing the coordinator's role while I'm away. All DAA information is to go to Di. **Di Bradshaw** is also the merchandise person while Cindy is away.

Our thoughts are with **Sue Drew, Lenyss Snellen, Katherine Kralikas** and **Val Barger** and family. We hope to see everyone soon paddling, at coffee or at the **Dragon Muster** on Wednesday 21 August at the Belconnen Community Centre. Paddles up! **Pasty Sheales**
Coordinator Dragons Abreast Canberra
canberra@dragonsabreast.com.au

DAA website

<http://www.dragonsabreast.com.au/>
<http://www.dragonsabreast.com.au/act/>

Fernwood Thank you for your sponsorship at: [Belconnen Gym](#) and [Gungahlin Gym](#).

Merchandise

Look out for the DA shop on Saturdays from **Di Bradshaw's** car boot. Please bring cash or cheque to pay. [ACT merchandise price list](#)



DA Illawarra and others, DAA Convention welcome reception, Parliament House, 17 May 2013 Image: Wes Forrest



DA Wagga Wagga, Denise Flockton (centre), DAA Convention, 18 May 2013 Image: Wes Forrest

Dragons Abreast Unity Quilt

I had great pleasure to unveil the Dragons Abreast Unity Quilt, which was specially sewn together to celebrate the 2013 DAA Convention. The quilt was an amazing project which involved and united all 37 DAA groups who contributed squares.

The quilt project began in Canberra in August 2012, evolving from a thread of an idea at coffee and woven into what has become a really beautiful work of art. The stunning squares that you and your members decorated and contributed now represent your group. They were joined together by a small team in Canberra — **Boerge Alexander, Lee Moyes, Gillian Styles and Marion Blake.**

It seems the result truly demonstrates the positive strength, depth and diversity of DAA as an organisation. The squares and DAA have many similarities and, united or sewn together can be beautiful, dynamic, strong and coordinated. But, look closely and you will see that each of these beautiful squares is different; with many varied and individual ideas and styles, representing us in our different regions across Australia.

Some squares are beautifully embroidered or quilted by experienced sewers while others are more naively constructed by less experienced seamstresses. But, each is equally effective, representing established DAA groups as well as newer, struggling or starting out groups. Some squares, I regret to say, were touched by the iron or the scissors as the quilt team stretched and pulled them into shape and some have melted in the process of uniting the seams. Perhaps this



Unity quilt launch, DAA Convention, 18 May 2013 Image: Wes Forrest

represents us as individual DAA members and groups, some of us a bit damaged and all at a different shape and stage of our journey, but resilient enough to be stretched and challenged and proudly stand under the DAA banner. I am sure that like the squares, the DAA Convention will identify and reinforce the beliefs and philosophies that unite us. Remember that while individually every square or group is beautiful, together they are spectacular!

On a personal level, being part of the quilt was quite an emotional experience. Maintaining contact with people around the country as they worked on and sometimes agonised over their squares. I received each square in the mail, often carefully wrapped in many layers with a lovely card explaining the meaning or something very special about them. What a responsibility I had to ensure they were kept safe and respected! I captured some of the stories in a scrapbook.

Of course, my worst nightmare happened. The last two squares were lost in the mail following floods in Bundaberg and Clarence Valley. Apparently, bags of wet mail are destroyed. So sadly, after many urgent emails and phone calls, these groups were able to with great understanding and tolerance, replace their beautiful squares. Thank you all for your contributions.

Brett is showing the unity quilt to a few groups in Melbourne and around the country. We plan to hang the quilt in Canberra eventually.

Marion Blake 18 May 2013

Go quilt! I think sharing the quilt plus photographs of it presents a message of building unity among DA groups. **Gillian Styles**



Jim Styles and Tony Thomas played cool jazz, DAA Convention, The Terrace restaurant, 18 May 2013 Image: Wes Forrest



DA Mornington Peninsula, Victoria members register with Debbie Whitfield, Boerge Alexander and Colleen White, Lotus Bay, DAA Convention, 17 May 2013 Image: Kerrie Griffin



Elsbeth Humphries, Frances Heaney, Anna Wellings Booth, Patsy Sheales, Jo Parry and Lyn Moore, DAA Convention welcome reception, Parliament House, 17 May 2013 Image: Wes Forrest

DAA Convention

To everyone who helped to make the 2013 national Dragons Abreast Australia Convention a success, thank you for your time, talents, good humour, enthusiasm and teamwork. What a fabulous team we are at DA Canberra! No doubt, shortly we will become a convention organising company!

So many members were involved in so many ways, either in preparation, with ideas, finding sponsors, loaning or collecting things or a host of other roles, so apologies in advance if I miss naming any of your but here goes...Thanks to the welcome team headed up by 'meeter and greeter' captain **Di Bradshaw** who organised a group to meet delegates at the airport and drive them to their hotels — many even took them sightseeing to showcase Canberra — **Kerrie, Di, Anna, Amelia, Julie Richardson, Francis, Elspeth Humphries, Lee Moyes, Narelle Powers, Susan Pitt and Theresa Kerby.**



Wes Forrest, Judy Cluse, Anna Wellings Booth, Lyn Moore and Susan Pitt with new puppy, Lotus Bay, DAA Convention, 17 May 2013 Image: Kerrie Griffin

Thanks to **Boerge Alexander** and **Cindy Young** who did a magnificent job pre-convention with the welcome bags, and to Boerge and her merry team, including **Colleen White, Lee, Deb Whitfield, Gillian Styles, Elly McGuinness** and **Theresa Kerb**, who assembled dinner menus, packed and sewed bags and much more.

Thanks to **Boerge** for organising registrations and merchandise sales, ably assisted by a team including one of our newest members **Maureen Wild**, as well as **Judy Cluse, Colleen, Di, Kerrie, Elly, Denise Brown, Lee** and others.



Patsy Sheales, and Bea Brickhill with our new Dragons Abreast Canberra Flag which was generously sponsored by **Edmund Kralikas Financial Planning** and **Fernwood Fitness Belconnen** and **Gungahlin** and launched at the DAA Convention, 18 May 2013 Image: Wes Forrest



Lotus Bay, DAA Convention, 17 May 2013 Image: Wes Forrest



Excellent high calibre presentations on exercise for recovery, cognition and exercise in relation to lymphodema were given by Liz Charlton, Disa Smee and Dr Kate Pumpa, University of Canberra, DAA Convention, 18 May 2013 Image: Wes Forrest



DAA Convention, 18 May 2013 Image: Wes Forrest



DAA Convention, 18 May 2013 Image: Wes Forrest

Thanks to **Kerrie** for planting the Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA) Mini Field of Women with me, finding things, setting up the AV etc. Thanks to **Theresa** and **Mim Forrest** and their team who organised a yummy afternoon tea with homemade goodies at the lake. Despite the weather which did not allow paddling it was a huge pre convention success. Thanks also to sweeps **Gillian Styles**, **Deb Whitfield** and **Les Williams**, CDBA President, who were ready to take us all paddling and sightseeing.

Thanks to all those involved in the welcome reception at Parliament House including **Kerrie** and **Anna** who liaised with Parliament House and **Senator Lundy's** office; to **Lee** who delivered the list to security; to **Patsy** for organising the menus and to the wonderful group of DA members who acted as waitresses and kitchen hands.

Thanks to **Francis Heaney** for representing all new DAA members by speaking about her impressions; to **Robyne Kellett** who gave a presentation on paddling technique; to **Narelle Powers** who facilitated a session on Code of Conduct; and to **Jan Skorich** who presented on social media

Thanks to **Patsy Sheales** who was a superb hostess and acted as Convention MC on many occasions as she so warmly welcomed our guests. Patsy was also key in the organising committee and spent many hours in planning.

Thanks to **Anna** who, despite her own and David's ill health, continued with a huge role both in planning and implementing the event. Anna also spoke in the members group journeys session (with **Elsbeth** and **Jan Skorich**) and led the meditation group on Sunday morning.

Thanks to **Bea Brickhill** who assisted with the initial planning and venue selection and who arranged for **Michael Milton** to be our motivational dinner speaker. Thanks to **Marion Leiba** who made a great map identifying teams' locations and who was represented. Thanks to **Deb** and **Annette Dean** who took on the lucky door prize roles at the dinner when poor Katherine was sick. Thanks to **Lee** for her great workshop lists and work on the planning committee.

Thanks to **Elsbeth** and **Kerrie** for organising guided sightseeing trips on the bus and to **Susan Pitt** for her ongoing assistance, with among other things acting as parking attendant standing in the cold on Saturday night directing traffic.

Thanks to **Wes Forrest** for being a fantastic event photographer. Thanks to **Denise Brown** for collecting the birthday cake and candles and delivering it to The Terrace. Thanks to **Gillian**, **Elsbeth** and **Colleen** who acted as note takers or facilitators at workshops

Finally, a **big thanks to all of you in DA Canberra for hosting this wonderful event, whether you were there physically or in spirit**. Your support was tremendous and we did it really well. Here is to a great future for DAA across Australia!

Marion Blake
Event Coordinator and DAA Board Member

Congratulations on the **Unity quilt project undertaken by Marion Blake, Gillian Styles Boerge Alexander and Lee Moyes**. What a fantastic concept for unifying and healing our national 37 clubs and it looks sensational. Thank you to all the high calibre speakers who spoke on relevant topics. I particularly enjoyed the *healthy minds and bodies* session, especially **Caroline Sainsbury's** comment that any cereal with cartoons on it or containing a toy is not a cereal!
Kerrie Griffin, editor

Member group journeys

Three members gave us a brief glimpse into their lives as members of Dragons Abreast. **Anna Wellings Booth**, aka *The Old Dragon* from Canberra, skipped down the aisle waving her walking stick and related the tale behind the title to the amusement of all. She then brought the room to a hush with the following:

When reminiscing and preparing a talk my mind inevitably sees the faces of those inspirational women who have left us. Kerrie planted a BCNA Mini Field of Women outside and I'm sure many of you will reflect on the life of someone special. But, collectively, I'd ask you to pause briefly and remember them with joy, not sadness, and silently thank them for their legacy of passion, friendship and courage.

Anna highlighted some special times with DAA — the first composite team in the Nationals in Penrith in 2000, the first international composite team in Toronto, Canada in 2001, the writing of the DAA book, *A dragon's tale*, with **Michelle Hanton**, the first international regatta in Australia in Queensland in 2007, to name but a few.



Juliette Sizer, Rainbow Dragons Abreast, Lennox Head NSW, DAA Convention, 19 May 2013 *Image: Wes Forrest*

Juliette Sizer, Rainbow Dragons Abreast, Lennox Head NSW, gave an animated presentation on her addiction to dragon boating. Juliette's excitement and sheer joy in belonging to the group was palpable as she brought a smile to every face with her unbridled enthusiasm!

Maxine Barker, DA Port Lincoln, told of her dream that became a reality and how the local community support DA. Most were just a wee bit envious when Maxine mentioned their boat house! She spoke of how **Madeleine Luck** donated \$20,000 at the Oz Masters' Games in Canberra in 2003. Three fantastic stories from three diverse locations!



DA Canberra 2007 international *Abreast in a boat*, Caloundra, Qld, organising committee members, Elspeth Humphries, Anna Wellings Booth and Jan Skorich, 19 May 2013 *Image: Wes Forrest*

Beginnings

I would like to endorse **Sue Bowen's** remarks on our final day. She spoke of the beginnings of DAA and urged us not to forget the hard work done by **Michelle Hanton**, followed by Canberra and then **Janelle Gamble** in Queensland. It was difficult in those early days to be taken seriously. Anything new — constitutions, mission statements, logos, branding — had to be worked on from scratch. It is so much easier now for groups to be established as DAA is a well known and respected group around Australia.

DAA will continue to evolve, improve and grow stronger with a new CEO, a dynamic Board and committed women around the country but we must never forget the start it was given by Michelle at the end of 1998 and the encouragement and support of the Canadian women.

Anna Wellings Booth

What it means to me: A DAA newcomer's perspective

After the national **BCNA conference** in October 2012 in Sydney I stayed on for the **DAA Regatta**. I remember walking to Cockle Bay and being hit by a sea of PINK, which is not my colour, but look at me now — I am very proud to wear it! I headed straight to the merchandise tent and busily brought a Caloundra shirt, DA magnet, pen, sticker and a fake dragon tattoo, but now I have 3 real tattoos, like many of you.



Frances Heaney, representing all new DAA members, talks about her experience of recently joining DAA, DAA Convention, 19 May 2013 *Image: Wes Forrest*



Frances Heaney in front of *Gecko*, with members from around Australia, Lotus Bay, 17 May 2013 *Image: Wes Forrester*

I will never forget the DA NSW lady who served me. She asked me what my name was, where I was from and if I paddled. So I told her Canberra and I didn't paddle. She replied I will see you in Canberra next year for the DAA Convention — I just laughed! Not only was this lovely lady the President of DA NSW but she must be a clairvoyant because here I am!

I was thinking I could have a go at standing up holding onto that big wooden pole at the back! Little did I know that was the sweep; I thought that looks way easier than the paddling.

My first Come and Try was on 25 November. I turned up with my newly acquired BCNA pink bag thinking someone will see me. Of course, I was early and feeling very nervous. The next thing is the car park filling up with pink ladies. My opening remark was 'I would like to have a go standing up holding that pole'. Now I know why they were so happy to see me, a potential new sweep in the making. Little did I know what was involved in being a sweep. The next moment I had a paddle in my hand and I was hooked by the first bridge.

My second week started with the regular 6.30am Tuesday paddle, a magic time of the day, followed by the Wednesday afternoon paddle. I was lucky to be part of a very moving experience on Springbank Island. We paddled over with two boats full and scattered the ashes of a very dear member, **June McMahon**. The following Tuesday I was at my first 'flowers on the water' ceremony for **Annie McNeill**. Wow, we scattered petals around a very gorgeous bay on Lake Burley Griffin; it looked awesome.

Anna Wellings Booth emailed the team to join her in a photo shoot for the cover of the 2013-14 ACT telephone book. This was in recognition of Anna's tireless efforts for DA and breast cancer not only here in Canberra but nationally. At 5.45am on 8 December, poor Anna was frozen as were the crew waiting for the sunrise. But what a great photograph. We are now known as the 'cover girls'!

The following week was my first regatta which was awesome and followed by the annual DA Christmas party that night. I thought these girls know how to party. Then the worst news of all



Image: Telstra phone book 2013

NO PADDLING until 12 January 2013! Please keep in mind this all happened in my first 3½ weeks. I thought 'bring on 2013'!

2013 began with me as the new Project Manager for the annual 20 October **DA Canberra Regatta**. Thankfully, we have a club full of fantastic organisers, sweeps, coaches and just generally fabulous women. I have plenty of mentors! I am on the DA Canberra Committee, and attend the CDBA (Canberra Dragon Boat Association) monthly meetings with **Patsy Sheales**.

I was very lucky to paddle with the local **Diamond Phoenix** club and a few other DA members at the **Jindabyne Floating Festival** on 17 February. We brought home the gold trophy — it was awesome. I signed a shark waiver and paddled in the **CNY Regatta** in Sydney the following Sunday. We took out the minor final I thought, great my first medal but NO medal for the minor final. It was another fantastic experience with DA Canberra.

The Centenary of Canberra Day demonstration paddle alert went out to all clubs, so I put my name down for both morning and afternoon sessions. Again, I was lucky to be invited on the **Diamond Phoenix** boat. I was thinking it will be great fun paddling around Central Basin waving at people — little did I know what I was in for!

Les Williams, CDBA president and our sweep, thought it would be a good idea to have a few 100 metre sprint races that turned into 12. I was exhausted but had signed up to the late afternoon session with DA Canberra. It was out of the red shirt and into the pink and stroking with **Di Bradshaw**. Three quarters of the way around I did the 'lay down Sally'. I was totally exhausted, so I became the drummer, a very smooth transition back to the Yacht Club. We rested and returned for our final lap, where I was drummer. I have now

tried every position in the boat: paddler, sweep, engine room, stroke and drummer.

On Wednesday 20 March my first post breast cancer mammogram was all good but not the ultrasound. I knew something was wrong when the technician hovered in the one spot, this time, on the left side. When I'd had my call back last year and saw the black fuzzy felt pen coming towards me I thought this isn't looking good! The doctor said we have a problem and I thought oh no, not again. I was still in recovery from last year's hit. When they required a core biopsy I said to do it now as I am in my first 2km dragon boat race on Sunday!

This was also our club's first 2km race and for our coach/sweep **Narelle Powers**, so I didn't want to miss that boat. I was in the boat on the Sunday, it was awesome. We paddled slow and steady with great coaching and encouragement from our sweep Narelle. As we approached the finish line there were people running up to us cheering and clapping. It was mad. We formed our own paddles' guard of honour joined by a few other teams. It was fantastic and we paddled in under 15 minutes.

The pathology confirmed an 'active suspicious lesion' which was removed on 12 April. Just before, I asked to see my surgeon who thought I must be anxious about the surgery. I said I am not worried about the surgery; I am in your hands. I want to know how long before I can start dragon boating!

I'm now into my 4th month of paddling, out of six. I had four weeks for recovery and the pathology was benign; I'll have six monthly check ups. On my first paddle on 11 May I was lucky to have **Jan Skorich** as my buddy. I gave her the full body twist with the underarm look. Jan said I've got it, that's it! I said it even feels good; I studied the video Jan sent me.

Check out this training paddling link

<http://www.dragonflyers.net.au/training/newbies.htm>

The next day, I was in my first **Mothers Day Classic** paddle. It was a very cold foggy morning. You couldn't see past the front of the boat, but off we went with one of DA's expert sweeps, **Boerge Alexander**, who guided us beautifully over to Rond Terrace in the thick fog. It was magic. We appeared out of the fog just as **Senator Kate Lundy** (who you met at Parliament House) said 'all eyes to the water, here comes Dragons Abreast Canberra in their boat.' Thousands cheered wildly and clapped; now I know what a rock star must feel like!

I nursed for 26 years and looked after many women with all stages of breast cancer never thinking that one day my name would be on that register. I was very lucky that I knew exactly what I was up for, unlike some poor women who have no idea what is going to happen to them. I had a fantastic team of medical people looking after me.



Liz Charlton (nee Turner), physiotherapist talked about exercise, DAA Convention, 17 May 2013 *Image: Wes Forrest*

I am seeing the awesome **Liz Charlton (Turner)**, Lymphoedema physio (who spoke on 18 May on exercise). I am joining the gym where Liz runs a two day a week program for her patients.

Recently, I pushed a trolley around my work place selling pink buns for the **BCNA Bakers Delight Pink Bun** campaign. I am now known as the pink bun lady, it was great fun. I made new friends while raising money for BCNA.

I was chosen as the DA Canberra representative to attend the BCNA Summit, 8-9 August in Sydney. The Ord River paddle is on the radar next June and Florida in October — I can't wait.



Marion Blake, Anne Stowe, Frances Heaney (centre) and DA members, BCNA Mini Field of Women, The Brassey of Canberra, DAA Convention, 17 May 2013 *Image: Kerrie Griffin*

My life was turned upside down in 2012 when I was diagnosed with breast cancer. The last six months my feet haven't touched the ground. I wish, like all of you, that we didn't have to qualify how we did to join in the wonderful sport of dragon boating — it was a pretty rough entry ticket.

I have played many team sports but nothing compares with this team sport, the friendship, and the quiet understanding among us. I wish you all good health and I hope you enjoyed your stay in Canberra. This conference was simply the best!
Frances Heaney



Patsy Sheales, Senator Kate Lundy, Brett Mason and Marion Blake, DAA Convention welcome reception, Main Committee Room, Parliament House, 17 May 2013 Image: Wes Forrest

Parliament House welcome reception

Senator Kate Lundy has an idea, one she'd like Dragons Abreast to take on, and as their patron she suggested it when welcoming the local Dragons Abreast members and visitors from around the country to their 2013 Dragons Abreast Australia Convention.

She suggested: How about tying pink ribbons to the nipples of that lugubrious Skywhale?

Well, she has a lot of them and drawing attention to breast cancer is a handy use for her pendulous puppies though it may take a bit of organising but if any group can do it, this one can. We were at a reception in the Main Committee Room, Parliament House where most people come to experience trepidation, humiliation and consternation as they're quizzed by members of Parliament on all manner of things but on this night it was a vision in pink. Lots of it worn by these fantastic women who formed a formidable **Weyr of Dragons** for a group photo with some lolling about on the floor — I bet that hasn't happened before — and now my favourite description for a gathering of them.

The program of events for this convention — Patsy Sheales, DA Canberra coordinator, also welcomed guests — was comprehensive, collaborative and informative. From paddling techniques to member's



Skywhale over the National Museum of Australia, 11 May 2013 Image: Susan Pitt



DAA Convention welcome reception, the foyer, Parliament House, 17 May 2013 Image: Wes Forrest

personal journeys, healthy minds and bodies to developing a code of conduct, with a morning walk, meditation session and a magical sightseeing trip around the city's icons before meeting at the Australian War Memorial for the Convention dinner.

Particularly important was the launch of the Dragons Abreast Unity Quilt, a project conceived by **Marion Blake** with all member groups contributing panels, pieced by Marion and her quilting friends with machine quilted borders and the names of those contributing stitched onto it. The quilt is a permanent work of art that unites and identifies this group of women who paddle because of breast cancer and come together to celebrate participation and inclusiveness as survivors. To remind you often of this initiative, the group is on the cover of the new phone book.

Lyn Mills, *The Canberra Times*

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/entertainment/about-town/dragons-abreast-may-23-20130522-2k0do.html>

I appreciate all the hard work that went into making this a truly successful convention. The program was really interesting and well balanced and I think achieved a lot for the development of DAA. The attention to detail in welcoming visitors to Canberra was so successful and really added to their experience. I really enjoyed my various tasks — it was so well organised. Once again, DA Canberra showed it is a fantastic team, achieving results beyond our expectations and having fun doing it. Thanks everyone!

Elsbeth Humphries



Debbie Whitfield sweeping DAA Convention members under the rainbow. What's at the end of the rainbow? Why us of course! said Boerge Alexander, 19 May 2013 *Image: Manuela*

Sometimes a bit of synchronicity comes our way... my friend Manuela was out for a walk and look what she captured on her phone! It's so good that there are DA paddlers from all around the country.

Jan Skorich

I thought it was fantastic, how special. And let me tell you from the front of the boat we were actually right at the end of the rainbow for quite some time. Yes very special.

Boerge Alexander

All the ladies loved being picked up from the airport and thought the show bags were fantastic; they appreciated lifts to and from the lake. They didn't mind in the least that they took a walk instead of paddling and really enjoyed their afternoon tea by the lake. That was feedback before the convention!

Julie Kesby

I would just like to add my personal congratulations to all those involved in the fabulous Convention. The positive vibe generated by all attendees was nothing short of extraordinary. There were many highlights for me, but the stand out was **Anna** skipping down the aisle to the lectern. WOW! It's an absolute privilege for me to be part of such a wonderful team.

Wes Forrest, photographer

World's Biggest Morning Tea

Lauren Montagnese is a beautiful young lady of 24 with a sparkle in her eyes, personality plus and just like Angelina Jolie inherited the BRCA 2 gene. For her it was not a story for *The New York Times*, but one shared at the annual **WBMT** at the **Forrest Hotel and Apartments** on 23 May. She revealed her story among a network of friends, business acquaintances of her family and supporters of the organisational skills of **Dorothy Barclay** and the



Lauren Montagnese shared her story at breakfast at The Brassey of Canberra, DAA Convention, 19 May 2013 *Image: Kerrie Griffin*

hotel's team. **Forrest Hotel and Apartments** is a regular sponsor happy to contribute to the ACT Cancer Council's WBMT supporting efforts in the field of research, patient and family support, education and community awareness.

Lauren's grandmother and mother both had breast cancer, and at 17 Lauren took the test, the genetic lottery test no one wants to win, and yes, she was positive. She waited four years but did have the double mastectomy and in the way girls talk about their 'girls' she's happy with the result — she is recently married with a positive outlook for a cancer free life.

So far the WBMT has raised \$110 million over 20 years, survival rates are increasing, we're better educated about prevention, research is finding solutions and the support networks have grown exponentially. That's all so good.

Lyn Mills, The Canberra Times

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/worlds-biggest-morning-tea-forrest-hotel-may-28-20130527-2n6ef.html>



Warm up and training times

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 6.15 for | 6.30am | Tuesdays |
| 12.15 for | 12.30pm | Wednesday |
| 8.00 for | 8.30–9.30am | Saturdays |

Contact: **Lee Moyes**
lea@millpost.com.au

Some great paddling technique tips:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7IRbj3K8c4&feature=player_embedded

Remember water, hat, sunscreen and sunglasses!

If you want to have a try at sweeping contact:
Narelle Powers narelle.powers1@defence.gov.au
 or **Elsbeth Humphries** humphries44@ozemail.com.au

Weather watch
<http://www.canberrayachtclub.com.au>
<http://www.canberrayachtclub.com.au/webcam/cam>

Dragons Abreast Canberra Dawn Paddle (62 photos)
 Images to entice everyone to Tuesday morning paddling:
 Narelle sweeping, Frances and Sylvia stroking, 22 January 2013
images: Chris Holly

Under the pink umbrella



Breast
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Australia

www.bcna.org.au



BCNA Mini Field of Women at the Dragons Abreast Canberra Corporate and Social Regatta 20 October 2012

Help support BCNA

Every day this year, 41 Australians will be told they have breast cancer. As the end-of-financial year approaches we encourage you to think of BCNA and if you are in a position to do so, make a secure online donation.



Marion Blake, Anne Stowe, Frances Heaney (centre) and DA members, BCNA Mini Field of Women, The Brassey of Canberra, DAA Convention, 17 May 2013 *Image: Kerrie Griffin*

BCNA Summit

Congratulations to **Frances Heaney** representing DA Canberra and **Gillian Styles** as a Community Liaison representative who were selected by BCNA as ACT participants at the BCNA Summit in Sydney on 8–9 August. The BCNA National Summit is a fantastic opportunity to network, share knowledge and experiences, and develop skills to support members. <http://www.bcna.org.au/events/bcna-national-summits>

Patsy Sheales

Vale Denice Bassanelli

Sincere condolences to **Denice Bassanelli's** family and friends. Denice passed away on 30 May at Clare Holland House. Denice was such a feisty, funny person with a wonderful laugh that drew people around her like a moth to a candle. Denice will be sorely missed. She touched many people's lives.

On Saturday 1 June, Dragons Abreast Canberra paddled to the National Gallery of Australia and paused and reflected as **Elsbeth Humphries** recited the:

Salutation to the dawn

Look to this day!

For it is life, the very life of life.

In its brief course Lie all the verities and realities of your existence:

The bliss of growth

The glory of action

The splendour of beauty

For yesterday is but a dream and tomorrow only a vision

But today well lived makes every yesterday a dream of happiness

And every tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well, therefore to this day!

Such is the salutation to the dawn.

Kalidasa, Indian poet



Vale Denice Bassanelli

<http://www.bcna.org.au/secondary-breast-cancer/living-secondary-breast-cancer/personal-stories-living-secondary-breast-can-0>

My journey with breast cancer – live for today

I have been living with breast cancer for over 13 (including secondary breast cancer for 10 years) years and during this time I have seen many changes.

When I was diagnosed there were few resources especially for the younger woman. Nowadays, secondary cancer is like a chronic illness as people are living longer. There are more drugs available and with better detection people are treated earlier. There are also more resources becoming available to help women.

In May 1997 at the age of 31, I was diagnosed with early breast cancer, which came as a shock to a mother with two sons aged 15 months and 2.5 years old. I had a lumpectomy and axillary dissection followed by 6 weeks of radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

In December 2000, I was diagnosed with multiple bone metastases. I underwent radiotherapy to relieve the pain, had my ovaries irradiated and started endocrine therapy

(through the special access scheme) and bisphosphonates. In 2007 I was diagnosed with liver metastases and have had six different chemotherapy regimes.

I started doing Advocate work for BCNA in 2002. For me advocacy work helps ensure that the newly diagnosed, or those that not yet diagnosed, will have current and up to date resources. Through my own cancer experience, I like to be involved to help others have a smoother or informed cancer journey.

In 2003 I won an overseas holiday and was refused travel insurance because I had secondary cancer. I ended up obtaining travel insurance with another company 50% owned by the company that refused my initial travel insurance application. After my holiday I lodged a discrimination complaint with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) for who sided with the insurer and dismissed my complaint. I took my case to the Federal Magistrates Court which I won and the insurer subsequently lost on appeal. I wasn't looking for cover for my cancer diagnosis but wanted to make sure I was covered for anything medical not related to my cancer, lost luggage, delayed flights etc. Winning my case set a legal precedence stopping insurance companies discriminating against people have a terminal illness like cancer. HREOC guidelines for insurers are based on my court cases, without acknowledging that they dismissed my complaint.

As an Advocate there are always challenges, including public speaking! I have told my story at an Adelaide mini field of women, was a member of the working party that created Hope & Hurdles Pack. I am currently working on a NBOCC working party looking at Bisphosphonates, drugs that help strengthen bones affected by metastases.

One of the highlights of my work was sharing a breakfast prior to the start of the 2009 Tour Down Under. For me mixing with other people who have cancer is a reminder that we are all unique, that the same cancer can have vastly different effects on similar people and accordingly that our journeys are all different. Cancer has taught me to live for today, to continuously challenge my treating doctors, make decisions and to have no regrets. I believe having cancer has made me a better human being. My personality is continuously evolving with every new success or set-back during my cancer journey, requiring great understanding and support from my family. Personally, advocacy work keeps me informed with current treatment options and standards. Being involved in working parties allows my voice to be heard and show that I am a person with a life and family, not just a statistic. I hopefully have inspired others to take control of their cancer journey.

Denice Bassanelli 2011

[Field of Women postponed](#)



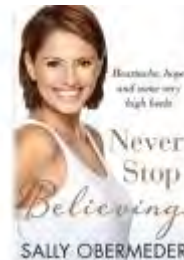
21 May 2013

BCNA regretfully advises that the Field of Women 2013 in Sydney on 10 August at ANZ Stadium will not go ahead as planned.



Kerrie Griffin, Denice Bassanelli and Susan Pitt, BCNA Mini Field of Women and launch, The Lodge, 21 October 2011

BCNA news



04 Jun 2013

BCNA member and Channel 7 Entertainment Reporter, Sally Obermeder has released a limited edition of her book, which includes a special message to her 'pink sisters'.

[Support for Tour de Crawford rolling in!](#)

31 May 2013

It was a massive night on The AFL Footy Show last night with many corporate donations going up on the Tour de Crawford board.

[BreastScreen SA releases review findings](#)

29 May 2013

The results of the BreastScreen SA independent review of lower than expected cancer detection rates were released.

[BCNA responds to 2013 Federal Budget](#)

15 May 2013

Breast Cancer Network Australia CEO Maxine Morand said today there is good and bad news in the federal budget for women with breast cancer.

"There are a number of initiatives in the budget that will help to improve cancer services, including for women with breast cancer," Maxine said.

"In particular, we welcome the provision of **\$55.7 million over four years to extend the target age range of women invited to participate in the BreastScreen Australia program**. The decision to extend the age range to include women from **50 years through to 74 years** will ensure more women receive regular mammograms and will improve early detection rates."

BCNA also welcomes funding for **Cancer Australia to collect national data relating to the stage of cancer diagnosis, treatment and frequency of cancer recurrence after treatment**. This data is not currently routinely collected and will help in the planning and delivery of cancer care services. BCNA has long advocated for the collection of this data.

"We are also pleased to note that funding has been provided to increase chemotherapy dispensing fees for pharmacists from 1 July 2013 to 31 December 2013

while the Government undertakes a review of chemotherapy funding arrangements,” Maxine said. However, some changes will increase health care costs for women with breast cancer.

“A diagnosis of breast cancer can have a significant financial impact, even for women having treatment through the public hospital system,” Maxine said. “Any increase in costs puts additional pressure on women and families.”

Maxine said the decision to increase the Extended Medicare Safety Net threshold from \$1221.90 to \$2000 from 1 January 2015 will put pressure on some families. BCNA is also concerned about the decision to delay increasing Medicare rebates until July 2014.

[Angelina Jolie's surgery](#)

14 May 2013

Actress Angelina Jolie shared publicly her decision to have a risk reducing double mastectomy.

- You can read Angelina Jolie's full article on [The New York Times website](#)
- Read [BCNA's Breast cancer in the family page](#)
- Read [BCNA's Family History fact sheet](#)
- Visit Cancer Australia's website to read [Your risk and breast cancer page](#), which includes a risk calculator to help you determine your risk

Get involved with BCNA

- [Community fundraising](#)
- [Join our online network](#)
- [Advocacy](#)
- [Speak out](#)
- [Find services & support near you](#)
- [The Beacon](#)
This issue focuses on **Body matters** – issue 63, Winter 2013
 - [Download issue 63 of The Beacon](#)
- Past issues of *The Beacon* [The Beacon archive](#).
- [Help with research](#) Join our Review & Survey Group
- <http://www.bcna.org.au/store/Merchandise>

Strengthen your recovery: A Pilates program following breast cancer surgery

Fiona Eakin, former Canberra Pilates instructor and breast cancer survivor, devised the graduated program and Estee Lauder is the generous sponsor. To order phone freecall **1800 500 258**, if you have recently had breast cancer surgery and would like more information.

<http://www.bcna.org.au/new-diagnosis/treatment/surgery/staying-mobile-after-surgery>

BreastScreen ACT

BreastScreen ACT is part of a national population breast screening program that is aimed at reducing deaths from breast cancer through early detection.

Phone BreastScreen ACT on 13 2050.

Please spread the word that BreastScreen ACT has lots of appointments available for the new digital mammography service in either **Civic** or **Woden**. They are at last fully staffed and screen women from 40 if higher risk, else the service target women from 50-69. Email susan.pitt@netspeed.com.au if you have queries about screening services in the ACT. Read more <http://health.act.gov.au/c/health?a=sp&did=10108867>

Susan Pitt, BCNA consumer representative, BreastScreen ACT Advisory Committee

Westmead BCI brochure on Vitamin D levels [Vitamin D and Breast Cancer](#)

Vitamin D Latitude Study

Women who live south of Coffs Harbour or below 30 degrees latitude in Australia have almost double the risk of breast cancer than those in the north, the Westmead Breast Cancer Institute study shows. <http://www.bci.org.au/>

[Ten years of tamoxifen may be better than five](#)

Category: [News](#) - 6 December 2012 A new study has shown that tamoxifen for ten years may benefit women with ER+ breast cancer.

Report to the nation – breast cancer 2012

For an up-to-date summary of information about the incidence, mortality and survival for breast cancer in Australia, using the latest available, see Cancer Australia's *Report to the nation-breast cancer 2012* at <http://canceraustralia.gov.au/about-us/news/report-nation-breast-cancer-2012-released>

[NBCF launch Register4](#)

The concept is very similar to BCNA's Review & Survey Group,

Otis Foundation retreats

We are very privileged that Elspeth Humphries' family allows visitors to *Creekside* during summer.

<http://www.otisfoundation.org.au/OTISSanctuaries.asp?SanctuaryID=6>

Bosom Buddies

Come to a social event and let us know you would like to take part. bosombuddies@shout.org.au

Eleanor Bates, President, [Bosom Buddies](#)

[YWCA Encore](#)

www.ywcaencore.org.au September 2013
Helps women with the after-effects of breast cancer surgery and treatment, helping to restore strength, mobility, flexibility and confidence. 02 6175 9900 or canberra@ywca-canberra.org.au

HeadsUp@Bruce

HeadsUp is a not-for-profit service established to help women who have lost their hair, either as a result of treatment such as chemotherapy or from permanent alopecia.

<http://headsup.net.au>

Open: **10am to 3pm Wednesdays and Thursdays**

<http://web.me.com/sueowen1/HeadsUp/Welcome.html>

Sue Owen 0416 227 5959

Prosthesis recycling Contact **Jan Murphy 0402 188 361**
janaliveandwell@hotmail.com.au

[Team training as a predictor of reduced recurrence among breast ...](#)

Terry Mitchell, PhD, Director of the Centre of Community Research Learning and Action and Associate Professor, department of Psychology, Wilfrid Laurier ...

www.dragonsabreast.com.au/.../TeamTrainingReducedRecurrence.htm

Jean Hailes Foundation <http://www.jeanhailes.org.au/>

Improve your brain health and performance

Build your Personalised Training Program

http://www.lumosity.com/landing_pages/188

Kerrie Griffin

consumer representative

Seat at the Table (SATT) Program, BCNA



11th Dragons Abreast Canberra Corporate and Social Dragon Boat Challenge 20 October 2012

All teams can download regatta images courtesy of Chris Holly Check Facebook for more: <http://on.fb.me/VhVm0u>
<http://www.facebook.com/dragonsabreast>

Calendar of events

Dates and events may change – please check [CDBA Canberra / Facebook](#) or www.cdba.com.au/

| Month | Date(s) | Event | Location | Notes |
|--|-----------------------|---|---|--|
| July | Monday 29 | CDBA Annual General Meeting | Lotus Bay, Yarralumla | Canberra@dragonsabreast.com.au |
| August | Wednesday 21 | Dragon Muster | Belconnen Community Centre | Canberra@dragonsabreast.com.au |
| September | tbc | Come and Try session | Lotus Bay, Yarralumla | mimwesforrest@gmail.com |
|   | Sunday 20 | Dragons Abreast Canberra Corporate Challenge Regatta | Weston Park, Lake Burley Griffin | canberra@dragonsabreast.com.au Volunteers needed moulin419@hotmail.com |
| | Sunday 20 8am–2pm | BCNA Mini Field of Women at the Regatta | Grevillea Park, Lake Burley Griffin | Volunteers needed for the BCNA stall! |
| | Monday 21 Time tbc | BCNA Mini Field of Women at Calvary | Calvary Hospital, Bruce Speakers tbc | Volunteers needed for the BCNA mini field and stall! |
| | Monday 21 | Bosom Buddies Australian Breast Cancer Day dinner | Southern Cross Club, Woden tbc | RSVP bosombuddies@shout.org.au |
| December | Sunday 1 | Wagga Wagga inaugural regatta | Wagga Wagga | canberra@dragonsabreast.com.au |
| 2014 February | 15 | <u>Flowing Festival - Lake Jindabyne.</u> | Jindabyne | canberra@dragonsabreast.com.au |
| | tbc | DA Chinese New Year regatta | Docklands, Melbourne | canberra@dragonsabreast.com.au |
| June | tbc | Ord River regatta | Ord River, WA | canberra@dragonsabreast.com.au |
| October | 24–26 | International breast cancer survivor dragon boat regatta | Sarasota, Florida, USA | http://www.ibcpc.com/2014Festival/IBCPC2014Festival.htm http://www.sarasotabcs2014festival.org/ |

Dragons Abreast Australia — Mission statement

<http://www.dragonsabreast.com.au/>

To offer hope and inspiration to those faced with a diagnosis of breast cancer and promote the fact that there is quality of life after breast cancer.

Keeping the spirit alive!

Next issue of the DA Canberra newsletter — September 2013

Thank you to all members who have contributed to this issue.

Please submit any news, items and images by 31 August 2013 to the newsletter coordinator

Kerrie.griffin@act.gov.au or taylorclan@inet.net.au



Laughter erupted as Lauren Montagnese spoke at The Brassey of Canberra breakfast, DAA Convention, 19 May 2013 *Image:* Kerrie Griffin



DA Mornington Peninsula and Jan Skorich (yellow dragon shirt), Julie, The Terrace, DAA Convention, 18 May 2013 *Image:* Wes Forrest



DA Illawarra, Lotus Bay, DAA Convention, 17 May 2013 *Image:* Wes Forrest



DAA Board members Jo Parry, Sue Bowen and Marion B lake, DAA Convention, 18 May 2013 *Image:* Wes Forrest



DAA Convention delegates, welcome reception, Parliament House, 17 May 2013 *Image:* Wes Forrest

DAA Convention Healthy clubs presentations and images hyperlinks

<http://www.dragonsabreast.com.au/other-documents/>

http://www.dragonsabreast.com.au/wp-content/uploads/canberra_conference_evaluation_results.pdf

Dragons Abreast Australia Convention: supporters

Thank you very much to all the supporters who contributed to our very successful DAA Convention.

| Type | Name of organisation | item |
|---------------|--|---|
| Major | ACTEW Water The Brassey of Canberra Forrest Hotel and Apartments 2013 Centenary of Canberra Keir's of Canberra Charter Coaches | \$1000 and drink bottles breakfast for 81 delegates @\$30pp prizes donation of buses and drivers for dinner |
| Bags | Dragons Abreast Australia ACTEW Water The Brassey of Canberra Forrest Hotel and Apartments 2013 Centenary of Canberra Australian Capital Tourism Handmade Markets Casino Canberra Keihl's Canberra Costco Fernwood Belconnen JPX2 | scarves water bottles pad and pen mug brochure brochures and maps book playing cards cosmetics chocolates books vouchers |
| Dinner | Keir's of Canberra Charter Coaches The Terrace at the Australian War Memorial Michael Milton Jim Styles and Tony Thomas St. Francis Xavier College Canberra Convention Centre Eden Road Wines Pat Lynch Nutrimetics 2013 Centenary of Canberra | Use of buses and drivers canapés and pre dinner drinks heavily reduced cost of speech band microphone wine wine at cost placemat design samples |
| Paddle | CDBA | use CDBA boats, PFDs |



Lotus Bay, DAA Convention delegates, 17 May 2013 Image: Wes Forrest

DRAGONS ABREAST – keeping the spirit alive!