



# ABREAST of the NEWS

DRAGONS ABREAST CANBERRA

PO Box 7191, Yarralumla ACT 2600

DRAGONSABREAST.COM.AU

ISSUE 87

NOVEMBER 2023



DA Canberra 21 October 2023, Kellie Nissen kindly arranged for images courtesy of: Mel Thornberry Photography (<https://melthornberryphotography.com/>)

## Coordinator's report

It's been another jam-packed couple of months since the last edition and I've started wondering if we ever really have a 'quiet time'. The committee and I have been working on establishing ourselves and making sure we have the 'business' of the club in hand. Meanwhile, under the leadership of our coaching team, we started the regatta season with some strong paddling, demonstrating our commitment to training and supporting each other.

DB ACT has implemented a new membership type for this season called 'dual club, different state' which allows paddlers from outside the ACT to join an ACT club as a dual member. **Kaaren Sutcliffe** and **Phyllis Jost** are now official DA Canberra members and they both competed in Regatta 1 which was truly exciting. Kaaren has been an honorary DA Canberra member for some time so it's fantastic to make it official!

We had a wonderful DA Come and try session on 21 October and welcome **Simary, Maree** and **Mandy** who signed up for a Dragon Pass. Thank you to **Kate Reid, Joanne Widdup, April Weiss** and the whole DA Come and try team (**Isabel Haynes** and **Sugar Masangcay**) for a wonderful morning. I extend an especially big thank you to whoever put in the order for some great weather! Please promote the next one via your networks.

[Dragons Abreast Australia](#) held its AGM on 16 November where the existing board, chaired by



DAA 25th anniversary *Flowers on the water* ceremony, eight dragon boats rafting up, Tench Park, Penrith 30 September 2023 Image: Steve Taylor

**Pearl Lee**, welcomed three new directors.

Welcome to **Desley Ralph, Robyn Ridnell** and **Vivienne Williams**. The *DAA 2022-23 Annual Report* will be published soon and I encourage you to have a read — what an exciting year it's been!

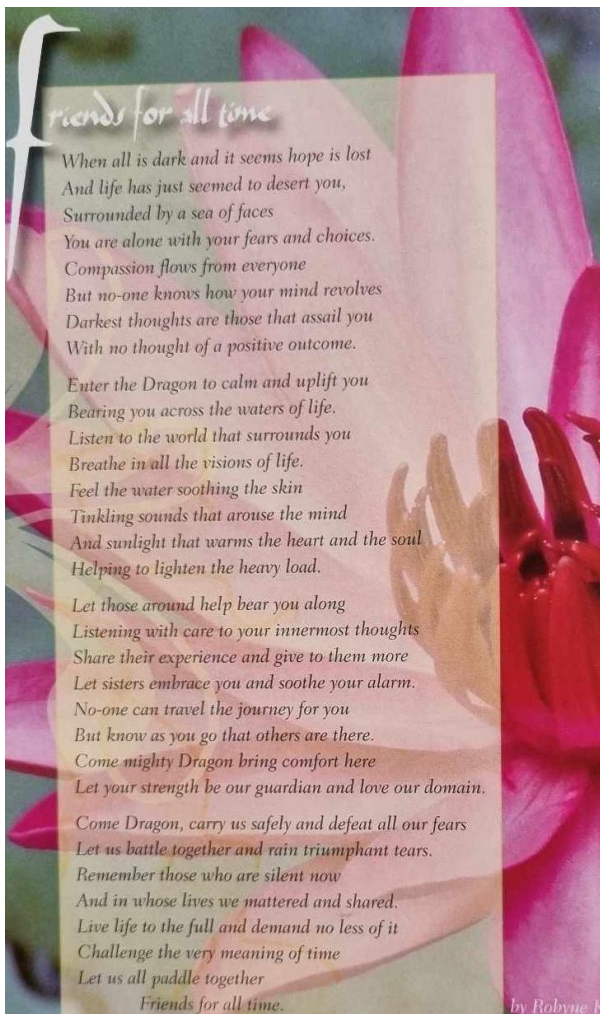
In this edition, you will read stories from DA Canberra members about the fabulous [DAA 25th anniversary](#) celebration held in Penrith at the end of September. It was a wonderful celebration of camaraderie and fun!

While we're talking anniversaries, 2024 marks the 25th anniversary of Dragons Abreast Canberra. The endurance of our club from its early days as *Tickled Pink* is definitely worth celebrating! We've some big things planned for our silver anniversary including a trip to Hobart to participate in the DAA Pink Paddle Power regatta on 26-27 October. More information about the calendar of events will be released soon so keep an eye out for that.



DA Canberra 21 October 2023, Kellie Nissen kindly arranged for images courtesy of: Mel Thornberry Photography (<https://melthornberryphotography.com/>)





*Friends for all time*, a poem by Robyne Kellett 2005 published in *A dragon's tale* 2007 Image: Kerrie Griffin

Congratulations to **Robyne Kellett** and **Frances Heaney** on receiving their Level 5 sweep accreditation. **Robyne Kellett** is a long-time supporter member and sweep for DA Canberra (now with Dragon Flyers) while **Frances Heaney** joined DA Canberra in 2012, led us as Coordinator and Head Coach and now competes with Diamond Phoenix.

#### Book launch 9 December

[Kaaren Sutcliffe](#) cordially invites DA Canberra members to the launch of book three in her trilogy.

Finally, thank you for your support of me as I find my feet in the coordinator role. Don't forget to read the monthly committee update, check the events calendar and RSVP on [TeamApp](#).

**Jeannie Cotterell**

**Coordinator**

**Dragons Abreast Canberra**

**0459 981 293**

[coordinator.dac@gmail.com](mailto:coordinator.dac@gmail.com)



DA Canberra, DB ACT Mad Hatter regatta 1's ominous weather 14 October 2023 Image: Andrew Sutcliffe

#### Dragons Abreast clothing and equipment pool

If you would like to donate or recycle any dragon boating and/or Dragons Abreast items please contact: **Clare Purcell** [clare@cgpurcell.com](mailto:clare@cgpurcell.com)

#### DA Canberra Facebook and website

To ensure you keep abreast of all our news, please join us. Many thanks to **Julie Kesby** for updates.

Website <https://www.revolutionise.com.au/dacanberra/>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/DragonsAbreastCanberra/>

DAA website <https://www.dragonsabreast.com.au/>

DAA Facebook

[https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=dragons%20abreast%20australia&epa=SEARCH\\_BOX](https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=dragons%20abreast%20australia&epa=SEARCH_BOX)

DB ACT website <http://www.dbact.com.au/home/>





Aix les Bains Riviera des Alpes, France 24-30 August 2026

### [2026 IBCPC Participatory Festival](#)

The [2026 IBCPC Festival](#) will welcome 4500 participants from the current 320 IBCPC member teams, from 37 countries across all continents. The Festival will take place on the shores of Lac du Bourget, France's largest natural glacial lake. [https://ibcpcfrance2026.com/event/?fbclid=IwAR1VzGAdxr2yANz9-uAgzPrjwP48Ed2\\_9pbvhTo7iOCHaFA56ftNGxIBks](https://ibcpcfrance2026.com/event/?fbclid=IwAR1VzGAdxr2yANz9-uAgzPrjwP48Ed2_9pbvhTo7iOCHaFA56ftNGxIBks)

### [Dragons Abreast Australia](#)

Philosophy: *Awareness, Participation, Inclusiveness Connect. Move. Live.*

Encourage wellness, fitness, fun and camaraderie for breast cancer survivors through the sport of dragon boating and promote breast cancer awareness throughout our community.

### [Check out our new DAA branded paddles!](#)

[Fernwood Belconnen](#) Thank you for your support of DA Canberra.

### [Dragons Abreast Australia's National Ambassador, Dr Kellie Toohey has devised a fantastic at home work out that anyone can do!](#)

<https://youtu.be/kWXi6L5GHlo>



Lyndall Milward-Bason, Joanne Widdup, Janet Olsen, Denise Brown and Elly McGinness, DA Canberra paddling in 90s fashions, DAA 25th anniversary regatta, Tench Park, Penrith 30 September 2023 *Image: Anita Godley*



Kim Tito, Lyndall Milward-Bason, Janet Olsen and Shelley Owen, DAA 25th anniversary mingling at Panthers Leagues Club, Penrith 29 September 2023 *Image: Steve Taylor*



April Weiss, Che Mortimer, Clare Purcell, Clare Smyth and Anita Godley, DB ACT come and try volunteers 2 September 2023 *Image: Susan Pitt*



DA Canberra and Annie Boulton, DAA Board member (in red), DB ACT regatta 2 11 November 2023 *Image: Kerrie Griffin*





Jeannie Cotterell with Donna Lennon, coach DA Canberra paddling in 90s fashions, DAA 25th anniversary regatta, Tench Park, Penrith 30 September 2023 *Image: Steve Taylor*

### Coaches' corner

Our November highlight was to compete in the 10s 2 km race at the DB ACT regatta 2 on 11 November. This was a first for our team with the crew performing admirably. The team was strong, confident and consistent throughout the course of the race, and we now have a benchmark for the distance. More important was the crew's sense of achievement and pride which was well deserved.

November also saw the first of our training sessions for the **55 km Ord River Marathon** scheduled for 9 June 2024. This is the start of a build-up of endurance to have the team ready for the event. We have crew members who have completed this wonderful journey previously, so there's plenty of experience and recommendations for making the paddle comfortable and successful.

The **DAA 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations** provided an opportunity to dress up in 90s gear to compete alongside other Dragons Abreast Australia teams. This was about celebration and fun, as well as showing our form in the 10s races with two fabulous teams entered. A number of us followed up the next day at the DB NSW Regatta for the breast cancer survivor (BCS) 10s races; we also teamed up with FFB to compete in the Senior As events. What a fantastic weekend and well done to all!

Welcome to **Kim Tito** who is training as a coach to join **Jenny Milward-Bason** and me.

Well done to both **Che Mortimer** and **Carol McAlwee** who are training as sweeps.



Janet Olsen, Jeannie Cotterell, Donna Lennon, Anita Godley and Denise Brown, DAA 25th anniversary dinner, Penrith 30 September 2023 *Image: Steve Taylor*



DA Canberra swim assessment by Anita Godley 10 September 2023 *Image: Maureen Wild*

### Water safety session Sunday 26 November

All paddling DB ACT members are encouraged to undertake a swim assessment according to the [AusDBF](#) rules. For DA Canberra, we take things a step further, encouraging paddling members to come along once a year, do the assessment part if they feel comfortable and also participate in (or watch) practice for 'what do we do if we capsize?'.

This is such an essential activity for everyone, for peace-of-mind at the very least, but we would not be able to do this without the expertise of **Anita Godley**. Not only is Anita a qualified swimming instructor but she has the knack of making the most uncomfortable of us feel comfortable and safe completing these activities, which always consist of lots of laughter. Thanks to Anita for the session on **10 September** as well as our next water safety assessment on **Sunday 26 November**.

Watch [TeamApp](#) for comments linked to each training session for any warnings, advice or cancellations. See future editions of the *Coaches' corner*. <https://www.revolutionise.com.au/dacanberra/>

**Donna Lennon, coach**





DA Canberra 10s 2km race, DB ACT regatta 11 November 2023  
 Image: Sugar Masangcay

*Editor's note:* Congratulations to **Natalie Evans-Sandell** and **Jeannie Cotterell** who celebrated their first wins as sweeps at the DAA 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary regatta weekend.

DB ACT held a **Remembrance Day** observance at the Dragon Boat ACT Regatta 2 at 11am on 11 November which was very moving. An Invictus woman paddler, who is a serving defence member, recited the Ode followed by *The last post* and a minute's silence. Some 300 paddlers participated including interstate and school teams.

**Kerrie Griffin**



Lyndall Milward-Bason, Donna Lennon and Maureen Wild, DAA 25th anniversary regatta, Tench Park, Penrith 30 September 2023  
 Image: Steve Taylor



Natalie Evans-Sandell sweep, Che Mortimer and Carol McAlwee strokes, Mad Hatter regatta 14 October 2023  
 Image: Jeannie Cotterell



Carol McAlwee, Amanda Ferris, Kellie Nissen and Kate Reid, Sunrise, Central Basin, Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra 3 October 2023  
 Image: Jeannie Cotterell

**[Paddling pants, gloves and shoes](https://www.typhoon8.com.au/collections/all)**

<https://www.typhoon8.com.au/collections/all>



Shelley Owen, Julie Kesby, April Weiss, Kim Tito and Che Mortimer, DAA 25th anniversary dinner, Penrith 30 September 2023 *Image: Kerrie Griffin*

### **Discover the thrill of dragon boating: A celebration of resilience and camaraderie**

On 30 September, I had the privilege of attending an extraordinary event in Penrith, NSW, commemorating 25 years of Dragons Abreast Australia (DAA) breast cancer survivors' unwavering spirit in the world of dragon boating. It was an unforgettable celebration of resilience, strength, and the unbreakable bonds formed on the water. As we glided through the Nepean River, competing with fierce determination during the day, and later, as we gathered for a heart-warming dinner dance, it struck me how far we've come since my own battle with cancer seven years ago.

Dragon boating is not just a sport; it's a testament to the power of community and the triumph of the human spirit. Whether you're a survivor seeking a different outlet for your recovery or a supporter and you are looking for a sense of belonging, dragon boating welcomes you. Come and be part of a remarkable journey — one that transforms challenges into triumphs, and strangers into lifelong friends. We invite you to join our dragon boat family and create your own story of strength and celebration.

### **April Weiss, DA Canberra Come and try team**

*Note:* Thanks [#hercanberra](#) and for their article and **April Weiss**.

<https://hercanberra.com.au/city/dragon-boating-isnt-just-an-adventure-its-a-celebration-of-strength-and-solidarity/>



Spring stretches post paddle 18 October 2023 *Image Lyndall Milward-Bason*

### **[Dragon boating isn't just an adventure; it's a celebration of strength and solidarity](#)**

Have you had a breast cancer diagnosis or are you a supporter looking for a remarkable way to embrace life, celebrate resilience, and build lasting connections?

Look no further — dragon boating is the adventure you've been waiting for! But it's also so much more.

Dragon boating is a dynamic water sport that blends camaraderie, strength, and the thrill of paddling together. It's more than just a sport; it's an empowering journey where survivors and supporters come together, forming a tight-knit community that uplifts and inspires.

The [Dragons Abreast Canberra](#) dragon boat family is a diverse group of individuals who understand the challenges and triumphs that come with a breast cancer journey. Together, we paddle as one, quietly celebrating the spirit of survival and the joy of living life to the fullest. Whether you're an experienced paddler or new to the sport, there's a place for you in our dragon boat.

If you're a breast cancer survivor, dragon boating can be an incredible source of physical and emotional healing. It's an opportunity to reclaim your strength, rediscover your confidence, and create lasting memories with other survivors. For supporters, it's a chance to stand by your loved ones, offering unwavering encouragement and sharing in their victories.

There is no cost to try, so why not embrace the journey, make new friends, and be part of a community that celebrates life, resilience, and the enduring bonds that tie us together? It's not just an adventure; it's a celebration of strength and solidarity.

[HerCanberra.com.au](https://hercanberra.com.au) 11 October 2023





Kaaren Sutcliffe and Kerrie Griffin, DAA 25th anniversary dinner, Penrith 30 September 2023 *Image: Steve Taylor*

### **[Dragons Abreast Australia](#) 25th anniversary regatta and dinner**

Just wow. I paddled with [Dragons Abreast Canberra](#) and had such a fantastic time. The venue at Tench Reserve Penrith worked really well. The river was nice to paddle on and there was plenty of greenery and shade on the side.

All DA teams embraced the spirit of the 90s theme. DA Canberra and [Dragons Abreast Hobart](#), Tasmania were clad in 90s grunge, [Dragons Abreast Melbourne Pink Phoenix](#) had a topical AFL theme and [Dragons Abreast Penrith](#), Pendragons, were recruited into Harry Potter's Gryffindor House. The [Gryffindors](#) won the costume award and were hard to beat on the water — especially with their cloaked sweep waving a magic wand and yelling *Leviosum!* to help with their rate lifts.

DA Canberra won best decorated marquee and was also handy in the races with two firsts, two seconds and a third. Andrew wore his volunteer shirt with pride. After paddling in it all day, I offered him back his checked shirt to wear to the dinner but he declined for some reason.

I enjoyed sitting next to bench buddy **Patsy Sheales**, who also paddles with Diamond Phoenix. After a brief break we had a 'hat trick' race and were randomly sorted into boats. A great way to meet new friends. I was excited to be called for **Linda Papworth's** purple hat team. She is such a talented artist. Anyway, ended up back in row two next to ... Patsy from DA Canberra. She must seriously have drawn the short straw. Anyhow, a pleasing clear first place. Then straight on to the DAA *Flowers on the water* ceremony, so great that everyone could take part.



DAA Board cutting the cake: Pearl Lee chair, Annie Boulton, Sue Von Richter, Leonie Silk and Sharon Cooper, DAA 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner, Log Cabin, Penrith 30 September 2023 *Image: Kerrie Griffin*

The moving ceremony confused all the kids who'd been jumping into the river from the pontoons. We fanged up and down the river all morning then huddled all the boats together and sat in silence. The looks on their faces was priceless.

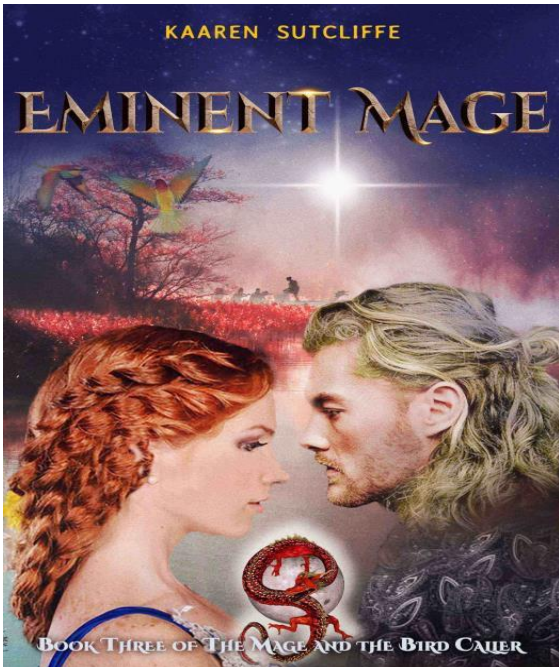
Thanks so much to DA Canberra for adopting me for the event. It was also great to see many of my buddies from DAA *Team Hope* in New Zealand. Even if that did momentarily confuse my brain about which team I was supposed to be following.

On a personal note, the camaraderie, energy and support at DAA events is simply magic and so uplifting. It has been a long road back since my spine surgery in March 2021, but after 15 months back in a boat I was thrilled to feel that I actually raced six races with enough beans in my arms to noticeably bring it home each time. Onward ho. Looking forward to the next DAA regatta in Hobart in October 2024.

Congratulations to the organisers, including [Dragons Abreast Penrith](#) and the five DAA Board members, **Pearl Lee** chair, **Annie Boulton**, **Sue Von Richter**, **Leonie Silk** and **Sharon Cooper**, all extraordinary women. We were spoilt with the Friday night mingling at [Panthers](#), the Saturday night [DAA dinner](#) at the Log Cabin, the amazing dragon cake and the entertaining MC **DAA Ambassador Robyn Moore**.

**Kaaren Sutcliffe**

[www.kaarensutcliffe.com.au](http://www.kaarensutcliffe.com.au)



Books for sale at launch price or available from [www.kaarensutcliffe.com.au](http://www.kaarensutcliffe.com.au)

### Help Kaaren bring the trilogy home!

Return to Ossilis for book three in the captivating *Mage and the Bird Caller* trilogy. Please join Kaaren Sutcliffe in an evening of celebration, camaraderie and fun. Friday 8 December. RSVP by 2 December.



Natalie Evans-Sandell, Kathy Hayes and Kerrie Griffin, DAA 25th anniversary dinner, Log Cabin, Penrith 30 September 2023  
Image: Steve Taylor

### Back to the 90s

With some fashion guidance, I hastily assembled an outfit that deviated from our usual style — ditching the pretty-in-pink for something more ‘fitting’ for the event. Sporting a weird ensemble of clothing, wearing somewhat dramatic makeup and black-painted nails, I set out, anticipating reuniting with both old and new friends.



Natalie Evans-Sandell and Janet Olsen, DAA 25th anniversary regatta, Tench Park, Penrith 30 September 2023  
Image: Steve Taylor

The gathering was a reunion with familiar faces from my paddling adventures along the east coast, as I go to as many ‘aways’ as I can. As the sun blazed overhead, layers of costumes were discarded, and my extravagant makeup melted under the heat and coatings of sunscreen. After paddling the 20s I swept the first 10s race of the day with Team *Gecko* and was grateful for the ‘respite’ of being a sweep. The following race, paddling in the sweltering conditions, felt like 1000 m. The cheering from the riverbanks, where supporters, families and children sought refuge from the heat, was heartwarming.

The third race marked a victory for Team *Gecko*, a mixed team of Team *Goanna* and *Gecko*, united by sheer determination and strength to see out the penultimate race of the day, before the hat race! It was exhilarating to be my first ever sweeping victory. Much gratitude to **Kathy Hayes** for joining in with my shouting, her drumming which fueled our determination to maintain our lead.

The hat races, created teams for the DAA *Flowers on the water* ceremony (FOW). Kathy and I had the honour of drumming/sweeping the gold boat, marked with Kathy trying to drum and keep a gold hat on her head! As we prepared to raft up after the race, a generator glitch forced us to improvise with some paddle tap ‘doughies’ before regrouping. Kathy noted the diversity in our paddling experience on our boat, ranging from a tough first FOW seven months to an impressive 21 years after diagnosis.

The memorable weekend was filled with camaraderie and shared triumphs, even though the following day promised to be a far warmer scorching challenge for the DB NSW regatta.

**Natalie Evans-Sandell, sweep**





DA Canberra paddling in 90s fashions, DAA 25th anniversary regatta, Tench Park, Penrith 30 September 2023 *Image: Steve Taylor*

### [Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of Dragons Abreast Australia](#)

[Dragons Abreast Canberra](#) members celebrated the 25th Anniversary of Dragons Abreast Australia (DAA) in style from 29 September to 1 October while remembering and honouring their angels including their founder [Anna Wellings Booth OAM](#).

[Dragons Abreast Australia \(DAA\)](#) has its origin from attendees (including **Michelle Hanton OAM**) being inspired by a Canadian speaker at the first **Breast Cancer Network Australia (BNCA)** summit held in Canberra during October 1998 promoting the health and wellness benefits of dragon boating for breast cancer survivors. Post this summit, Dragons Abreast Australia originated under Michelle's leadership in the Northern Territory (NT) with the first survivor paddlers paddling in December 1998 in Darwin, NT. In early 1999, **Anna Wellings Booth OAM** established Dragons Abreast Canberra. Now 25 years later the DAA movement is spread across Australia with some 27 clubs and other individual members of DAA. Dragons Abreast Blue Mountains, July 2023, is the most recently established club.

On Sunday, Dragons Abreast Canberra raced proudly in 1999 Dragons Abreast Canberra race shirts at the **DB NSW Regatta Series** Round 2 in both Senior A Women's 20s crews, and breast cancer survivor (BCS) 10s crews in 500 m racing.

A big congratulations to the DAA Board: **Pearl Lee, Sue Von Richter, Leonie Silk, Sharon Cooper,** and **Annie Boulton**; and thank you to all officials and volunteers over the weekend.

See full article:

<https://www.revolutionise.com.au/dacanberra/news/celebrating-the-25th-anniversary-of-dragons-abreast-australia/>

### **Julie Kesby, membership officer**

#### [Videos:](#)

DAA 25th Anniversary - A journey through the years

DAA 25th Anniversary - An interview with Michelle Hanton

Dragons Abreast Australia 25th Anniversary Message from the Governor General of Australia



Denise Ma, starter and Susan Pitt assistant starter officials, DB NSW regatta, Cudgegong Lake, Windemere NSW 29 October 2023 *Image: Bathurst Dragon Boat Club*



Lyndall Milward-Bason, Fiona Maguire and Susan Pitt sweep 24 October 2023 *Image Lyndall Milward-Bason*



DA Canberra paddle and morning tea, National Museum of Australia (NMA) 11 September 2023 *Image: Kerrie Griffin*



Spring warm up 18 October 2023 *Image Lyndall Milward-Bason*



What cancer said: And what I said back by Kellie Nissen Image: Kerrie Griffin

You may purchase copies of **What Cancer Said: And what I said back** directly from **Kellie Nissen** [kellie@justrightwords.com.au](mailto:kellie@justrightwords.com.au) or from the Book Cow.

**Why Being Near Water Really Does Make Us Happier**

There are scientific reasons why we're so drawn to lakes, rivers, and oceans. 'Our oceans, waterways, and the life they contain are so much more than their ecological, economic, and educational value. They have vast emotional benefits. They make life on earth possible, but also worth living,' says Nichols. 'I like to imagine the world would be a better place if we all understood just how true that is. Water is medicine, for everyone, for life.'

[Condé Nast Traveler](#) **Courtesy of Deb Lopert**

**Why is there a silver ball in the dragon's mouth?**

In ancient China, there were many reasons including:  
 The most expensive pearls must be in the mouth of dragon living in the deepest water.  
 The dragon, namely the king of lake or sea, owned the most expensive and largest pearls.  
 The dragon had many animals' feature and the snake and crocodile rank first. They are born in eggs, so the dragon ball symbolises the dragon's child. Playing with eggs represents respect for life.  
 Because the dragon is a special animal from the East, and the sun rises in the East, so the dragon ball represents the sun. At that time, dragons always appeared flying over the sea.

In Western mythology, Dragons are destructive, fire breathing, rampaging, flying dinosaurs with an appetite for virgins and a tendency to chomp at the nearest tin-clad knight. In Chinese/Eastern




Woman in jumpsuit, Linda Marrinon, 2021 NGA Sculpture Garden new acquisition  
 'I thought a black bronze would just disappear into the bush ... I was keen to promote the illusion that she is looking out at the National Carillon,' Linda Marrinon  
<https://nga.gov.au/art.../linda-marrinon-woman-in-jumpsuit/>

mythology, dragons are protectors and guardian spirits. Much as dryads are to trees and naiads to lakes in Western mythology, a dragon is associated with specific locations or features rather than being free-ranging forces. The pearl represents the item, person or location being protected.

<https://www.quora.com/Why-do-Chinese-dragons-hold-pearls>

**Courtesy of Kerrie Griffin**



**Warm up and training times**

**Saturday morning:**

<b>Extra effort:</b>	<b>7.15 – 8.15am</b>
<b>Saturday morning:</b>	<b>8.15 – 9.30am</b>
<b>Tuesday morning:</b>	<b>6.00 – 7.00am</b>
<b>Wednesday evening:</b>	<b>5.45 – 7.00pm</b>

**Contact:** [TeamApp coordinator.dac@gmail.com](mailto:TeamApp@coordinator.dac@gmail.com)

Some great paddling technique tips:  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7lRbj3K8c4&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7lRbj3K8c4&feature=player_embedded)

Remember water, hat, sunscreen and sunglasses!  
[Sealskinz](#) gloves and socks for winter

**Weather watch**  
<http://www.eldersweather.com.au/act/act/canberra>



## Under the pink umbrella



Breast  
Cancer  
Network  
Australia

[www.bcna.org.au](http://www.bcna.org.au)

## Breast Cancer Network Australia

THE BEACON [Issue 96 October 2023](#)

OCTOBER 2023  
**BREAST CANCER**  
AWARENESS MONTH  
*Living well your way*  
Breast Cancer Network Australia

**Multilingual resources available**

[BCNA](#) has multilingual resources available on the website, accessible in six (6) different languages (Mandarin, Cantonese, Arabic, Vietnamese, Italian, Greek) as well as in plain English. BCNA also offer resources in Cantonese, Mandarin and Greek for people affected by metastatic breast cancer.

BCNA works hard to ensure people in Australia, who are affected by breast cancer, can easily access the support they need, when they need it. You can read, watch or listen to these now in one location.

Calling all members - we want to hear from you!

### [BCNA survey](#) request

Calling all members — we want to hear from you! We want to know about your experiences with BCNA to make sure our information resources and support services still offer what you need from us. Our national survey is now open for everyone diagnosed with breast cancer or living with metastatic breast cancer.

<https://redcap.sydney.edu.au/surveys/?s=NKM3LYFHE9CWHC8M>

<https://www.bcna.org.au/member-experience-survey/>

*The BCNA survey takes approximately 10 minutes.*



Ms Kerrie Griffin OAM For service to community health. [Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care](#) [Breast Cancer Network Australia](#) [Dragons Abreast Canberra](#) Government House 12 September 2023 *Image: Australian Honours and Awards*

Video at DAA 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SVmeMAttCLA>

[Dragons Abreast Australia 25th Anniversary Message from the Governor General of Australia](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC65JNE6GNI6yqBT2anQt5nA>

### OAM investiture Government House, Canberra 12 September 2023

It was an honour to meet Governor-General (GG) **David Hurley AC DSC (Retd)**. When he presented the OAM medal to me, for community health, his words were really considered ... it was very personal. It is totally unexpected and wonderful to have that acknowledgment. The GG spoke to me longer than the other recipients (according to my family).

Being recognised for advocacy for **Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA)**, [Dragons Abreast Canberra](#) and [Cancer Australia](#) feels like a breakthrough as it lifts the profile of our movement.

The GG, his wife and the official Secretary were all well briefed and most knowledgeable about the important work of **BCNA** and **Dragons Abreast Canberra** during polite chats at the reception and photograph opportunities afterwards.

It was important to have my encouraging and proud family, **Steve, Claire** and **Lucy Taylor**, witness the investiture because they have always supported me. Thank you to everyone for your good wishes. It is truly a humbling and surreal experience. I encourage everyone to volunteer.

**Kerrie Griffin OAM**  
**BCNA Consumer Representative**

### ACTION

*We need to involve more women:*

## #HonourAWoman movement

History will ask, 'Where were the women?' she says. The public record is very important in the long term. We need to see a diverse range of people recognised; those who have contributed over and above. Role models for women are very important. You can't be what you can't see.

### [Honour a Woman](#)

<https://honourawoman.com>

The **Honour a Woman** movement began in 2017 after 43 years of men consistently receiving over 70% of all the Orders of Australia.

You can nominate someone you know for an Order of Australia at any time throughout the year. Learn more [here](#).

<https://www.gg.gov.au/australian-honours-and-awards/nominate-someone-award>

## BCNA consumer representative program

If you're interested in learning more about the BCNA program, see the following link:

<https://www.bcna.org.au/.../pol.../consumer-representatives/>

<https://www.bcna.org.au/get-involved/volunteer-for-bcna/seat-at-the-table-bcna-consumer-representative-program/>

## Kerrie Griffin, BCNA Consumer Representative

### [Australian Cancer Plan](#)

Developed by **Cancer Australia** is a future-focused plan designed to improve cancer outcomes:

[Australia's first national cancer plan aims to improve outcomes for Indigenous and regional Australians](#) ABC 2 November 2023

### [Breast cancer statistics](#)

### [NBCF tracking progress to zero deaths from breast cancer by 2030](#)

[READ THE FULL REPORT CARD](#)



BCNA Mini Field of Women, North Canberra Hospital 25 October 2023 *Image: Kathy Hayes*



Karen McKinnon, BCN North Canberra Hospital 25 October 2023 *Image: Kathy Hayes*

## Breast Care Nurses at North Canberra Hospital

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month, the primary goal is to focus on breast cancer and the impact that it has on the individual diagnosed with breast cancer. In 1985, October became Breast Cancer Awareness month in the USA evolving from a partnership between the [American Cancer Society](#) and the pharmaceutical division of Imperial Chemical Industries to endorse mammograms as a pivotal tool to detect breast cancer. Initially, it was a weeklong event but, today, it lasts a month. **Betty Ford**, wife of the US President **Gerald Ford**, was diagnosed with breast cancer, and she promoted the event.

The **Breast Care Nurses (BCNs)** at **North Canberra Hospital** promoted Breast Cancer Awareness in several ways. Driving into the hospital, you noticed a field of [BCNA silhouettes](#) – pink, white, and blue. Unfortunately, someone took a liking for the blue silhouette and removed it. The pink silhouettes were also displayed in a ribbon shape.

Walking through the main doors, a table was front and centre, and was adorned with various resource material related to breast cancer, support services in the ACT, [BreastScreen ACT](#), breast health and changes, [Bosom Buddies](#), [Breast Cancer Nurses](#), [Cancer Council ACT](#), and [Dragons Abreast](#). The Breast Care Nurses held an afternoon tea for work colleagues and had a hyperlink for fundraising for [BCNA](#).

## Kathy Hayes

### [Breast Cancer Trials](#)

Breast clinical trials are the critical tool to identify new, improved treatments which can save and protect lives.



To find out more and to register, visit the link:  
<https://loghic.eventsair.com/bcna/061223/Site/Register>  
[#BCNAPinkLady](#) [#AskTheExpert](#) [#Webcast](#)

### [Making Metastatic Breast Cancer Count – No longer Hidden in Plain Sight](https://www.bcna.org.au/news/2022/10/making-metastatic-breast-cancer-count/)

<https://www.bcna.org.au/news/2022/10/making-metastatic-breast-cancer-count/>

BCNA are leading a campaign to have people with metastatic breast cancer routinely counted on Australia's cancer registries.

BCNA staff and consumer representatives, including Director of Policy, Advocacy & Support Services **Vicki Durston** were at the **Clinical Oncology Society of Australia's (COSA)** 50th annual scientific meeting presenting the results of this advocacy to conference attendees on 3 November.

Attendees heard how the campaign began with an issues paper, *Making Metastatic Breast Cancer Count*, followed almost a year later when we held a National Roundtable in Canberra, gathering leading cancer and data experts to discuss solutions.

[Making Metastatic Breast Cancer Count - A Way Forward](#) is a summary which precedes a full report from the roundtable which BCNA will release on 29 November.

### [BCNA's Online Network](#)

Our new-look network is more inviting, better looking and easier to use. Sign up to BCNA's [My Journey](#) to access the latest information about your breast cancer diagnosis. Featuring articles, videos, podcasts, webcasts and digital tools that empower people with breast cancer to make the best decisions about their treatment and care and manage their breast cancer experience.

## Online Q&A TRIPLE NEGATIVE BREAST CANCER



Moderated by Author and Journalist Annabel Crabb, join our panel of experts as we hear firsthand from women about their breast cancer experiences.

Tuesday 24 October,  
4:30-6pm (AEDT)



### [Breast Cancer Trials Q&A: Triple Negative Breast Cancer](#)

Watch it now on YouTube:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NFe8gMgU2aq>

Triple negative breast cancer is a more aggressive cancer that usually occurs at an earlier age. It has a greater chance of developing into a [metastatic stage](#) and has poorer clinical outcomes as shown by higher relapse rates and lower survival rates. Because it does not have receptors that can be targeted by medications such as hormone- and HER2-blocking drugs, it has fewer treatment options available.

### [News](#)

<https://www.bcna.org.au/audience-hub-media-centre/>

### [BCNA history video link:](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/BreastCancerNetworkAustralia/videos/666293868535762/>

### [Review of BreastScreen Australia program welcomed by BCNA](#)

**31 Oct 2023**

### [BCNA's Pink Promise this Breast Cancer Awareness Month](#)

**28 Sep 2023**

### [The power of BCNA's consumer voice at COSA](#)

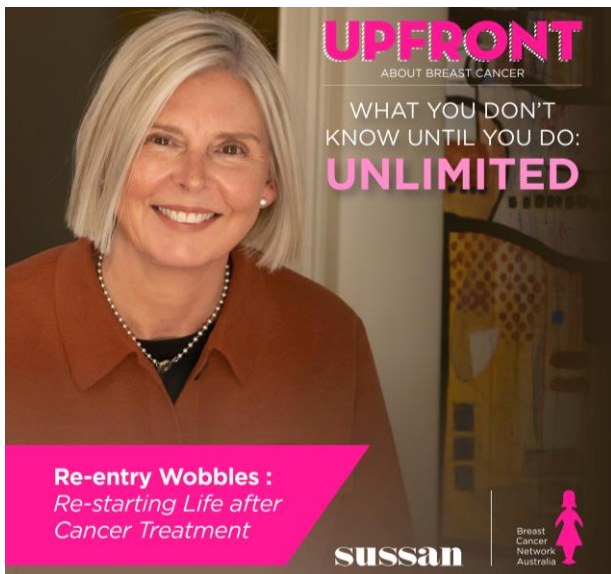
**02 Nov 2023**

### ['Living Well, Your Way' on male breast cancer awareness day](#)

**20 Oct 2023**

### [Time to Count People with Metastatic Breast Cancer - A Way Forward](#)

**12 Oct 2023**



Clinical Psychologist [Dr Charlotte Tottman](#) says — just like physical stamina, strength, and capacity — we decondition psychologically much faster than we recondition.

[In episode 5 of Upfront – What You Don't Know Until You Do: Unlimited](#), Charlotte shares strategies, including repetition, that allow a sense of progression and success to act as a motivator. She explores the challenges involved with re-entering work and other obligations, alongside the common drop in self-confidence and the importance of purpose and meaning.

Listen to What You Don't Know Until You Do: Unlimited via <https://bcna.live/CharlotteTottmanSeason2> or wherever you get your podcasts.

### ['Feminist approach' to cancer could save lives of 800,000 women a year](#)

Gender inequality and discrimination impede timely diagnoses and quality care for women around the world, says report

Health experts are calling for a 'feminist approach' to cancer to eliminate inequalities, as research reveals 800,000 women worldwide are dying needlessly every year because they are denied optimal care. Cancer is one of the biggest killers of women and ranks in their top three causes of premature deaths in almost every country. [Andrew Gregory](#) *The Guardian* 27 September 2023

### [Australian breast cancer survivors call for informed, unbiased options when undergoing mastectomies](#) ABC 10 November 2023

**BreastScreen ACT** is part of a national population breast screening program aimed at reducing deaths from breast cancer through early detection. The Program provides **free screening and follow up services to ACT resident women from the age of 40 years.**

Please spread the word that **BreastScreen ACT** has appointments available for the digital mammography service in **Belconnen, Civic or Woden**. The service screens women from 40 years and **targets women from 50–74. Women over 74 years of age are welcome too.**

Statistics show that **only 64% of women, aged 50-74 year old**, take up the free mammograms in the ACT which is higher than the national average.

Call on [13 20 50](tel:132050) to make an appointment

### [Shy migrants urged to step up for free breast screening](#)

### **HeadsUp Kippax Inc.**

**2/12-16 Hardwick Cres. Holt ACT 2615  
Open 10am-4pm Tuesday-Friday**

HeadsUp provides a service for women who have total or partial hair loss. We sell wigs, hats, scarves and other headwear. Appointments are preferred so that we can provide individual attention in a safe environment. Shop instore or online at [www.headsup.net.au](http://www.headsup.net.au)

**For assistance call Sue Owen 02 6254 4403**

*Congratulations to **Sue Owen** of Murrumbateman who was awarded an OAM for service to community health in June.*

### **Colleen's Lingerie and Swimwear**

Colleen's post surgery fashion lingerie range including [Megami](#)

### [Fiji update](#)

Colleens accept donations of pocketed bras and breast forms. If you would like to buy a bra to donate, please contact [info@colleens.com.au](mailto:info@colleens.com.au) or call **02 6285 1311**. Your donations truly change lives!

### **Gillian Horton**

22 Garran Place, Garran. 2605 | T: 02 6285 1311 | E: [info@colleens.com.au](mailto:info@colleens.com.au)

**Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm, Wed 9.30am to 5.30pm Appointments and onlineshopping.** [www.colleens.com.au](http://www.colleens.com.au)

<https://www.colleens.com.au/page/support-the-girls/>

[This airport is trying to end 'scanxiety' for cancer survivors](#) video

*Congratulations to **Colleen's Lingerie and Swimwear**, a local boutique cherished by cancer survivors, which was crowned a winner of [Australia Post's Local Business Heroes](#) program in June*





[Casting for Recovery](http://www.castingforrecovery.org.au/), a program run by the ACT Fly Fishing Club for women who have had breast cancer at any time in their lives.

<http://www.castingforrecovery.org.au/>



**Younger Women's  
Cancer Support Group**  
ACT & SURROUNDING REGION

The **Younger Women's Cancer Support Group ACT & Surrounding Region (YWCSG)**

supports these women: to ask questions, vent, socialise and support each other, raising awareness of these challenges, standing up to make a difference and ultimately close up the gaps.

Join at: [www.ywcsq.com](http://www.ywcsq.com)

[ywcsq.act@gmail](mailto:ywcsq.act@gmail.com) [www.facebook.com/ywcsq](https://www.facebook.com/ywcsq)

[www.linkedin.com/company/ywcsq](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ywcsq)

**Beth LeFerve, Founder**

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



### **Tips from Kellie Toohey**

Exercise Physiologist for Cancer Council ACT's  
ENRICHing Survivorship Program

If you are interested in future ENRICHing Survivorship programs, register your interest at

<https://bit.ly/ENRICHingsurvivorship>

**Cancer Council ACT** Unit 1 (The Annex), 173 Strickland Crescent DEAKIN ACT 2600 <http://www.actcancer.org/>



**Bosom Buddies ACT Inc.**

Throughout the year, Bosom Buddies hold regular morning teas, after work drinks, Young Women's Group and a variety of social events and outings. These get-togethers provide the perfect environment to meet other members, build networks and catch up with old friends!

Bosom Buddies looks forward to continuing to work with BCNA, Dragons Abreast and other organisations to ensure that those in the community with breast cancer are fully supported.

If you would like to speak to a Support team member or for further information, please call

**0406 376 500** or email [admin@bosombuddies.org.au](mailto:admin@bosombuddies.org.au).

Website: [www.bosombuddies.org.au](http://www.bosombuddies.org.au) or Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/bosombuddiescanberra>

**Catherine Rider-Aichholzer, Executive Officer  
Bosom Buddies *Connecting People to Support***

**[PACES](#) University of Canberra cancer recovery**

Leading the world's research into cancer care

[PACES](#) focuses its research activity on three distinct themes: prehabilitation, physical activity in people affected by cancer, and life after cancer. At its core, PACES focuses on:

- nutrition and physical activity
- supportive care
- mental health and social well-being during and post chemotherapy.

**[Abridge | Stay on Top of Your Health](#)**

<https://www.abridge.com/> Learn how people have made Abridge a part of their health journey. 'It kept my mind focused on my appointments.'

**Article on genomic testing (tumour profiling):**

<https://myjourney.org.au/article/2181>

**Article on genetics and risk of breast cancer:**

<https://myjourney.org.au/article/3645>

### Otis Foundation

Creekside is a luxury chalet situated in the picturesque Thredbo Village. Creekside is available to people who are newly diagnosed or who have undergone active treatment for breast cancer in the 12 months prior to their stay. To enquire about a booking at Creekside or another retreat [www.otisfoundation.org.au](http://www.otisfoundation.org.au) or call 03 5444 1185

### **Elsbeth Humphries**

### Lymphedonna

<http://www.lymphedonna.com.au/faqs/>  
[lymphedonna@positivemotion.com.au](mailto:lymphedonna@positivemotion.com.au)

### **Positive Motion Physiotherapy**

2/61 Dundas Court, Phillip ACT 2606 0414 809 994

### **Clinic 88 Macquarie**

### Lymphatic Drainage

### Rare Cancer Australia

Rare Cancers Australia calls for equality with clear message: Cancer is Cancer.

### Brain Tumour Alliance Australia Inc.

[www.btaa.org.au](http://www.btaa.org.au)

### So Brave | Young Women's Breast Cancer Charity - So Brave

goingflat

<https://notputtingonashirt.org/livingflat/>

### **Kerrie Griffin OAM**

**Consumer Representative**

**Seat at the Table (SATT) Program, BCNA**



### **Calendar of events**

Dates and events may change – please check <http://www.dbact.com.au/events>

Month	Date(s)	Event	Location	Notes
	Saturday 2	DA Canberra Christmas Party	Clare Purcell's	TeamApp RSVP
	Sunday 3	Springbank Island and back 8 km challenge paddle	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
	Friday 8	<i>Eminent Mage</i> by Kaaren Sutcliffe book launch	Gorman House	TeamApp RSVP
	Saturday 9	IDB ACT Regatta 3 Christmas Regatta 500 m (20s)	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
	Date tbc	DA Canberra Christmas carol paddle	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
2024	1-31	Site management Grevillea Park for a month	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
January	Saturday 13	DB ACT Regatta 4 2 km (20s, 10s) 200 m (10s)	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
February	Saturday 3	Bei Loon 8 km race	Bayview Sydney	TeamApp RSVP
	Friday 9 – Sunday 11	Nipples on Ripples, Dragons Abreast North West Tasmania Regatta	Lake Barrington, Tasmania	TeamApp RSVP



	Saturday 10	DB ACT Regatta 5 500 m (10s)	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
	Saturday 16 – Sunday 18	Lunar new year Festival Regatta Darling Harbour	Sydney NSW	TeamApp RSVP
	Saturday 24	DB ACT make up regatta if required	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
March	Saturday 9	DB ACT Regatta 6 2 km (20s, 10s) 200 m (20s)	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
	Saturday 23 – Sunday 24	ACT Championships Regatta	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
April 	Sunday 7	NSW State Championships Regatta	NSW	
	Wednesday 17 – Sunday 21	<a href="#">AusChamps - Australian Dragon Boat Federation</a> Champion Lakes, Armadale, Perth WA 20-21 April BCS races	Perth WA	TeamApp RSVP
June	Sunday 9	<a href="#">Ord River Marathon – 9 June, 2024</a>	Ord River, WA	TeamApp RSVP
October	Saturday 26 – Sunday 27	<a href="#">DAA Pink Paddle Power regatta, Derwent River</a>	Hobart, Tasmania	TeamApp RSVP

### Dragons Abreast Australia — Mission statement

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

Encourage wellness, fitness, fun and camaraderie for breast cancer survivors through the sport of dragon boating and promote breast cancer awareness throughout our community.

*Keeping the spirit alive!*

### Next issue of the DA Canberra newsletter — February 2024

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

Please submit any news, items and images by **10 February 2024** to the newsletter coordinator

[Kerrie.griffin22@gmail.com](mailto:Kerrie.griffin22@gmail.com)

[Previous newsletters](#)



DA Canberra, DB ACT Mad Hatter regatta 1 14 October 2023  
Image: Andrew Sutcliffe



Julie Chynoweth and Patsy Sheales with DA Canberra, DB ACT regatta 2 11 November 2023 Image: Kerrie Griffin





Susan Pitt sweeping, Jeannie Cotterell, Carol McAlwee and Shelley Owen, Molongo River 5 September 2023 *Image:* Jeannie Cotterell



Janet Olsen and Jax (not a great conversationalist!), Commonwealth Place 26 September 2023 *Image:* Jeannie Cotterell



Susan Pitt sweep 19 September 2023 *Image:* Jeannie Cotterell



Kim Tito and Deborah Lopert 12 September 2023 *Image:* Jeannie Cotterell



On Lake Cafe, Kingston post paddle 24 October 2023 *Image:* Lyndall Milward-Bason