

INTERNATIONAL BREAST CANCER PADDLERS' COMMISSION



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Waterford Ireland honours team's efforts

Waterford Dragon Warriors (WDW), Ireland, were recognized at "The Mayor's Launch" in January 2014 when Mayor John Cummins praised the team's hard work in establishing a breast cancer dragon boat team for the city. His press conference took place in The Theatre Royal one of the oldest theatres in Europe. Waterford is celebrating 1100 years as a city making it the oldest city in Ireland. It is also the maritime capital of the country.

Waterford Dragon Warriors which has a current membership of 30 will take delivery of their dragon boat in March. Marcella Sweeney, chairperson of WDW in writing about the initiative says "Only about 10 have ever paddled before so we are realistically aware we will need to work together to prepare for paddling on a very tidal river. However, immense community support and the mayor's recognition have further inspired us. We can do it!"



Front row left to right: Angela Kelly (secretary of Waterford Dragon Warriors), Julie Doyle (Chairperson IDBA, Irish Dragon Boat Association), Marcella Sweeney (Chairperson WDW), Cll John Cummins (Mayor of Waterford City), Margaret O Keffe (Vice-chairperson WDW) and Ray Ryan (Cancer Care Waterford Regional and Sout Tipp Hospital & our major sponsor). Middle row: Clare Shanahan (Solas Centre-Southeast cancer care centre), Phil Carroll (Treasurer WDW), Mairéad Collins (Communication Officer WDW) and hiding behind Marcella over Mayor's left shoulder is Catherine Phelan and Eileen Houlihan (both Cancer Care fundraisers and sponsors). Back row: Declan Barry (Waterford Marine Search and Rescue) is going to keep us safe on the water and got us a place to put the boat at Neptune Marina, Shirle Boyle (WDW) and Buddy Cuddihy (Life Governor of Irish Water Safety) and Lola O Sullivan (Chairperson & National Council Member of Irish Water Safety).

Over 100 teams to take part in Festival

Sarasota, Florida, USA will welcome over 100 teams of breast cancer paddlers to the 2014 IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival, October 24 to 26, 2014. Registration is open for individual paddlers or small groups of paddlers who are not affiliated to a team already registered. See pages 2, 3, 4 and 5 for stories from teams attending from around the world. "Visit www.sarasotabcs2014festival.org

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Where we are coming from

Team Ireland has strong representation

By: Susan Rowe,
Ireland's National Representative
Plurabelle Paddlers, Dublin, Ireland

Team Ireland is made up of paddlers representing three of the five breast cancer dragon boat teams in Ireland: Plurabelle Paddlers (Dublin), Cork Dragons (Cork), Suir Dragon Paddlers (Clonmel, Co Tipperary), Waterford Dragon Warriors (Waterford) and Carlow Dragon Boat Club (Carlow).

Members of the Plurabelle Paddlers have participated in overseas events before, in Malaysia and the UK. We knew the Sarasota 2014 IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival would be a unifying goal for us and the recently formed teams to aim for, in 2014.

Sarasota is a great opportunity to take part in a fantastic event and meet other breast cancer teams from all over the

world. We have welcomed a number of teams to the Dublin Dragon Boat regatta over the last few years - 2011 Pink Champagne, UK; 2012 - Canadians Abreast, CAN; North Shore Dragon Busters, CAN; 2013 - Paddlers for Life, UK; Italian Pink Sisters, and Bella Italia Rosa and look forward to meeting up with them all again in Sarasota.

The Plurabelle Paddlers Winter Fitness Training Programme was selected as one of the winners of Arthur Guinness Projects 2013. As winners, we received funds part of which will go towards supporting Team Ireland crew to train for and compete in Sarasota.

Look forward to seeing everyone in Sarasota. Roll on October 2014!"

The Aussies are coming

By: Angie O'Reilly,
Dragons Abreast Australia Coffs Coast

As well as nine member groups competing in their own right at the Sarasota 2014 Festival, Dragons Abreast Australia (DAA) will have 3 composite teams registered, DAA team: 'Hope', 'Inspiration' and 'Spirit'. Most of these paddlers come from DAA groups too small to send a full team. Many of these paddlers and supporters were together in Peterborough, Canada, 2010 and Caloundra, Australia, 2007. We enjoy the inclusiveness of participating in composite crews, nationally and internationally, something very strong in the DAA ethos. Oh, and we also love to travel!

The three composite crews are made up of 60 survivors and 30 supporters from 17 different member groups from as far south as Tasmania, up to the Northern Territory, across to Western Australia and right along Australia's eastern states.

We are fortunate in Australia to have beautiful paddling waterways varying widely from capital cities amongst cruise and cargo ships to rivers and creeks, on dams and the open ocean, where crocodile sighting is optional. When drought, floods or heat waves stop us, some members paddle poolside to keep up their fitness. We are a diverse bunch of women and men and will certainly not be wallflowers at the Festival.

In 2007 in Caloundra we were fortunate to have a Canadian paddle with us because, as Marie said, 'I

am not going to Australia to paddle with Canadians, I want to paddle with the Aussies'. To this day Marie remains close friends with many of her Intrepid Spirit teammates. This tradition was continued in Peterborough when Wendy from Philadelphia drummed with Team Inspiration. We still have some spaces available for survivors to paddle in our composite crews so any individuals out there from anywhere across our globe are encouraged to email their interest to Angie O'Reilly daacompsarasota@dragonsabreast.org.au We will make you truly welcome.

Our aim is to participate, strengthen national friendships, make new global friends and soak up the atmosphere. Winning is definitely not a priority as we are from all over Australia. Our one and only training session together will be in Sarasota.

One of our paddlers is participating as her team's President lost her lengthy battle with this disease and she promised to take her memory to Sarasota.

Our members are travelling before and after Sarasota to varying locations including San Francisco, Louisville, Miami, San Diego, New York, Boston, New Orleans in the USA, Canada, Europe and cruising the Caribbean, the Inside Passage and the Panama Canal, just to name a few. Watch out Sarasota the Aussies are coming!

“We’re the gals that built the boat”

By: Nancy Bennett,
Avalon Dragons, Newfoundland, Canada



In the boat they built, the Avalon Dragons celebrate and paddle at the same time. The December 2012 IBCPC Newsletter has the story about building their boat, the first breast cancer paddling team to do so. Visit www.ibcpc.com and click on the newsletter icon.

The Avalon Dragons are so excited about the IBCPC Festival in Sarasota that we are sending two teams! We look forward to another Peterborough, one of the most exciting and moving experiences of our paddling careers.

We paddle on Octagon Pond in Paradise, Newfoundland. When we launched our first boat, the Mayor called us “the brightest stars in Paradise.” The Town has been a staunch supporter and given us land for a boathouse. Now we need to raise money to build it!

In Fall, 2006, we “unleashed the dragon” and early in 2007, naval architect Bruce Whitelaw, one of our three volunteer coaches, led our team in building the most beautiful wooden boat ever. Two Royal Canadian Mint breast cancer ribbon quarters were embedded in the keel for good luck.

New Zealand represented by two strong teams

By Sonya Young
CanSurvive, Wellington, New Zealand

The CanSurvive Team is from The Coolest Little Capital in The World – Wellington, New Zealand. We paddle in Wellington’s deep, natural harbour. Famous for its steep surrounding hills, stunning waterfront, the wild weather always makes for challenging and exciting paddling. We celebrated our 10th anniversary last year and have 28 members, some of whom have paddled continuously with the team since its inception.

Our team travelling to Sarasota will comprise 24 members plus our Coach and Manager and it will be the first visit to the USA for a number of our paddlers. We travel two

We have 60 team members and 38 have signed up for Sarasota. We range from our 40’s to 82, from those who have been cancer free many years to those still in treatment. We will come to Florida after a winter Boot Camp, a summer of practices and our August Festival which hosts 30 community teams.

Three Avalon Dragons joined Montreal’s Two Abreast team to win the breast cancer competition at Israel’s first Festival in 2012. The team has competed in these Canadian cities: Peterborough, New Glasgow, London and Barrie as well as Burlington, Vermont, USA

Our major sponsor is the Magic Wok Restaurant. Owner and chef Rennie So was born in the year of the dragon. How appropriate!

or three times each season to other parts of the country to compete and catch up with the six New Zealand breast cancer paddling teams.

Wellington hosts New Zealand’s largest dragon boat festival each March, which gives us the opportunity to paddle against local, regional and international teams in open categories. Last year the Festival held the first Wellington breast cancer division and Flower Ceremony. Our members are looking forward to sharing the breast cancer dragon boat phenomenon on the world stage; showcasing how a diagnosis of breast cancer can be seen as a door opening – not closing.

Continued page 4

Here come the Boobops

By: Matt Cuthbert,
Boobops, Bay of Plenty, New Zealand

The Boobops have been keen to go to an international breast cancer festival since 2007 when they participated in the 2007 Abreast Australia Caloundra event. Some of the team took part in that festival as the “Pink Kiwis” team made up of Boobops and Waikato “Treasure Chest”.

The Boobops have just celebrated their 10th anniversary as they started in 2003 as a mixed breast cancer and supporter team. Now they are proud to say they are New Zealand’s National breast cancer champions for 2011, 2012 and 2013.

There are six breast cancer teams in New Zealand plus 2 teams that are breast cancer and non breast cancer as there are not enough breast cancer paddlers in those areas. Boobops currently have 26 members, 22 of whom are going to Florida along with the Manager, Coach and 6 supporters.

They paddle on the sea in an area called Sulphur Point which is part of the Tauranga City harbour. Unfortunately the team do not have a major sponsor and are funding the trip through fund raising efforts. The team will be staying on after the event and going to various cities and attractions around Florida.



Boobops Wellington New Zealand Festival Regatta Breast Cancer Division 2013

Ciao Sisters!

By: Milena Vacirca
Florence Dragon Lady, Italy

We are the Florence Dragon Lady team from Firenze (Florence), Italy – a breast cancer paddling team formed in February 2006, happy to celebrate our 8th birthday this year! We are all volunteers for LILT (an Italian organization for the fight against cancer) which means that we are involved in various projects related to prevention and the spread of our hopeful message about living with breast cancer.

We are doing our best to be able to bring a complete crew to the International Festival in Sarasota, although the economic crisis in Italy makes fundraising difficult. However, we are happy to report that, so far, we have received contributions from the Rotary Club of the town of Fiesole and also from The Federation of the Wine, Oil and Taste Routes of Tuscany. After the great experience our team had in Peterborough, Canada (and a few of our members in Caloundra, Australia), we are really motivated to take part in the Sarasota festival. It is our hope to be able to bring our other sisters to share the experi-

ence of this special gathering of breast cancer survivors in October.

The breast cancer paddling movement in Italy has grown quickly to the point where we now have 12 teams. In our region of Tuscany, we share the Arno River with a new team, the Astro Dragon Ladies, who are about to celebrate their 2nd birthday. Florence Dragon Lady has almost 50 members, some of whom come straight from the rehabilitation oncology centre in Firenze where dragon boating is considered an official rehabilitation activity. We paddle in a beautiful location at the Canottieri Comunali Club (Rowing Club) which hosts us.

Last year was full of events for breast cancer survivor dragon boaters in Italy. In Rome, we celebrated the 10-year anniversary of Orlanda Cappelli’s founding of the first Italian breast cancer dragon boat team, had regattas in both Torino and Val Cavallina and joined thousands of boats on Venice’s Grand Canal for the

annual Vogalonga. We attended international events hosted by Italy in Castelgandolfo, Rome and Florence where we met with women from Italy, Great Britain, Germany, Canada, Australia and the USA to discuss the future of breast cancer dragon boating. In September, some of us were part of a two-boat composite Italian team which had fun participating in the Dublin Regatta

hosted by the Plurabelle Paddlers.

The trip to Sarasota will be our very first visit to the USA, and it will be extra special for us as we hope to see again our old teammate Nikita from Houston, Texas who lived for four years in Pisa, Italy. And, of course, we can't wait to meet up with ALL of our Sisters from around the world.

Breathe the Magic

By: Mariagrazie Punzo
Pink Butterflies, Rome, Italy



Pink Butterflies parade in Peterborough 2010 IBCPC Festival

Having participated in the IBCPC 2010 Peterborough Festival, Pink Butterfly wanted to relive and again breathe the magic some members experienced at this Festival. We have now injected this enthusiasm into our new teammates. We are excited about the prospect of being together for this important international trip and of meeting hundreds of women like us.

Our team is composed of 32 women and we are bringing to Sarasota 18 of them. Also there will be Rose from New Zealand and a friend from Venice Pink Lioness. We paddle the Castel Gandolfo Lake, a place near to Rome and very close to the Pope's summer residence.

We often paddle with other Italian teams. We paddled the Castel Gandolfo Lake in May 2013, on the occasion of our tenth anniversary called "Pagaie Rosa 10 e lode" where we made new friends with Dragons Abreast Australia's Bridie Island. Last September we paddled in Turin, on the occasion of "Il Pò si tinge di rosa" sports event. Last year we joined with our Tasmanian

friends during the Florence Dragon Boat Pink meeting and in Venice's Vogalonga. Some of our members have paddled with other international teams on the three occasions of Vancouver 2005, Australia 2007 and of course, Peterborough.

We are organizing a theatrical representation and other such activities in order to provide some financial support for our team.

For some, this will be the first experience abroad. With us there are going to be some friends who have just begun to paddle. They have many questions and want to know many things. Our group is experiencing a particular moment: we are maturing a lot and are trying to instill awareness in all our new friends. Our primary task is to be able to help ourselves: in this way we will be able to show other people the positivity and strength we matured doing together these activities. Our aim is to restore the smile to new friends, that smile we have already found.

Two dedicated paddlers to welcome aboard

As new teams join the IBCPC, the Steering Committee is working with these teams to appoint a representative who will liaise between the country's team(s) and the IBCPC. Being active in their respective communities, these individuals will ensure there are good communication channels to and from the IBCPC. Sheila and Cheryl are the fifth and sixth Canadian National Representatives to be appointed.

Sheila Blair

Bunny Rosse (left) and Sheila Blair



Sheila Blair is an “Original” member of Abreast In A Boat (AIAB). She was one of those 24 women who, in 1996, participated in Dr. Don McKenzie’s project to study the effects of strenuous upper body exercise on women who had been treated for breast cancer. She has continued her involvement with AIAB and has paddled on numerous teams both at home in Vancouver and abroad.

Sheila is lauded for her efforts to raise awareness travelling around British Columbia with an information booth about exercise, breast health and breast cancer. Her friend, Bunny Rosse, herself a breast cancer paddler, joins Sheila and together they are an effective force at wellness shows, festivals, conferences, schools and malls. They go anywhere that gives the opportunity to talk to women and their families about breast health and breast cancer. She and Bunny especially like to encourage and support newly diagnosed women through the challenges of life with breast cancer. Sheila is also the archivist for AIAB and has a whole room in her house dedicated to the team.

Sheila’s husband, Vern, is an ardent supporter of breast cancer paddling and travels with Sheila to many of the AIAB’s overseas adventures. Sheila enjoys spending time in her beautiful garden. She is a keen sportswoman and enjoys almost every sport whether she is doing it herself, watching it on TV or going to games with her husband and two sons. Sheila is currently and bravely going through a recurrence after 23 years of being breast cancer clear.

Sheila, as one of six Canadian National representatives, has responsibility for 8 British Columbia teams: Abreast In A Boat-Vancouver; Angels Abreast-Nanaimo; Bust’N Loose-Kelowna; Forza Rosa Canada-Gibsons; North Shore Dragon Busters-North Vancouver; Sunshine Dragons Abreast-Sunshine Coast; Survivorship-Penticton and International Pink Sisters-Parksville.

Cheryl Watson

Cheryl Watson is a 13 year member of Abreast In A Boat (AIAB), Vancouver, Canada. She has served on the AIAB Board and in various capacities on several crews.

Cheryl has traveled with AIAB to Singapore, South Africa, Australia and the International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF) Club Crew event in 2002 in Rome. Four AIABers paddled on Internationally Abreast where the women met Orlanda Cappelli. Orlanda went on to start the breast cancer dragon boat movement in Italy when she formed the Pink Butterflies in Rome, 2003. Cheryl will be returning to Italy when she paddles in the IDBF Club Crew World Championships in Ravenna, Italy in September 2014.

She was diagnosed in 1995 and again in 2009. Her novice year of paddling was a wonderful experience she will never forget. Each year she is encouraged to see the novices embrace the sport, see their fear abate and their confidence rise. To be amongst others in the same boat who are supportive and getting stronger emotionally and physically is awesome!



Cheryl is a semi-retired registered nurse who works with surgical patients, many involving breast cancer. She loves to spread our message of hope and active lives.

She lives in North Delta B.C. with her husband Rick and their dog Webster.

Cheryl is proud to be one of six Canadian National Representatives for IBCPC and has responsibility for these British Columbia teams: Abreast of Life-Central Vancouver Island, Buoyant Buddies-Vernon, Dragon Divas-Cowichan, Hope Afloat-Comox, Island Breaststrokers-Victoria, NorthBreast Passage-Prince George, Spirit Abreast-Chilliwack and Spirit Warriors-Kamloops.

Canada's Reps Ensure Communication

Now six enthusiastic women have begun work as IBCPC Canadian National Representatives (NRs). These women will liaise with the breast cancer dragon boat teams assigned to them and they will ensure timely communications between their respective teams and the IBCPC.

Read the biographies of Sheila Blair and Cheryl Watson on page 5. Peggy Hurley and Suzanne Bodner's biographies are in the December 2013 Newsletter. Cathy Prusak and Mieke Martin are in the September 2013 edition.

The following is a breakdown of the teams assigned to each of the NRs from coast to coast. To contact your NR, email her at committee@ibcpc.com.

Mieke Martin, Blandford, Nova Scotia

1. Avalon Dragons, St John's, Nfld
2. Bosom Buddies, Halifax, NS
3. Breasts Ahoy, St. John, NB
4. Cape Breastoners, NS
5. Phenix Rose des Vents, Sherbrooke, Que
6. Vise A Vie Dragon Boat Team, Quebec, Que
7. 'tit Bateau, Lower Coverdale, NB
8. Two Abreast/ Cote a Cote, Montreal, Que
9. West Island Dragons, Pointe Claire, Que
10. Women Alike Abreast a River, New Glasgow, NS

Suzanne Bodner, Kingston, Ontario Squad #1

1. Busting Out, Ottawa
2. Canadians Abreast, Bethany
3. Chestmates, Kingston
4. Dragon Flies, Lindsay
5. Pink Sensations, Pickering
6. Prior Chestnuts, Arnprior
7. Ribbons of Hope, Barrie
8. Survivors Abreast, Peterborough

Peg Hurley, Windsor, Ontario Squad #2

1. A Breast or Knot, Windsor
2. Breast Buddies, Sarnia
3. Breast Strokes, Guelph
4. Dragons Abreast, Toronto
5. Hope Floats of St. Catherines
6. Knot A Breast, Hamilton
7. Rowbust, London
8. Wonder Broads, Windsor

Cathy Prusak, Winnipeg, Manitoba

1. Breast Friends, Edmonton, Alta
2. Busting With Energy, Saskatoon, Sask
3. Chemo Savvy, Winnipeg, Man
4. Dragon Tamers, Kenora, Ont
5. Sistership Dragon Boat Association, Calgary, Alta
6. Warriors of Hope, North Bay, Ont
7. Waves of Hope, Brandon, Man

Sheila Blair, North Vancouver, BC Squad #1

1. Abreast In A Boat, Vancouver
2. Angels Abreast, Nanaimo
3. Bust'N Loose, Kelowna
4. Forza Rosa Canada, Gibsons
5. North Shore Dragon Busters, North Vancouver
6. Sunshine Dragons Abreast, Sunshine Coast
7. Survivorship, Penticton
8. International Pink Sisters, Parksville

Cheryl Watson, Surrey, BC Squad #2

1. Abreast of Life, Central Vancouver Island
2. Buoyant Buddies, Vernon
3. Dragon Divas, Cowichan
4. Hope Afloat, Comox
5. Island Breaststrokers, Victoria
6. NorthBreast Passage, Prince George
7. Spirit Abreast, Chilliwack,
8. Spirit Warriors, Kamloops

Puerto Rico's Flower Ceremony a first.



A Canadian breast cancer paddler, Mary Connelly organizes International Pink Sisters (IPS), a team of survivors who work hard encouraging new teams to come together. Mary rounds up paddlers from any number of countries hence their name. Their most recent adventure was to Puerto Rico (PR) in February. Adriana Bartoli from Vancouver, Canada joined this team as she has been working hard to raise awareness in Latin America. By the time the two IPS crews arrived in Puerto Rico the International Dragon Boat Federation PR representative, JoMarie Martinez, assisted by Mary and Adriana, had pulled together a number of Puerto Rican breast cancer survivors. Together with Miami, USA's Save Our Sisters the three teams paddled together on a lake called Los Cerrillos near the capital city of Ponce. They joined together for a very emotional Flower Ceremony which is the first Flower Ceremony to take place in Latin America. Congratulations to Mary, Adriana and Jomarie for making this happen.

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Taipei invites IBCPC members to join in the ancient tradition



The Taipei City Government of Taiwan is cordially inviting two IBCPC member teams to participate in their annual Dragon Boat Festival. The three day event begins May 31 and continues to June 2, 2014. The Taipei City Government will provide accommodation and city tour guides to the two IBCPC teams. Team would have to cover their transportation costs.

Taiwan's breast cancer dragon boat team, Hsin Huai Dragon Boat Team is the only breast cancer paddling team in Taiwan. They have paddled for three years and have this year joined the International Breast Cancer Paddlers' Commission. Email committee@ibcpc.com if you are interested in participating with the Hsin Huai team.

What in the World is Going On?



May 31 – June 2, 2014 Taipei, Taiwan
The annual Taipei Government Festival
committee@ibcpc.com



August 16, 2014 Paradise, Newfoundland
Avalon Dragons 4th festival
www.avalondragons.com



July 11 - 13 2014 Tecumseh, Ont, Canada
Join the Wonderbroads for their
12th Season
www.dragonboatsonline.com



August 27, 2014 Ravenna, Italy
International Dragon Boat Federation
9th Club Crew World Championships
www.idbf.org



August 2 & 3 2014 Burlington, Vermont, USA
Sisters at Heart and Lake Champlain
Dragon Boat Festival
www.ridethedragon.org



October 19, 2014 Australia
7th Annual Dragons Abreast Australia
Location to be determined
festival@dragonsabreast.org.au



October 24-26, 2014, Sarasota, Florida, USA
IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival
info@sarasotabcsfestival2014.org



The IBCPC invites teams to post events of interest to paddlers on the above Bulletin Board. To do so email the information to newsletter@ibcpc.com The IBCPC takes no responsibility for events by reason of the posting. Where travel to another country is involved, teams are advised to consult their respective Government's Travel Advisory.

