



# ABREAST of the NEWS

DRAGONS ABREAST CANBERRA

PO Box 7191, Yarralumla ACT 2600

DRAGONSABREAST.COM.AU

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AUGUST 2023



Kellie Nissen, Shelley Owen and Lyndall Milward-Bason sweeping, Commonwealth Place 15 August 2023 *Image: Susan Pitt*

## Coordinator's report

This is my final coordinator's report for this amazing team. After a long and busy year, paddling, personal and business, I am handing over the reins to the wonderful **Jeannie Cotterell** who I know will bring more energy and more light to the club.

I feel very fortunate to work alongside such an amazing DA Canberra Committee over the last year — they have kept me sane and centred, and more than pulled their weight for the benefit of DA Canberra as a whole. Thank you to **Janet Olsen** (Assistant Coordinator who frequently reminded me to 'breathe'), **Jenny Milward-Bason** (Treasurer tasked with the unfortunate job of making number-crunching understandable and excelling at it), **Joan White** (Secretary and the kind voice in my ear with gentle reminders of things forgotten or neglected), **Helen Couper-Logan** (general committee member the 'voice of reason' among us), **Lyndall Milward-Bason** (general committee member always working hard behind the scenes, without fuss but with a wonderful sense of humour), and **Megan Davis** (general committee member and calming influence for whom nothing was too hard). I also have to thank **Deborah Lopert** (Public Officer) for

her advice and promptings when it came to protocol and other such matters.

As with all groups, there are always tough times to navigate and joyous times to celebrate, and we've had our fair share of both in the last 12 months. However, for me, DA Canberra has always been about support and acknowledging every member for what they contribute. Our aim is to make members feel strong and confident in what they do, to rally around when times are hard and to cheer loudly when achievements are reached.

We ALL do this well, which is what makes DA Canberra a club I am proud and honoured to be involved in.

## Dragon Spirit Award

One of the best things about our AGM is finding out who is the recipient of that year's Dragon Spirit Award. Nominees for the award are recognised for their long-term contribution to the club, both on and off the water. This year, the decision could not be split and was awarded to sisters **Jenny Milward-Bason** and **Lyndall Milward-Bason**. Both Jenny and Lyndall contribute in multiple ways (with multiple roles) to DA Canberra and are extremely well-deserving of the recognition.

## Background information on the [Dragon Spirit Award](#)



Dragon Spirit award presented by 2022 recipient Clare Purcell to sisters Lyndall and Jenny Milward-Bason, at the DA Canberra AGM. At left: Joan White (Secretary) and Deborah Lopert (Public Officer) 26 August 2023 *Image: Kerrie Griffin*



Helen Couper Logan presented DA gifts to Kellie Nissen in appreciation 26 August 2023 *Image:* Kerrie Griffin

### Local regatta season is almost upon us

Suddenly, winter is in the past and we are gearing up for the [DB ACT](#) regatta season, with our first regatta on Saturday 14 October. It's a 'Mad Hatter Regatta' with 100 m sprint races and a 1 km pursuit plus 'mad hats'. What this means for DA Canberra is a more concerted focus on training and preparing our bodies and mindset for racing. Our hardworking coaches, **Donna Lennon** and **Jenny Milward-Bason** are all over this!

Believe it or not, even though we were in winter slow-down, plenty of things happened.



DA Chinese Gardens paddle and Social Committee picnic courtesy of Pene Lee and Katherine Davis Kralikas 17 June 2023 *Image:* Kerrie Griffin



Ice house built from ice on boats overnight 27 May 2023 *Image:* Susan Pitt



Shelley Owen, Joanne Widdup, Megan Davis and, Carol McAlwee with ice! 22 July 2023 *Image:* Lyndall Milward-Bason

### Water safety assessment Sunday 10 September

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) practise for 'what do we do if we capsiz?'

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 **4 June** and our next water safety assessment on **10 September**.



DA Canberra and Nature Coast paddle together in two boats, Lyndall sweeping, Moruya, south coast 5 August 2023 *Image:* Susan Pitt

### Come and try 21 October

Come and Try sessions are always well-attended by potential new members who have heard about us 'through the grapevine' or via our flyers placed across various locations in Canberra by members.

Our new Come and try team (**Joanne Widdup, Kate Reid, Isabel Haynes, April Weiss and Sugar Masangcay**) are working hard behind the scenes, under the mentorship of **Megan Davis** and we are all looking forward to our upcoming Come and try session. Please bring a plate to share at morning tea.



Kaaren and Andrew Sutcliffe's generous lunch at Dalmeny with DA Canberra 5 August 2023 *Image:* Peter Weiss

### Social paddles

We're not all about 'serious' training and our coaches frequently organise longer, themed paddles, which are well-attended. (When I say 'longer', the distance is often longer as well as the overall timeframe — endurance training anyone?)

Recently, our members have enjoyed a paddle to the Museum of Australia (NMA) (for brunch with non-paddling members), Moruya paddle, games and social activities (coordinated by [Kaaren Sutcliffe](#) and **Donna Lennon**), and French-themed paddle and brunch at the NMA to celebrate the announcement of the 2026 IBCPC regatta location.



DA Canberra and Nature Coast paddle together in two boats. Jude Smith former DA Canberra is front right in green visor, and Carolyn Lean, coach at back, Moruya, south coast 5 August 2023 *Image:* Susan Pitt



DA French-themed paddle and morning tea, NMA 12 August 2023 *Image:* Susan Pitt



Natalie Evans-Sandell, Eily McGinness, Gigi Lungu, Anne Baynes and Pene Lee, Bella Vista Restaurant 28 June 2023 *Image:* Kerrie Griffin



Che Mortimer, Katherine Davis Kralikas, Julie Kesby and Lyndal Milward-Bason, DA French-themed paddle and morning tea, NMA 12 August 2023 *Image:* Susan Pitt



Julie Kesby, Diane Wilkinson, Helen Rowcliffe and Fiona Maguire, Bella Vista Restaurant 28 June 2023 Image: Kerrie Griffin



Deborah Lopert, Jeannie Cotterell, Che Mortimer and Clare Purcell, Bella Vista Restaurant 28 June 2023 Image: Kerrie Griffin

### Social events

Every time I think the **Social Committee** has outdone themselves, they come back again with more. Since May, the Social Committee has organised several events, including: a winter dinner at Bella Vista restaurant; a night at the theatre to see **Joan White** in *Amadeus*; a night at the movies to see *Barbie*; and catering and coordination for our recent AGM (generously hosted by **Clare and Greg Purcell**).



DA Canberra and Pearl Lee, DAA Chair (front right), BCNA Field of Women MCG 20 August 2023 Image: Katrina Tull



DA Canberra, Janet Olsen, Jeannie Cotterell, Natalie Evans-Sandall, Che Mortimer, Elly McGinness, Julie Kesby, Anne Baynes and Clare Purcell, BCNA Field of Women MCG 20 August 2023 Image: Janet Olsen

### [BCNA Field of Women at the MCG](#)

Several members headed to Melbourne on 20 August to participate in the [BCNA Field of Women at the MCG](#). You may want to go in the future. It's held every five years. Everyone who participates talks enthusiastically about the atmosphere of hope and celebration, as well as solidarity. A few participants also headed out on the water with [Dragons Abreast Melbourne Pink Phoenix](#) — never miss an opportunity to paddle!



DA Canberra dancing the *Nutbush*, BCNA Field of Women MCG 20 August 2023 Image: Katrina Tull



[Dragons Abreast Melbourne Pink Phoenix](#) and marquee, BCNA Field of Women MCG 20 August 2023 Image: Katrina Tull



DA Canberra outgoing committee: Joan White, Kellie Nissen, Jenny Milward-Bason, Helen Couper Logan, Lyndall Milward-Bason, Janet Olsen and Megan Davis (NB *Karen Adams-Barker missing*) 26 August 2023 Image: Kerrie Griffin

### **DA Canberra AGM 26 August**

Our AGM was serious business combined with a social lunch. I sincerely thank all outgoing committee members for your time, effort, support and positivity over the last year.

Our on-water team also deserves a special mention as they are the ones who keep us afloat and moving forward, encouraging us to always do our best — coaches **Donna Lennon** and **Jenny Milward-Bason**, boat captains (local regattas) **Lyndall Milward-Bason** and **Jenny Milward-Bason** and our sweeps and drummers.

I also thank each and every member who has volunteered their time and effort towards the many and varied roles required to keep our club functioning. We simply could not do it without you.

It is my great pleasure to congratulate the newly elected DA Canberra Committee:

Coordinator: **Jeannie Cotterell**  
Assistant coordinator: **Helen Couper Logan**  
Treasurer: **Jenny Milward-Bason**  
Secretary: **Joan White**  
General members:  
**Lyndall Milward-Bason, Janet Olsen, Kim Tito**  
and **Donna Lennon** (missing in photograph)

Membership: **Julie Kesby**  
Public Officer: **Deborah Lopert**

I cannot think of a better group to take our club forward into the 2023–24 season.

**Jeannie** would like us to think about refreshing our goals and email your ideas to her.

### **TeamApp**

Thanks to our 'tech heads' **Donna Lennon** and **Kellie Nissen** who continue to look at ways to overcome any issues that sometimes arise.



DA Canberra incoming committee: Joan White, Jenny Milward-Bason, Helen Couper Logan, Kim Tito, Lyndall Milward-Bason, Janet Olsen and Jeannie Cotterell (NB *Donna Lennon missing*) 26 August 2023 Image: Kerrie Griffin

### **DAA 25th anniversary Penrith, Sydney**

Friday 29 September welcome and greet  
Saturday 30 September regatta Tench Park, dinner  
Sunday 1 October DB NSW regatta

Let's celebrate in style for the 25th anniversary of Dragons Abreast Australia with a fun regatta for all, and a night of laughter and dancing.

### **Ord River Marathon 9 June 2024**

EOI for our DA team on our TeamApp.

### **Check out our new DAA branded paddles!**

#### **Merchandise**

If you would like to purchase any merchandise, please contact: **Kathy Hayes** [hayes.spain@gmail.com](mailto:hayes.spain@gmail.com)  
Please pay online.

#### **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/>

#### **Kellie Nissen**

**Outgoing Coordinator 2023-24**  
**Dragons Abreast Canberra**  
**0403 444 884**  
[coordinator.dac@gmail.com](mailto:coordinator.dac@gmail.com)

### **DAA In the loop August 2023**



DA Canberra at the Book Cow launch of Kellie Nissen's book, *What cancer said: And what I said back*, before a celebratory dinner at the Kingston Hotel 23 August 2023 Image: Kerrie Griffin



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

**Editor's note:**

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.

[#breastcancerawareness](#) [#localauthor](#) [#memoir](#)  
[#dragonsabreastcanberra](#) [#dragonsabreastaustralia](#)  
[#BCNAPinkLady](#)

**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.

**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>



Anita Godley, Clare Purcell, Denise Brown, Maureen Wild and Jenny Milward-Bason, NMA paddle 15 July 2023 Image Susan Pitt

**NZ Ambassadors make the Festival Incredibly special** 3 June 2023

Our ambassadors **Seuze** and **Wayne Morris** on their experience:

<https://www.ibcpc.com/post/ambassadors-make-the-festival-incredibly-special>

**Beauty of the composite team**

**Submitted by Clare Purcell, Dragons Abreast Canberra, Australia**

After a few false starts, Meri let me know that we would be paddling with **The Pink Dragon Ladies**, 14 paddlers from Sweden. I was VERY EXCITED.

Read on... <https://www.ibcpc.com/post/beauty-of-the-composite-team>

*One team, two boats.*

**Clare Purcell, NZ manager**

<https://www.newzealandbcs2023.com/>

[2023 IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival, Lake Karapiro, New Zealand - Posts | Facebook](#)

Links to [2023 IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival, Lake Karapiro, New Zealand](#) website images and drone videos: <https://www.ibcpc.com/>

*Would you like to relive those NZ moments, and memories? Well, you are in luck. Please share these far and wide, and relive those memories:*

[Day 1](#)

[Day 2](#)



Che Mortimer trainee sweep 22 July 2023 *Image:* Lyndall Milward-Bason



Lyndall Milward-Bason sweep and boat captain with Donna Lennon, coach 12 August 2023 *Image:* Susan Pitt

### Coaches' corner

We are now busy paddling out of winter and into preparation for the September DAA 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations with the DB ACT Regatta season hot on its heels. That's not to say that we all hibernated during winter.

**Natalie Evans-Sandell** and **Julie Kesby** competed in warmer climes at the **Flamin' Dragons Regatta** at Wauchope, and joined the Dragons Abreast Sydney club for Sunday racing. A contingent of DA Canberra team jumped in the boat with members from the south coast clubs for an outing at **Moruya**. It was so refreshing to get a splash that tasted of

sea water! A big thank you to **Kaaren Sutcliffe** who organised everything at the Moruya end. We paddled, had a lovely lunch generously hosted at Kaaren and Andrew's, fabulous dinner at the Pickled Octopus, Tuross Head and said hello to the Narooma seals.

Courtesy of **Anita Godley**, a number of us participated in a water safety assessment on 4 June which enables us to see how we actually respond and move in the water in a PFD (personal floatation device not PDF!). It's so valuable to practice our capsize drills which we have not yet needed, but always important to be prepared. Thank you Anita. The next assessment is 10 September.

This winter we added a longer paddle to Museum Bay which is combined with a social catch up with paddlers and those who are off the water. A longer stretch out each month enhances our endurance plus we keep our team connected with those waiting to return to paddling. It's a win win.

As usual, our schedule is crammed with local and away events from September until June next year. Lots to keep us engaged and fit. See you on the water!

Watch the [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

**Jenny Milward-Bason, treasurer, coach and drummer**



[Dragons Abreast Melbourne Pink Phoenix](#) pink paddle with DAA members including Jeannie Cotterell, Natalie Evans-Sandell and Che Mortimer, Docklands 19 August 2023 *Image:* [DA Melbourne Facebook](#)

## Concord Pacific Dragon Boat Festival — Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival

This was sponsored by the **NAVMAT** team who generously provided all the organisation, coaching and moral support.

In June, I had the great fortune to take part in the **Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival** on the waters of [False Creek](#) at the site of Expo 86 in [Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada](#). It is North America's largest and most competitive dragon boat festival with over 130 crews competing from around the world with 6000 athletes watched by over 100,000 visitors and was live streamed as well. It was such a stunning venue.

See below a photo of our training session on the day before the races. I am dressed in blue and seated third from the back with 19 other paddlers, a drummer in the front and a helmsman/sweep in the stern to guide the boat. We are waiting for the order to paddle out to the start of the racecourse so we could train.

We had a composite team called **Southern Cross** (clubs listed below) of mostly Canberra competitors and two Sydneysiders competing in women's, men's and mixed events. I competed in eight events over two days.

NAVMAT

Ice Dragons

Invictus

Komodo

FFB (Sydney)

Nature Coast

Diamond Phoenix and

Dragons Abreast.



Training session on the day before the races. April is dressed in blue and seated third from the back June 2023 *Image: April Weiss*



Southern Cross team. April is in the second last row on the left June 2023 *Image: April Weiss*

In the women's races we won the trial and nearly won a medal but pipped at the post by 0.6 of a second. See below my team in boat 5:



In the women's we won the trial and nearly won a medal, pipped at the post by 0.6 of a second. See my team in boat 5 June 2023 *Image: April Weiss*



Chinese lion dancer with April, Canada June 2023 *Image: April Weiss*

We had a lovely time enjoying summer, getting to know some of the other teams and making new friends.

**April Weiss**





Shona Rose 12 July 2023 Image: Susan Pitt

### Dragons aware!

Newly arrived in Canberra and missing Sydney Harbour and my water sports, a small advertisement in the *Canberra Weekly* caught my eye that seemed to offer a lot of positives. An opportunity to get out on the water (my happy place) as well as the chance to improve my fitness and provide some new challenges and goals to aim for. Maybe even a new social circle?

I'd never thought about dragon boating before, but the possibilities saw me heading down to the DA Canberra Come and try in February. I'm pleased to say it was one of my better decisions!

Yes, DA has provided me a chance to get out on the water and enjoy the beautiful Canberra scenery and birdlife (those autumn trees were amazing!) and I'm certainly a little fitter and have some new goals for skill-building and hopefully getting some regattas in. But it's the people and the welcome that really make DA for me. It's the icing on the cake!

In the words of the movie *You had me at hello*. The warmth and interest people showed on the come and try day continues without a let up.

Even though work and life commitments (and my total inability to cope with the early morning cold!) mean I don't attend anywhere near as much as I would like, there is always a welcome for me and a hello which is so much appreciated and valued.

I haven't met many of you yet. But, I know you will be the same welcoming people. As a bonus, it's entertaining to read the chats, share the photographs and remotely cheer your achievements. It's terrific to be inspired by those who have had some tough times in their life getting out there and getting on with it. Long may it continue!

### Shona Rose



Ponto Vecchio in the evening light, Florence, Italy May 2023  
Image: Joanne Widdup

### The Arno still flows and the tourists keep coming to Firenze.....but the dragon boats were resting!

After hearing so much about the wonderful [2018 IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival, Florence](#) (from all those who attended), I was keen to visit and check out the site on my recent trip to Italy. How thrilling to taste the excitement you experienced in Florence. Sadly, there was no paddling activity and only two lonely little boats were tied up at the riverside.

David was still there in all his glory and the pasta dishes and pizza were delicious. I do hope this photograph revives happy memories for those who attended that memorable regatta.

Rome was in full swing with preparations for a **Race for the Cure** event being held at the most historic Circus Maximus. It seems that it is a similar event, but on a larger scale, to our own **Mother's Day Classic** held on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin = our own iconic and beautiful venue.

### Joanne Widdup



Joanne Widdup, Race for the cure, Rome, Italy May 2023  
Image: Doug Widdup



Sisters Diane and Helen Rowcliffe strokes, Commonwealth Place 8 August 2023 *Image:* Jeannie Cotterell

### DAA team

Joining Dragons Abreast gave me a team — it has been many years since I was involved in a team sport, and nothing epitomises 'team' like dragon boating. You can't move forward if you don't work together, you can't improve without mutual support, everyone is equal, and anyone who has been through the grind of breast cancer treatment has the tenacity you need to race and train — always with a determined smile.

### Kim Tito

#### DAA logo history

The pink lady silhouette: Here is the historical connection with **BCNA** and why many DA groups and members are BCNA member groups and individual members.

Dragons Abreast Australia (DAA). started from BCNA's first national conference in Canberra in 1998 where **Michelle Hanton** and **Anna Wellings Booth** heard the [Canadian](#) speaker 'we even have dragon boating for breast cancer survivors' and planted the seed which started to establish DAA.

The **four pink ladies abreast** show we are not alone in our journeys with breast cancer and are stronger together.

**The Dragon:** the dragon spirit embracing the women paddling together. The colour yellow represents hope, and blue for the water on which DA groups paddle.

### Lexie Warren



DA Canberra, BCNA Field of Women MCG 20 August 2023 *Image:* bcnapinklady Facebook



### Warm up and training times

#### Saturday morning:

**Extra effort:** 7.15 – 8.15am

**Saturday morning:** 8.00 – 9.30am

**Tuesday morning:** 6.00 – 7.15am

**Wednesday lunch:** 11.50am – 1.10pm

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

Some great paddling technique tips:  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7IRbj3K8c4&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7IRbj3K8c4&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 95, June 2023](#)

#### [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-events/events/2023-field-of-women/>

#### BCNA Field of Women MCG 20 August

On behalf of everyone at Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA), our partners and all Australians affected by breast cancer, we would like to say a huge thank you to everyone for supporting this year's [Field of Women](#)

Together, we raised an incredible \$1.5 million and we are still counting! You helped BCNA continue to be the voice of, and provide support for, all Australians affected by breast cancer

Here is an [album of photos](#) from the day. While we have many people to thank, we want to pay special tribute to this year's Field of Women ambassadors, who contributed to this remarkable result by sharing their personal stories with Australia.

Without our partners and sponsors, we would not be here to **support the 20,000 Australians, including 202 men, diagnosed every year.**  
**Kirsten Pilatti, CEO BCNA**

[#BCNAPinkLady](#) [#PLAY4BCNA](#) [#fieldofwomen](#)  
[#StandWithMeAtTheG](#)



BCNA Field of Women MCG 20 August 2023 *Image:* BCNA  
[BCNA video](#)

[album of photos](#)



Che Mortimer, DA Canberra, holds up the DAA flag, BCNA Field of Women MCG 20 August 2023 *Image:* Katrina Tull



Julie Kesby, Elly McGinness, Anne Baynes and Katherine Davis Kralikas, DA Canberra, BCNA Field of Women MCG 20 August 2023 *Image:* Katrina Tull

#### BCNA Field of Women MCG flashback

My second participation in the BCNA's Field of Women was just as exciting, emotional and humbling as my first in 2018. It was an absolute privilege to stand again in the middle of the MCG wearing our pink ponchos to form the Pink Lady with some of my wonderful DA Canberra team members, as well as beautiful strangers, and hold our heads (and arms) high as breast cancer survivors.

I loved the fact that some women donned blue ponchos in recognition of their husbands/ brothers/sons/ nephews who are battling/ have battled breast cancer.

**Janet Olsen**



Julie Kesby Janet Olsen, Clare Purcell, Jeannie Cotterell and Elly McGinness, DA Canberra, BCNA Field of Women MCG 20 August 2023 *Image:* Katrina Tull

### Memorable day at the G

What an emotional experience stepping onto the MCG on 20 August to celebrate 25 years of BCNA with other dragon boaters and friends many from around Australia who we had recently shared the NZ IBCPC adventures together.

To watch on the big screen and see the *Pink lady* take her shape and reflect on all the support provided by so many different family members, friends, dragon boaters, networks including BCNA during my 14 years since my first diagnosis, and also realise the amazing changes in all support networks since our Mum's first diagnosis some 32 years ago. It was emotional hearing all the statistics and thinking of family and friends who had lost their lives with breast cancer over the years, and had supported others in their lifetimes.

It was a very special moment to see the *BCNA 20 Year Report* cover photo taken at Parliament House being flashed up on the MCG big screen with my photograph and others from Dragons Abreast Canberra among other screens of BCNA memories. The choir certainly provided further emotional moments in their singing of John Farnham's and Olivia Newton John's music. What a great game of AFL followed to complete a memorable day at the G.

**Julie Kesby**

**Cancer Australia's [Cancer Won't Wait](#) campaign** stresses the importance of people seeing their doctor about any symptoms or health issues.

[Breast cancer statistics](#)

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

[READ THE FULL REPORT CARD](#)

[Breast Cancer Trials](#)

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



Canberra breast cancer nurses, BCNA members and [Dragons Abreast Canberra](#) members, BCNA Board member Mellissa Naidoo and our newest BCNA ACT Consumer Representatives Deborah Lopert and Sarah Beasley with Alicia Payne MP, BCNA Parliamentary Friends of Women's Health panel and breakfast, Parliament House 3 August 2023 *Image:* Alicia Payne MP

### BCNA Parliamentary Friends of Women's Health panel and breakfast, Parliament House 3 August 2023

Not many people know that people living with metastatic breast cancer in Australia are not counted on our cancer registries.

If you are not counted you are not seen, which means patients are essentially 'invisible' when health service providers and policymakers plan cancer services and support.

As a strong supporter of [Breast Cancer Network Australia's](#) campaign to ensure that people living with [metastatic breast cancer are counted](#), I joined my Co-Chair of Parliamentary Friends of Women's Health [Peta Murphy MP Federal Member for Dunkley](#), who is also living with metastatic breast cancer, to host an event with BCNA.

The panel discussion with experts and metastatic breast cancer consumers focused on how government can work to ensure those living with metastatic breast cancer are counted and heard. [Bridget Archer MP - Liberal Member for Bass](#)

The **Hon. Ged Kearney MP**, Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, announced a new benefit for people living with metastatic breast cancer starting 1 November 2023.



Kerrie Griffin, Lan Crowley and Peta Murphy MP and panelist, BCNA Parliamentary Friends of Women's Health panel and breakfast, Parliament House 3 August 2023 *Image:* Professor Fran Boyle



BCNA consumer representatives Louise Sinclair Sydney, Kerrie Griffin, Lisa Tobin WA and Lan Crowley, BCNA Parliamentary Friends of Women's Health panel and breakfast, Parliament House 3 August 2023 *Image: Professor Fran Boyle*

### Health Report with Dr Norman Swan and Tegan Taylor 31 July 2023

#### [More awareness and support needed for metastatic breast cancer](#)

**LISTEN** Duration: 9 minutes 10 seconds 9m

Metastatic cancer is the term for the spread of a cancer from a primary site to other parts of the body. There's no nationally consistent way of keeping track of how many cancer patients go on to develop metastatic cancer, and the topic is under discussion at a [roundtable](#) in Canberra on 2 August. Among the people advocating for change are representatives from [Breast Cancer Network Australia](#)

**Speakers: Lisa Tobin, BCNA Consumer Representative WA**

**Vicki Durston, BCNA Director Policy Advocacy & Support Services**

#### [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.



Deborah Lopert and Sally Beasley, from the ACT, at the BCNA new consumer representative training 6 June 2023 *Image: BCNA*

### BCNA consumer representative training

Earlier this year, with great encouragement and support from **Kerrie Griffin**, I applied and was selected to undertake the training to be a consumer representative for Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA). It was the first since before COVID-19. The training consisted of three online modules and culminated in a two-day workshop in Melbourne.

There were 15 of us in the BCNA training group, and the diversity of the participants amply demonstrated that breast cancer is not a monolithic disease that affects a small population cohort. We came from all states and territories except Western Australia and Tasmania.

Our ages ranged from early 30s to late 60s, and everyone had an individual story. For example, a young woman who was diagnosed when pregnant, one whose first diagnosis was de novo metastatic breast cancer, a young woman whose cancer had metastasised, women on clinical trials, and one young woman whose baby was brought in for feeds (which she was happy that she could still do one-sided).

We met in the BCNA Head Office which is situated in the **Bakers Delight** Melbourne Office. Bakers Delight is a major partner of BCNA, and this was well evidenced by the number of baked goods available for the taking! The training was well thought out and comprehensive, and was provided by BCNA staff, some experienced consumer representatives and some external speakers.

I was amused to see that all the rooms were named after Bakers Delight products, and especially that our training was held in the 'pull-apart' room. On reflection, this was a perfect description for what we did — pulled apart our stories, feelings, hopes and aspirations — all in aid of becoming the very best consumer representatives we can be for those with, and affected by, breast cancer.

**Deborah Lopert, BCNA Consumer Representative**

'I needed people who had been there,' said **Dr Anna Singleton, University of Sydney**, of her research project EMPOWERSMS. 'Clinicians have a different perspective than patient perspective — that is why consumer voice is important within treatment and care.'

**BCNA Think Tank February 2023**

Congratulations to **Deborah Lopert** and **Sarah Beasley** on becoming BCNA consumer representatives which is a very diverse and rewarding experience.

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**

**BCNA MEDIA RELEASES 22 AUG 2023**

[BCNA celebrates recent PBAC decisions](#)

BCNA welcomed a decision to recommend a crucial drug to treat early-stage triple negative breast cancer for a government subsidy. The Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) announced that **Keytruda (pembrolizumab)**, a type of immunotherapy is now indicated to treat early-stage triple negative breast cancer, will be recommended for subsidy on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

**MEDIA RELEASES 05 AUG 2023**

[BCNA alarmed about delays in diagnosis and access to treatment for breast cancer in Queensland](#)

**BCNA NEWS 03 AUG 2023**

[People living with metastatic breast cancer call to be counted](#)

**BCNA NEWS 06 JUL 2023**

[New alert for scam door knockers](#)

**MEDIA RELEASES 15 MAY 2023**

[BCNA Welcomes Investment in Health Workforce to Support those with Breast Cancer](#)

**[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

**[So Brave | Young Women's Breast Cancer Charity - So Brave](#)**

**[goingflat](#)**

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



**Season 2** of BCNA's popular **Upfront About Breast Cancer** podcast **What You Don't Know Until You Do** with Clinical Psychologist **[Dr Charlotte Tottman](#)** is available now.

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

**[Do you know your eligibility for a free breast screen?](#)** 1 August 2023

**BreastScreen** invites women aged 50 to 74 to receive a free breast screen (mammogram) every two years.

If you are 40 to 49 or over 75 you are also eligible to receive free breast screens every two years; however, the decision to screen should be made in consultation with your doctor.

**If you've had breast cancer, you can return to regular breast screening through BreastScreen if it's been more than five years since your diagnosis and you've discussed it with your doctor.**

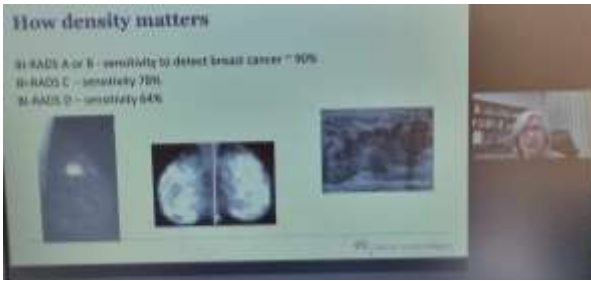
By screening regularly, breast cancer can be detected early and treated successfully.

BCNA encourages you to contact your state/territory's BreastScreen for any questions. You can book your appointment by calling 13 20 50. [#BCNAPinkLady](#)

**[What's your cancer color? | Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center](#)**

**[Understanding Ribbon Colours: Guide to Awareness & Cancer Ribbons](#)**

**[AI use in breast cancer screening as good as two radiologists, study finds](#)**



MRI, mammogram and ultrasound of a breast tumour. Some 44% of patients changed their surgery preference after their MRI  
23 August 2023 *Image: Professor Cristobel Saunders AO*

### **MRI to determine treatment in Breast Cancer – what the evidence shows and what the patients want**

**Some 44% of patients changed their initial surgery preference after their MRI.**

**Professor Cristobel Saunders AO and Dr Julia Matheson** discussed the role of breast MRIs with supporting insights from ongoing studies.

Up to 20% of treating teams recommend a breast MRI for patients with a new diagnosis of breast cancer, but there is considerable variation in availability. Now, patient-reported outcome measures are providing additional and rich information to determine the best use of MRI in newly diagnosed patients.

### **Should women know about their breast density? It's an issue dividing doctors and patients**



Anushe Khan, Julie Solway and Dr Shiamala Suntharalinga... 'We are urging women to come and see us, so that we can examine properly and investigate,' says Dr Suntharalinga.  
*Photo: Lily Pass*

### **Shy migrants urged to step up for free breast screening**

<https://citynews.com.au/2023/shy-migrants-urged-to-step-up-for-free-screening/>

**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



**In 2024, we'll be going further and inviting our participants to run or walk in support of ovarian cancer research, in addition to breast cancer research.**

### **Mother's Day Classic**

**We are thrilled to announce that in 2023, more than 65,000 Australians came together to donate \$2.55 million to breast cancer research!**

Our MDC community is proud that since the MDC began in 1998 the relative 5 year relative survival rate for breast cancer has increased from 84% to 92%. But we recognise that there is still more to do.

**Tragically, the 5 year relative survival rate for ovarian cancer is just 49% and there remains no early detection test.**

Which is why we're going further in 2024 and inviting our participants to run or walk in support of ovarian cancer research, in addition to breast cancer research. We want to accelerate progress towards the day where every woman diagnosed with either breast or ovarian cancer will be given the assurance that they can survive.

<https://www.mothersdayclassic.com.au/mdc-supporting-breast-and-ovarian>

[#mdc #mothersdayclassic #mdc2024](https://www.mothersdayclassic.com.au/mdc-supporting-breast-and-ovarian)



Vanessa and Catherine Catherine Rider-Aichholzer, International Women's Day 8 March 2023 *Image: Catherine Rider-Aichholzer*

### **Bosom Buddies update**

I can't believe that I joined Bosom Buddies as the Executive Officer almost a year ago — it's been a really exciting journey! Due to limited activity during the pandemic, post-COVID-19 meant that it was important to remind the community about our charity. What better way to do this than to reinvigorate ourselves and promote awareness that we are small with a team of one person working behind the scenes, and volunteers who donate their time to keep Bosom Buddies ticking over?

We were approached by **Vanessa Schimizzi**, Canberra's **Young Business Woman of the Year 2021**, who offered her services to rebrand our logo. Vanessa, the owner of **Branded Graphics**, wanted to ensure that as an established charity of more than 25 years, that the ethos and mission of Bosom Buddies remained strong in the logo, but had a contemporary twist. Our logo now shines with vibrant colours, reflecting the changes that have occurred in the world post-COVID-19. I'd like to explain the thought process behind this change. It remains predominantly pink because women are affected the most, a little blue for men who are also diagnosed with breast cancer and because they support and care for the women in their lives who are affected by breast cancer. Of course, pink + blue blend to purple to represent inclusivity and diversity. Our new catch phrase *Connecting People to Support* also strikes at the heart of what Bosom Buddies does — supporting people diagnosed with breast cancer and their families in the ACT and surrounding NSW region. We hope that you like it.

Bosom Buddies looks forward to continuing our fruitful and positive relationship with **BCNA**, **Dragons Abreast** and all our community partners who work together to support those in the community diagnosed with breast cancer.

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***

### **Rollercoaster of emotions**

The **BCNA Field of Women** experience at the MCG was a rollercoaster of emotions. My 16 year old daughter accompanied me which was very special for us. Elsie was 12 when I was diagnosed and had never really had the opportunity to participate in a celebratory event. It was amazing to have her there by my side as we watched so many people dressed in pink join us on the MCG. It was an atmosphere of joy, we danced the Nutbush together, we also shared tears and hugs along the way. An amazing tribute to those who have come before us, those who are still with us and those who are only just hearing those dreaded words. Watching the AFL game afterwards was an added bonus! (Go the mighty Hawkes!)

### **Megan Davis**

#### **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.*

#### **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**



**Casting for Recovery**, 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/>





### 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.com](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/>

#### **[Abridge | Stay on Top of Your Health](https://www.abridge.com/)**

<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>

### **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*

#### **[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](#)**

<https://www.clinic88.com.au/services/lymphatic-dr...>

#### **[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)

#### **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
 September	Saturday 2	DB ACT Come and Try (followed by Learn to paddle sessions in the following weeks)	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
	Sunday 10	DA Water Safety Session	CISAC	TeamApp RSVP
	Friday 29 Saturday 30	DAA 25 <sup>th</sup> anniversary Friday function and Saturday regatta Penrith, Sydney	Regatta Tench Park, Penrith Sydney	TeamApp RSVP
	Sunday 1	Sunday 1 October DB NSW Regatta BCS		
 October	Saturday 7 – Sunday 8	DB ACT Coaches courses	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
	Saturday 14	DB ACT Regatta 1 Mad Hatter 100m (10s) 1 km pursuit (20s)	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
	Saturday 21	DA Canberra come and try session	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
 November	Saturday 11 – Sunday 12	Coast to Coast Regatta	Lake Kawana, Qld	TeamApp RSVP
	Saturday 11	DB ACT Regatta 2 and Juniors Regatta 2km (20s and 10s) 200m (20s)	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
	tbc	Nature Coast Regatta tbc <i>Eminent Mage</i> by Kaaren Sutcliffe book launch tbc	Moruya, NSW	TeamApp RSVP
 December	Sunday 3	Molongo Reach 8km challenge paddle	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
	Saturday 9	IDB ACT Regatta 3 Christmas Regatta 500m (20s)	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
	Date tbc	DA Canberra Christmas Party	TBC	TeamApp RSVP
	Date tbc	DA Canberra Christmas carol paddle	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
2024 January	1-31	Site management Grevillea Park for a month		TeamApp RSVP
	Saturday 13	DB ACT Regatta 4 2km (20s, 10s) 200m (10s)	Grevillea Park	TeamApp RSVP
 February	Saturday 10	DB ACT Regatta 5 500m (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 2km (20s, 10s) 200m (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

**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 — November 2023**

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

Please submit any news, items and images by **1 November 2023** to the newsletter coordinator

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

[Previous newsletters](#)



Three new IBCPC NZ paddle designs, mountain mosaic, green koru, purple koru (a stylised fern leaf motif in Maori carving and tattooing) 22 July 2023 *Image: Lyndall Milward-Bason*



National Carillon lit green and gold for the Matildas, football Women's World Cup 8 August 2023 *Image: Jeannie Cotterell*



[Dragons Abreast Melbourne Pink Phoenix](#) pink paddle with DAA including Natalie Evans-Sandell, Che Mortimer, Docklands 19 August 2023 *Image: Jeannie Cotterell*



Jeannie Cotterell supervising Che Mortimer sweeping, Donna Lennon coach on right, Molongo River 24 June 2023 *Image: Janet Olsen*



Geoff played his bagpipes in a melancholy lament for our second paddling session 3 June 2023 *Image: Susan Pitt*



Che Mortimer sweeping, Amanda Ferris and Phil 24 June 2023 *Image: Susan Pitt*



Kingston sunrise reflections, Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra 18 July 2023 *Image: Carol McAlwee*



Sunrise, Central Basin, Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra 6 June 2023 *Image: Jeannie Cotterell*