

INTERNATIONAL BREAST CANCER PADDLERS' COMMISSION

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Twenty years ago *Abreast In A Boat* was formed to dispel the myth that strenuous exercise resulted in lymphedema. As you are aware, this unique application of sport to health care—‘canoeing as medicine’—has expanded globally with breast cancer dragon boat teams in six continents and a highly successful model of governance through the International Breast Cancer Paddlers’ Commission. Shortly after we started the dragon boat program **Dr. Karen Gelmon**, an oncologist at the British Columbia Cancer Agency, and I opened a small exercise facility near the Cancer Agency to investigate the role that physical activity plays in the management of patients with breast cancer. The Cancer Gym is an academic unit that provides evidence-based, supervised, exercise and nutrition programs for women who are being treated for breast cancer.

Canadian University to Expand Cancer Gym

By Dr Don McKenzie, Professor & Director,
Division of Sport and Exercise Medicine, Faculty of Medicine
University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

It is a part of supportive care to improve quality of life and overall health. All activity is based in research and we have been part of multi-center trials supported by grants from Canadian Federal and Provincial governments, among others. This facility has served to train many graduate students in this unique form of ‘exercise is medicine’ and continues to provide leadership in the cancer field. To date, eight young women have graduated from the University of British Columbia with MSc and/or PhD degrees based on the research from this unit; they have all gone on to careers in Medicine as research scientists or physicians. The most recent doctoral student defended her thesis earlier this month; it was a detailed series of studies that evaluated how exercise protects the heart from damage caused by some of the medications used to treat breast cancer.

Continued on Page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

Canadian university expands cancer gym	1 -2	A Fourth National Rep for the USA	6
Florence Festival update	2	IBCPC Appoints British Director	6
Italians encourage new team to form in Belgium	3	Rowbust off to Australia to defend world title	7
Outstanding Australian leaders appointed National Reps	4 & 5	New Zealand’s flower ceremony impresses bystanders	8
Canadians Abreast heading to Spain	6	What in the world is going on?	8

Canadian University to Expand Cancer Gym Continued from Page 1

For individuals with a cancer diagnosis, exercise has proven to be an important intervention and is helpful in managing treatment side effects such as fatigue, muscle and joint pain, depression and anxiety. It also helps maintain aerobic fitness and strength during treatment, minimizes the negative changes to body composition and bone density and improves the quality of life. This is a productive centre with more than 25 peer-reviewed publications in top cancer and exercise journals and importantly, there is longitudinal data that shows exercise changes the course of the disease.



The Cancer Gym's current space near the BC Cancer Agency is small, and plans for the new Sport and Exercise Centre at UBC contain a laboratory and expanded gym space (total ~ 3,000 square feet) to conduct research in this field. Construction will begin this summer and we will move into the new facility in September 2017. The Cancer Gym will be seamlessly transferred from its current site to the new Centre at UBC, where it will occupy a larger footprint, house state-of-the-art equipment and interact with a complementary laboratory, all of which will expand the programs and accelerate the research conducted in the gym. The move to UBC will also create new opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration. The School of Kinesiology supports this initiative and will train clinical exercise physiologists to deliver these exercise programs in community settings across British Columbia and beyond.

The Cancer Gym is a success story that has helped hundreds of cancer patients locally and, by disseminating research findings, thousands of patients worldwide. There is an important interaction between regular exercise and breast cancer, and this merits further research. We have a proven track record in this area and our team of exercise scientists, oncologists and sport medicine practitioners are tireless in their efforts to be leaders in exercise and oncology research.

For your personal support of Dr Don's facility please address your contribution to don.mckenzie@ubc.com

You will make a difference. Together we can change the world for people living with breast cancer. ■

2018 Florence Festival Update

Two years ago I only dared to imagine my city as the hosting location for the fifth IBCPC Dragon Boat Festival.

The 2014 festival held in Sarasota, Florida U.S.A. gave me an amazing feeling of joy and the consciousness of being part of something special. My enthusiasm for that experience overwhelmed me and I started to daydream about holding this extraordinary event in Florence -a charming and cosmopolitan city open to the world.

Since then the organizing committee and I have worked hard on this challenge which is to take place in Florence in 2018. Actual dates will be announced before the end of this year. Our dream to make it a truly memorable event is starting to materialize.

The whole city will be flooded by a pink tide: streets, shops and buildings will be invaded by a pink energy. For this reason we have

By Lucia De Ranieri, President, 2018 IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival

chosen as the official name of the Florence Festival organising committee: **Firenze in Rosa.**

The Committee is composed of **Susanna Benvenuti, Jolanda Giamberini, Alessandro Piccardi, Patrizia Spinelli** and myself are all team-members of the *Florence Dragon Lady*. **Firenze in Rosa** is busy laying the foundation for an unforgettable festival and a fabulous week of events in 2018. We now expect to break all records of attendance at the festival.

You can follow the ramp up to Florence 2018 on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/florenceBCSfestival2018/ and on Twitter <https://twitter.com/florencebcs2018>. Make sure your team is a member of the IBCPC, so you can participate and have the time of your life! Check it out at www.ibcpc.com ■



Pink Lioness Belgique



From Cecilia Picchi,
European Representative
Florence, Italy

Pink October 2015 gave a group of Belgian ladies the opportunity to try out dragon boating for the first time. **Madam Rosette van Rossem**, president and founding member of *Pink Ribbon Belgium* (<http://www.pink-ribbon.be/WP/?lang=fr>) organized a five-day trip to Venice for a group of ten breast cancer survivors from different parts of Belgium. The purpose of their visit was to learn more about our movement with the goal of starting up breast cancer teams in their country.

The women were warmly received in Venice by **Lucia Furlan** and *Pink Lioness*, the local breast cancer dragon boat team, at their team clubhouse RSC Bucintoro. 'En quelques minutes, nous sommes devenues des sœurs de cœur' --'in a few minutes we became sisters of the heart' Cécile and Sophie exclaimed. An exchange of official plaques and other gifts marked the beginning of a close friendship between the women of Belgium and their Venetian hosts. The ten novice paddlers will remember not only the emotion of paddling for the first time along the beautiful canals of Venice, but also the strong emotions they felt through sharing the experience with their new Italian friends. Smiles and hugs made language barriers crash easily! The day ended with a wonderful concert of Vivaldi's 'Four Seasons' at the Accademia.

The *Pink Lioness* members showed their energy and enthusiasm for dragon boating, explaining the benefits of being on a team and paddling together. Their new Belgian friends returned

home nourished by their experience, and in a short time, they are going to announce the country's first team -- in the village of Lier, near Antwerp. The name has already been announced -- '*Pink Lioness Belgique*', in honour of their Pink Lioness sisters in Venice.

The meeting between the two groups fostered an exchange of energies and feelings, leaving both the Belgians and the Venetians enriched and strengthened.

Aline Poulain – Monique Quaeyhaegens- Marie Buckens – Isabelle Thoelen – Els Craeghs – Carine Van Hoppe – Julie Hilgers – Sophie Halpouter – Liliane De Boeck – Cécile Weiss

Italian Shortened Version

In ottobre 2015 le Pink Lioness in Venice hanno vissuto una bellissima esperienza che desiderano condividere con tutte voi. Abbiamo trascorso una settimana in compagnia di dieci donne provenienti da diverse città del Belgio. Queste meravigliose donne, organizzate da Rosette van Rossem responsabile dell'associazione Pink Ribbon, ci hanno chiesto di aiutarle per la formazione di future squadre di dragonboat. Abbiamo condiviso con loro momenti molto emozionanti. Tra allenamenti e lezioni teoriche abbiamo trovato spazio per momenti di convivialità e intima condivisione.

Abbiamo potuto diffondere il messaggio che unisce il mondo rosa. Lo scambio di energie e sentimenti ha lasciato entrambi i gruppi arricchiti e rinforzati. ■



Australian National Reps: A growing force

With the appointment of two new Australian National Representatives, **Frances Heaney** from Canberra and **Ali Sutton** from Melbourne, this brings to five the number of IBCPC's Reps in this country. The IBCPC Steering Committee recognizes the terrific job **Corina Bradley** did as a National Rep and thank her most sincerely for her commitment and enthusiasm when she was doing this job for the Commission.

Frances and Ali join **Gillian Brown** from Penrith, **Angie O'Reilly** from Coffs Harbour and **Gillian Goddard**, Clarence Valley, Northern New South Wales. **Pat Hancock**, IBCPC Director at large will continue to provide leadership to these Australian National Reps.

Ali Sutton

Melbourne,
Dragons Abreast Melbourne (DAM Busters) Australia

After a breast cancer diagnosis in 2006, Ali was having her course of chemotherapy when she noticed a poster on the wall at the hospital advertising dragon boating. She promised herself when treatment was finished she would check out this amazing looking group of women in pink and learn more about paddling. Ali did just that and after her first come-and-try session, she was hooked. "From the minute I walked through the door it was like coming home to family, the warmth, compassion and caring nature of these women just overwhelmed me".

Since then Ali has been president and coach of the group for several years and is an accredited sweep. Ali has travelled extensively; her first overseas event was the Peterborough Festival 2010 and then the 2014 Sarasota Festival. Ali has also honed her steering skills in extraordinary events such as the Vogalonga in Venice; the Pink regatta in Florence; the Ord River Marathon in Western Australia; the Four Bridges on the Derwent River, Tasmania.

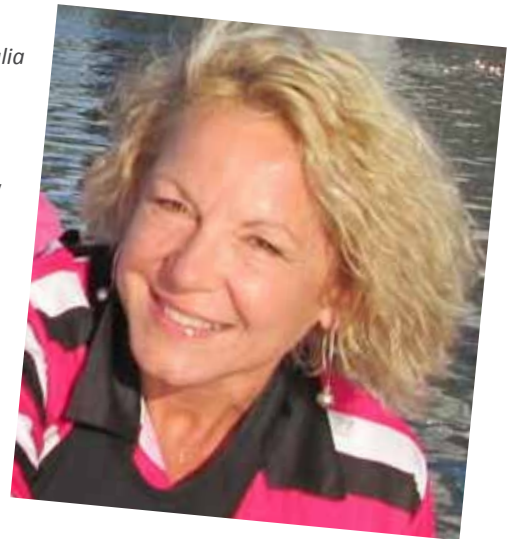
Ali was awarded Life Membership with *Dragons Abreast Melbourne* for exceptional service to the club in her capacity as president, coach, steersperson and club advocate and representative.

"It still amazes me that out of such adversity (diagnosis

and treatment) comes the opportunity to meet and share my life with so many beautiful people and be a part of such wonderful groups and experience so many adventures"

In addition to these skills Ali is a well-respected and well known member of the dragon boat community in the Australian state of Victoria serving as a board member and office bearer for the state organisation, *Dragon Boats Victoria*. She has a great rapport with both local and regional clubs and often helps out at regattas, sweeping for other clubs as required.

Currently Ali is working towards building breast cancer events into all the state's regattas, co-ordinating teams and encouraging individual breast cancer paddlers to come along to regattas even if their team has not entered. "I just like to see everyone enjoying these regattas and having the opportunity to experience dragonboating, it's all about inclusiveness and participation".



Australian National Representatives

Angie O'Reilly, Coffs Harbour
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DA Tasmania Hobart
DA Merimbula
DA Devonport
DA Launceston
DA Port Lincoln
DA South Australia Inc.
DA Adelaide
Adelaide Survivors Abreast
Dragon Boat Club

Frances Heaney, Canberra
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DA Central Coast
DA Townsville
DA Canberra
Newcastle Hunter Valley DA
DA Brisbane
Redcliffe DA
DA Bribie Island
DA Gold Coast
DA Mt Warning

Gill Goddard, Clarence Valley
Gillian.g@bigpond.com

DA Coffs Coast
DA Bunbury
Amazons Perth DA Club
DA Byron Bay
DA Clarence Valley
DA Bundaberg
DA Mackay
Titivators Coffs Coast





There are currently 23 National Reps who liaise between their country's teams and the IBCPC. As active members in their communities these individuals ensure good communication channels are in place. On page 6 you can read about a new Rep for the United States: **Liz O'Connell**, St Petersburg, Florida, USA. Liz will join **Linda Dyer**, Burlington, Vermont; **Cheryl Lychwich** from Fort Dodge, Iowa and TK Kimura from Los Angeles, California. **Betty Solley**, IBCPC Membership Director from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania will continue to lead these US National Reps.

Frances Heaney

Dragons Abreast Canberra, Australia

Frances had been a health professional her entire working life, nursing full time for 26 years then spending 12 years in the Department of Health, retiring in February 2014.

and more recently completed her level 1 coaching certificate. She has been the project manager for several local dragon boat regattas, vice coordinator and now the current coordinator of *Dragons Abreast Canberra*.



Frances attended a Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA) Summit in Sydney, Australia after her first round of treatment finished in October 2012 and stayed on to watch the *Dragons Abreast Australia (DAA)* dragon boat festival, her first introduction to dragon boating and the rest is history. Frances took up dragon boating with *Dragons Abreast Canberra* three years ago.

Frances attended her first IBCPC event in 2014, in Sarasota, Florida, USA. Frances has also travelled to many interstate regattas throughout Australia, competed in two Australian National Championships, 2014-2015, paddled the 55 km Ord River marathon June 2014, captained and coached a composite team to compete in Hong Kong in the Breast Cancer Survivors Championships on Victoria Harbour in July 2015 and more recently was the captain of team *DA Inspiration* for the DAA Festival in Sydney, October 2015, organising a crew with paddlers from New Zealand, Canada, Tasmania and Canberra.

Frances has been a very active member of *Dragons Abreast Canberra (DAC)* and *Dragons Abreast Australia (DAA)*. She is qualified as a level 3 sweep

Frances has always loved to travel and has travelled extensively around the world and is looking forward to now paddling her way around the world. ■

Gillian Brown, Penrith gilliansgo@hotmail.com

- DA Penrith
- DA Illawarra
- DA Wagga Wagga
- DA Orange
- DA Sydney
- Pittwater Pinks
- Flamin Dragons
- DA Camden Haven
- DA Dubbo

Ali Sutton, Melbourne alisutton61@yahoo.com.au

- DA Melbourne
- DA Peninsula
- Bravehearts on the Murray,
- Albury Wodonga
- DA Geelong
- DA Ballarat
- DA Bendigo
- DA Gippsland





Pictured here is an unusual but successful dragon boat team of breast cancer survivors called *Canadians Abreast*. This group comes together from all across Canada when they decide to go on an adventure. It was the brain child of *Survivors Abreast, Darlene Prager* of Peterborough, Canada. Darlene and her crew are pictured here in 2012 with *Loyola Hearn*, Canada's Ambassador to Ireland. This team had travelled first to Israel to paddle on the Sea of Galilee before coming to Dublin to paddle with the *Plurabelle Paddlers*. Their next adventure took them to Pinatar, Spain in March 2016 where they were paddling with some of their European breast cancer paddling friends from the United Kingdom and Italy. ■



IBCPC Appoints British Director



*The IBCPC Steering Committee is pleased to announce **Ann Johnson**, Manchester Dragoneers from Manchester, United Kingdom has been appointed as a Director to the Commission. Ann will be active representing the numerous teams in Great Britain and she is replacing **Louisa Balderson** who has resigned after five years working successfully to encourage breast cancer dragon boat paddling in the UK. We shall miss Louisa's*

wisdom and we welcome Ann aboard.

Ann Johnson, Manchester Dragoneers

Ann discovered *Paddlers for Life Windermere* in 2007 a year after she was treated for breast cancer. She had to travel almost 80 miles each way to paddle with the team on Lake Windermere every Sunday morning.

After a number of years Ann decided to look for water in the Greater Manchester area to set up a team in her own region. It was a difficult few years but eventually Manchester City Council suggested the Debdale Outdoor Centre would welcome a Breast Cancer Dragon Boat team. It was in 2012 that *Paddlers for Life Manchester*, now *Manchester Dragoneers* was formed. Five ladies from Manchester raised over £3,000 in order to purchase a boat from Windermere and the team was born.

Ann has taken part in the Celebration of Life Festivals in Peterborough and Sarasota and is now paddling forward towards Italy in 2018 with a Manchester crew. ■



Liz O'Connell: appointed fourth USA representative



Liz O'Connell now living in St. Petersburg, Florida, was born in the year of the Water Dragon under the sign of Pisces. Water sports have always played an important role in her life. She received the shocking news that she had breast cancer only two weeks before her planned departure on a three-year sailing adventure in the Pacific. After a five month delay for surgeries, she embarked on the trip with a resolve to put her experience to good use upon her return.

Liz later settled in Tampa and volunteered in a variety of capacities at Moffitt Cancer Center. In 2004 Moffitt called for survivors to form an *ad hoc* BCS team for Tampa's next dragon boat festival;

and she found her mission! Having been a collegiate swimmer and competitive sailor, dragon boat racing was a natural fit. Liz became one of the four founding officers of the *Pink Dragon Ladies/Team Survivor* Tampa Bay – Florida's first cancer survivor dragon boat team. She also served on the board of the Tampa Bay Dragon Boat Institute.

Liz continues to mentor her team's leaders, advise its Board, maintain the team's archives as well as being an enthusiastic paddler. She has advised several cancer survivor teams in the incorporation process, seeking to broaden survivor participation in the sport. Since 2011, Liz has served on the Sarasota Festival Organizing Committee/Board and had the honour of introducing **Dr. Susan Love**, the Opening Keynote Speaker in Sarasota at the IBCPC Participatory Festival in October 2014..

Liz has recently retired from a 37-year career in university administration. As an IBCPC representative, she is excited to be able to promote breast cancer paddling and work with the IBCPC leaders and the teams in her region. She also looks forward to spending more time with her teammates AND her husband, Walt – a dedicated team supporter and occasional sweep!

Liz has responsibility for the following teams: *Dragon Boat Atlanta Steel Magnolias*, Atlanta, GA, *Dragon Boat at the Beach*, Myrtle Beach, SC, *Healing Dragons*, Charlotte, NC, *Heart and Soul*, Satellite Beach, FL, *Jax Pink Fire Dragons*, Jacksonville, FL, *Kentucky Thorough-Breasts*, Highland Heights, KY, *Mammoglams*, Jacksonville, FL, *Missin' Mammaries/Breast Strokes*, Punta Gorda, FL, *Paddles and Pearls*, Charleston, SC, *Pink Dragon Ladies*, Tampa, FL, *Save Our Sisters SOS Miami*, Miami, FL, *Save Our Sisters Palm Beach County*, Palm Beach, FL, *Survivors in Sync*, Sarasota, FL and *Warriors on Water*, Orlando, FL. ■



Rowbust off to Australia to defend world title

By **Linda Kuska**, Team Captain
*Rowbust Breast Cancer Survivor
Dragon Boat Racing*

Adelaide, Australia will be the destination in early April for 26 members of the *Rowbust Team of London*, Canada. The Australian city is where they will defend their Club Crew World Championship Gold in the 200m, 500m and 2000m distance races won by them at Ravenna, Italy in 2014. This was the first time the International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF) recognized the Breast Cancer Survivor (BCS) Division.

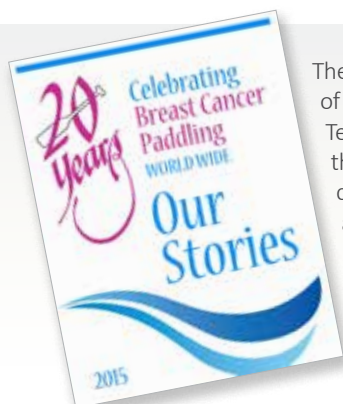


Once in Australia before proceeding to Adelaide, the team and coaches will spend a week in Canberra getting “race ready”. The competition from other highly competitive BCS teams is challenging particularly as this CCWC comes at the end of the paddling season in Australia but before the season in Canada. The team has taken a focused training schedule at Movati Athletic - a company that has sponsored the team for 14 years by providing free gym membership and trainers. In addition to outdoor paddling on Fanshawe Lake the team regularly uses the Welland International Flatwater Center’s world-class indoor paddling tank facilities.

As well as training for highly competitive competition the team has been faced with another challenge: raising the required money to send the full crew and coaches to Australia. To do this an incredible amount of work by a dedicated group of *Rowbust* volunteers

planned and organized fund raising events which included a golf tournament, a comedy night, garden and house tour, Sarah Smith Music Night and A Taste of Gold which featured gold medal athletes. All events were sold out. In addition many donors and sponsors assisted the team’s goal to show the world what breast cancer survivor athletes can do and how healthy and vigorous they can be. Their fund raising efforts reflect their dedication and determination they have almost raised the necessary amount.

To follow *Rowbust’s* adventures on our *Rowbust* Blog at “Like” on Facebook or on Twitter @ RowbustBCS ■



The year 2015 marked the 20th Anniversary of breast cancer dragon boat paddling. Teams from around the world paddled in their home locales on June 13, 2015 and celebrated those first years. Teams were asked to then submit a short history of their team and its activities. These documents have been compiled into a 20 Years Souvenir Memento entitled: *Our Stories*. One hundred teams

from twelve countries on six continents submitted their stories and a moving tribute to the power of dragon boating for breast cancer survivors is now available.

You can view the memento at www.ibcpc.com and download it as described on the website or you can purchase a copy through Lulu.



Get a printed version of ‘Our Stories’.

Shop in several countries using the flag navigation on the top right of the Lulu page to change the store then search ‘Our Stories IBCPC’. ■



Flower ceremony marks New Zealand's earthquakes



Christchurch, New Zealand, is recognized as an earthquake-prone city. As a reminder, on Valentine's Day of this year a 5.9 quake shook the city and reignited the citizen's sense of dread. Again, in the early hours of February 29th another quake alarmed the city with a solid 4.7 shake. These two quakes are remembered on plaques which sit on either side of a memorial to the devastating quake of February 22nd 2011. **Meri Gibson**, IBCPC Vice President, was in attendance in Botanic Gardens to mark the 5th anniversary of this catastrophe. With her was the junior crew from Avonside Girls High School which took to the water for the 'Flowers on the Water' ceremony pictured above. ■

What in the world is going on?



March 19, 2016 Sarasota, Florida, USA
Nathan Benderson Park
Revisit IBCPC 2014 Festival site & paddle with Florida breast cancer teams



March 19 & 20, 2016
Lake Hood, Ashburton, New Zealand
New Zealand Dragon Boat Association
National Championships



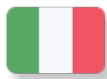
March 26 & 27, 2016
Lo Pagan Beach, San Pedro del Pinatar, Spain
4th International Festival & second breast cancer event for this organization
www.dragonboatpinatar.com



March 30 – April 7, 2016 Adelaide, Australia
International Dragon Boat Federation
Club Crew World Championships
www.idbf.org



May 21 & 22, 2016
Lake Las Vegas, Henderson, Nevada USA
Free entry for breast cancer teams
www.dragonboatnv.com



May 21 & 22, 2016 Florence, Italy
4th Florence Dragon Boat Pink Meeting
www.florencedragonlady.it
The weekend after Venice's Vogalonga
www.vogalonga.it



June 11, 2016 Peterborough, Canada
16th Annual Festival
www.peterboroughdragonboatfestival.com



June 17 & 18, 2016 Lake Kawana, Queensland Sunshine Coast, Australia
Dragons Abreast Australia National Regatta 2016
www.dragonsabreast.com.au

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.

Proviso

The information published in this newsletter is provided to us by the named authors, sources and other third parties and while we believe the information to be reliable we have not fully investigated all such information and we can not accept responsibility for the truth or accuracy of the same.

Accordingly, International Breast Cancer Paddlers' Commission and those associated with the Commission and Jane Frost, IBCPC President, disclaim responsibility for the truth and accuracy of the information in this newsletter.



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IBCPC is a commission of the International Dragon Boat Federation