



# International Breast Cancer PADDLERS' COMMISSION

Keep Abreast with IBCPC

Edition 4 / January 2019

Welcome to the IBCPC December 2018 newsletter.

Don't forget, we are always keen to share stories from around the globe, so please, feel free to send your stories to [committee@ibcpc.com](mailto:committee@ibcpc.com).

What's in this edition?

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From the desk of IBCPC President Meri Gibson

**Wishing you all wonderful New Year greetings.**

I have been lucky to enjoy a wonderful summer here in New Zealand and the weather Gods continue to smile on us each day. We have been basking in sunshine while enjoying our summer vacations. I have spent time in the beautiful Marlborough Sounds at the top of the South Island in Port Underwood, but mostly in two gorgeous bays, one called Flagg Bay and the other Honeymoon Bay... no honeymoon for me, just beautiful sunshine, swimming, walking and kayaking.



Kayaking with my intrepid navigator Miss Rosie

Both New Zealand and Australia tend to almost “shut down” from just before Christmas until about the middle of January as we all head off on holidays. We are just now starting to return to our desks and computers. I hope that you have all, wherever you are, had a wonderful break and a beautiful time with your families and friends over the New Year holidays.

**Wishing you all things bright and beautiful for 2019 and here’s cheers to the year being filled with much wonder and beauty.**



### **What’s in store for you for the New Year?**

2019 is the Chinese year of the PIG... Hmm, I know for many of you the pig may not be the most loved animal, but in all cultures there are animals that are precious, and this is the last sign in the Chinese zodiac. And the best part is that the Year of the Pig 2019 is a year of fortune and luck, it is a great year to make money and a good year to invest. Wishing you the very best of luck with those investments, especially if they entail buying a dragon boat or revamping your teams equipment.



### **Update from Dr. Don on the dragon boat world.**

*Update from Dr Don about what is happening in the world of dragon boating at a much higher level.*

I questioned Don about the recent reports that there will be dragon boat racing at the Tokyo Olympics, as we all got really excited about this possibility. Don put the hype into perspective.



Don says, "This just means that there will be a few dragon boat races at the Tokyo Games on the Sprint course. I am quite sure that they are also including some demonstrations of 'freestyle canoeing' at the Slalom venue. These events are for demonstration purposes and to provide some entertainment for spectators. There will not be a championship regatta and I suspect it will just be local teams that are invited. While it is great for dragon boat to get this exposure, it does not mean that dragon boat racing will be in the next Games. That is not on the radar. There are only 328 athlete quota spots at the Games for Canoeing; 82 slalom and 246 sprint. There are 164 National Federations that have membership in the ICF and all want to see their athletes participate at major games. Large boats with 20 athletes, or even 10, would mean very few countries would be represented. The IOC values as many countries as possible in the Games.

"Actually, the ICF wanted to have some other type of Canoe races between the morning and afternoon events at the Youth Olympic Games, recently held in Buenos Aires. I proposed that "We = Pink Ladies" serve that purpose and that was supported by the ICF. Unfortunately, the local Organizing Committee in BA would not approve the demonstration event due to cost. It would have been amazing exposure for us if it occurred".



Dr Don enjoying a paddle on a warmish winter's day in Vancouver.

## Amazing Ambassadors tell their story.

*Thank you just does not seem enough when we think about the amazing ambassadors that we had to look after us in Florence for our week of celebrations, paddling, laughter, fun and the creation of amazing memories. I had many long conversations with Jocelyn (Joss) Fitzgerald who along with Libby Cataldi was responsible for finding these amazing women, and men to look after us. Once the dust of the event had settled and Jocelyn had recovered from the mystery illness that beset her, hospitalising her just days before the regatta began, we sat down to have a chat about what this process of finding ambassadors entailed and how being a part of this event impacted on Jocelyn's life both before, during and after the event.*

Florence, July 2018

*Jocelyn tell me how you came to be involved with Firenze in Rosa and IBCPC.*

I was introduced to Alessandro Piccardi, VP of Firenze in Rosa (FIR) and the IBCPC Dragon Boat Festival by the councillors of the Florence City Hall as they approached the American International League (AIILO) of Florence (of which I was the Past President), to help with the search for Ambassadors for all the IBCPC teams coming to Florence for this important event.

*Can you tell me a little about AIILO and why you felt this collaboration was a good fit?*

AILO is committed to contributing to the community, so it seemed like the right fit between the two of us, also the members of AILO come from all over the world and had the language skills necessary to make the teams feel comfortable in Florence. The biggest problem we faced was the timing, at the end of June many Florentines and residents leave Florence to escape the heat so as the Festival was being held in July, this turned into a tricky task.

*Okay, now you have agreed this is a good idea, so what happened next because I can imagine this would have been a daunting task!*

I was the President of AILO when the initial request was made, so decided to enrol a partner to follow up and work with me on this project. My choice was a good one, Libby Cataldi, a former dragon boat paddler herself, she had been a member of the Florence Dragon Boat Ladies and understood the importance of being on a team, the problems we might encounter, and how to overcome them.

I started with an information booklet, just in case we could not find enough ambassadors for all the teams, this booklet would give all the pertinent information about Florence, how to get around, where to get help, both medical and otherwise and points of interest. The booklet was tailored to the possible needs of the teams. This was quite a complicated job and Deirdre an Australian AILO member was fundamental in getting this done.

*How did you go about finding enough ambassadors and how did you engage with them?*

The first information meeting was held at the British Institute Library on Lungarno Guicciardini in October 2017, we sent hundreds of invitations to all the expat groups in Florence and to the main points of reference for our prospective ambassadors, such as the consulates, the churches and the international schools and university programmes. We prepared a video of Dragon Boat races and Libby told her personal story of breast cancer and her experiences with the Florence Dragon boat team. Alessandro and Lucia also attended and introduced Firenze in Rosa as the organising committee. We gave out forms to all the attendees to fill in giving their background, country of origin, languages spoken and availability. We also explained the duties of the Ambassadors as we understood them. This is how we found our first Ambassadors who were not AILO members, but we were still short of many. So the search continued and included contacting friends, and friends of friends, visiting the expat groups to talk about the festival, the opportunity of being a part of it and recruiting as many as we could. In the meantime we endeavoured to assign the teams to the people most appropriate, US citizens to US teams, Australians to Australian teams and so on. The list of teams and their relevant contact details was given to us by Stefania a personal friend of Alessandro who was also helping us out. Each aspiring Ambassador would receive their Team Assignment with all of these details in order to make contact with the team before their arrival so that they could connect and make friends before the event.

*Oh my goodness that sounds like a lot of work. You would no doubt have had to keep tabs on all these people and work hard to keep them engaged. How did you do this?*

We followed up constantly on our ambassador email, giving snippets of information to keep their interest alive.

Firenze in Rosa, the organising committee, was inundated with work to complete and follow up, we tried to keep ourselves as independent as possible, so that we would not become another source of **'things to do' for them.** Our aim was to find the right ambassador for all the teams and to present them with the final list before the Festival.

*I know that you yourself became very involved and offered to help out where you could. I personally understand from our conversations over the 14 months leading up to the festival the amount of work that you did and also how committed you were to this event and to helping everyone as much as you could, for which I am eternally grateful. How did you get to become Alessandro's unofficial Personal Assistant and translator?*

Alessandro had many things to do and he also had a full time job and a family at home, therefore any moment of his free time was taken up by the Festival so when he asked me to help him out with the **company which provides the BUK boats he wanted to order from Germany, I said 'yes' of course.** That was the beginning of my second job - **Alessandro's personal assistant.** We contacted Wolfram the Dragon Boat supplier in Germany and after a series of emails and telephone calls finally agreed on the number of boats, equipment and the cost. It would entail Wolfram and his team coming to Florence with the boats in tow and their stay here in Florence. Alessandro also had many other ideas he wanted to explore, the production of a rubber duck with pink dragon boat clothes and gear, one or two inflatable dragons to be at the site, gym equipment at the race village. I was doing product research

and development as well as convincing Wolfram to bring the boats, it was all quite exciting and **interesting and today I still have the occasional email from 'alibaba' telling me about an item I might be interested in.** It seems that once you sign up with them, they are reluctant to let you go. Not all of **Alessandro's ideas came to fruition but his enthusiasm was infectious, he really wanted the very best for his dragon boat paddlers.**



Dragon boats on an intrepid journey from Germany to Italy.

*On my two visits to Florence prior to the event I began to realise the enormity of the task given the constant road works, the difficulty of dealing with suppliers, the expectations that were promised but not met. How were you able to help FIR navigate or at least reassure them with regards to many of these issues?*

The obstacles that Firenze in Rosa were encountering on the way seemed insurmountable, the work on the roads impeded the proper route planning for the transfers, the many broken promises, the complicated bureaucracy of Italy, the newly implemented laws concerning crowd control. This valiant team of dedicated people certainly needed all the help they could get so Lucia sent me her articles and newsfeeds to be translated or corrected and this was my next new job. Sometimes so urgent I had to put the alarm on for a very early rise so that I could get it done before the day started.

*Wow, your talents and skills are endless and no doubt were well utilized by all around you. But lets not forget the important task of finding these ambassadors, how was that tracking along?*

**Thank goodness Libby was working on the Team Assignments, I don't think I could have done this alone.** We were gradually finding the Ambassadors for all the teams and a second meeting for everyone on our list was organised in April 2018 at the Church of St. James, where we handed out the team assignments, took questions and treated everyone to an aperitif party. The atmosphere was upbeat, excited and gave all the ambassadors the opportunity to meet the other ambassadors, some **even formed a 'whatsapp' group** for the country they were representing.

Our main job was to keep the level of interest high. Every time an ambassador dropped out for one reason or another we had to hunt down another one to take his/her place. These were the difficult days, just when we thought we had finished the job another 2 or 3 disappeared. It meant a lot of work, redoing the team assignment and the main team/ambassador excel sheet. The one country we had not found the right ambassador for was Brazil; then one day I was talking to my bank manager



about a financial transaction and he casually mentioned that his wife was Brazilian, well that did not go unheeded, I quickly explained what the Festival was, agreed to meet the wife and send her all the **information and 'bingo' Brazil was covered too.** She turned out to be one of the hardest working and conscientious of our ambassadors.



Libby Cataldi on the right with some of her awesome volunteers.

*Yes I recall meeting this Brazilian lady; she was totally awesome, as were all of the ambassadors. You and Libby did an outstanding job with finding the right people for each team. I know that one of the Australian ambassadors organized an event for the New Zealand and Australian teams, it was fabulous to attend this event and have the honor of addressing the assembled paddlers and naming the youngest and oldest paddlers from each country, we could not believe the environment we were in. How did this come about and what other things did ambassadors organise? Y*

As the time of the Festival was approaching, many ambassadors got ideas of their own, Malle from Australia decided that it would be a great idea to hold a dinner for all the Australian and New Zealand teams and their ambassadors and to invite the Australian Ambassador from Rome. After much too-ing and fro-ing **from venue to venue she finally engaged the officer's club in Piazza San Marco.** This dinner was held and I understand a great time had by all. A world renowned photographer came to Florence for the Festival through the intervention of Jane a Canadian ambassador and Melissa an American **ambassador, and an aperitif party held in Palazzo San Niccolo' and the show opened for all visitors of the Festival.**

There were many highlights of interaction between the ambassadors and their teams. We were impressed with the level of care extended to the teams by their ambassadors, the general feeling was that they wanted them to be safe and well and enjoy their stay. Many ambassadors arranged to meet their teams at the registration to help where necessary, team dinners were arranged, invitations extended, the hand of friendship was held out to all the teams.

*I know that you were very unwell in the lead up to the festival and were even hospitalized in the days just before. I was very concerned for your well-being, but you stoically insisted on showing up at the **regatta on the weekend. With this level of dedication I'm sure there were many highlights for you along the way, can you name a couple.***

One of my special moments was when I met the dragon boats coming from Germany at the entrance to

Florence coming off the Autostrada. Alessandro and I had kept in contact with Wolfram since he left Germany, there were three jeeps pulling three trailers of six boats each. Such a stunning consignment, we managed to get them through the streets of Florence to the race village at the Cascine but not without the astounded stares of the passersby. I felt as though I was accompanying royalty, probably because I had been so much a part of this delivery, but could not conceal my delight at being with the boats as they arrived at their final destination.

I was unable to be present at the registration and the pink parade due to my unfortunate emergency hospitalisation, but I got out as soon as I could to attend the races. No way was I going to be absent from this amazing display of courage and strength by these marvellous ladies after being a part of it for so long. I was amazed, I was overcome, I was grateful to be there and the unexpected reward was being in one of the boats for the closing ceremony and the flowers on the water. Alessandro came to get me for this and put me in the boat where I sat in silence absorbing all the emotion and beauty of the ceremony, the music, the flowers on the water, the feeling of oneness with everyone present.



Jocelyn Fitzgerald on the right with one of her volunteers.



*Jocelyn, you have been one of the incredible heroines of the festival in Florence. I have loved meeting you and will always hold you in my heart and have you as a part of my life. I know that in many ways the experience will have been life changing for you. I cannot express enough my gratitude for all that you have done for us.*

The Festival was a large part of my life in 2018, I knew nothing about IBCPC when we started but today I have unlimited respect for it and the participants. I understand that having cancer is an isolating experience but being a part of a team and indeed something so big and important makes an enormous difference.

Long live IBCPC and all its teams!

Jocelyn

AILO

Ambassador co-ordinator for the IBCPC Florence Festival

## **amaBele Belles from South Africa paddle in Spain.**

*The ladies from South Africa have been enjoying the hospitality and camaraderie in Torrevieja, Spain, while there they took part in a very special training camp, regatta and flower ceremony.*

Cape Town Team wins an Intercontinental Regatta in Spain

In October 2018, 17 members of the amaBele Belles Dragon Boating Team from Cape Town travelled to Torrevieja, Spain, to participate in the 3rd Intercontinental Festival. As mentioned in a previous IBCPC newsletter, it was named "The Janet Collins Memorial" festival. A 5-day training "boot" camp that was designed to hone the technique of paddling preceded the festival, and an expert panel of instructors sharpened the skills needed to become a competitive team. The Belles had many opportunities for group practice, individual instruction, sessions with a high-tech data paddle and video analysis. It was an intense time, stretching us all to become better paddlers, and the warm early autumn weather played along and was perfect for paddling.

We went primarily as a Breast Cancer Survivor Team, but several members of our team are supporters. Our competitions for the Intercontinental Regatta involved Ladies Categories, BCS groupings, as well as mixed and open teams. The Breast Cancer category was most coveted, and after the first heat our captain announced that we needed to find 2 seconds to be likely to win the sought after medal. This we managed to do and on the final day of racing we won the BCS category, but to our astonishment we ended up having enough points to win the overall cup as well – for our home continent, Africa. We all ended the festival on a high, dancing and singing, "Welcome to Cape Town", "Shosholoza", and "Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika".

The beautiful surrounding areas offered much opportunity for travel and exploring the Costa Blanca. Many Belles travelled far and wide after the completion of the Intercontinental Regatta, including nearby Valencia, Madrid, and Barcelona.



amaBelles in green.



amaBelles in black.

## Awakening the Dragon Sister in China.

IBCPC Vice President, Lucia de Ranieri and I have set ourselves an IBCPC goal of establishing BCS teams in Mainland China. From my previous conversations whilst in China with the Chinese event directors, boat manufacturers and also other paddlers in China I realised that this would not be an easy task and was one that required a great deal of thought and careful management. Well luckily through Don McKenzie I was introduced to Beirong (Bei) Xiong. From the very first conversation with Bei I immediately knew that she was the right person to take on this massive task, one where we agreed that

we had to start from the bottom and as a result Awakening the Dragon Sister was born. I knew that Bei **would make an excellent National Representative and appointed her to take on this task.** Below is Bei's story about the journey so far.

For IBCPC Mainland China representative Bei Xiong, seeing really is believing. Seeing women with breast cancer reach out to each other with acceptance and encouragement awakened Bei to a community of support and a way of coping with her cancer she never knew existed. She says it saved **her life. It's also one of the key principles** Bei is using to establish breast cancer dragon boat teams in China.



Bei (seat two-right ) with Ottawa BCS Busting Out team.

Bei was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 2006. After her treatment, she took her first paddle with the BCS Busting Out dragon boat team in Ottawa, revelling in the remarkable openness and positivity that her team mates brought to each practice.

**"I could feel the power of sharing the same boat with other women in my position. We were all there because we wanted to live, we needed support and we were not alone! It's what I love the most about the breast cancer dragon boat lifestyle, twenty women paddling, stroke-by-stroke, in beautiful synchronicity. We lift the boat and propel it forward, moving together in the same direction. We are confident. We are powerful. We are in control of our lives".**

Bei says many women in China have yet to experience that openness and positivity as they cope alone with the myriad of medical, emotional and social challenges their diagnoses bring.



Bei with Dr. Don.



**"I remember looking** high and low at IBCPC festivals in Canada and Sarasota for other women from Mainland China to share our stories of recovery. I met so many wonderful women from around the world, but not a single team from my home country. I know that breast cancer is the single highest cause of death for women in Mainland China. And while activities such as Tai Chi and yoga are available to many cancer patients, doctors there tell Bei the medical community is not aware of the benefits dragon boating can bring to their patients. That being said, some oncologists are recommending their patients do upper body exercises and say they would like to learn more about the dragon boat option.

At 60, with her dragon boat credentials secured – a raft of gold medals from club and Team Canada world competitions in hand - Bei is on a mission to bring the healing power of dragon boat sport to Chinese women who are isolated from the support and acceptance she experienced after her own diagnosis. She calls her mission Awakening the Dragon Sister: helping women facing breast cancer discover and share their inner strength with each other. At its core, Awakening the Dragon Sister is about fostering an environment of acceptance and support – at home, at work and in the community – to help Chinese women everywhere reach beyond the stigma and fear of breast cancer to be all that they can be.

**"We are using a bottom-**up approach to involve receptive people in the medical community (to provide patient referrals and supportive research), recovering and recovered breast cancer patients (interested in paddling as part of their recovery and lifestyle), and the dragon boat community (paddlers, clubs and suppliers of facilities, equipment, boats and training).

Fearing rejection and judgement, Bei hid her breast cancer for eleven long years from many of her friends, clients and even some family members.

**"Stigma is a powerful force keeping us isolated from the very people who could provide the support we need,"** she says. **"When I finally came out, I discovered** new sources of love and support. I learned that many wished I had told them sooner so they could have been there for me."

Bei takes every opportunity to share her story with women whenever she is in China caring for her mother.

**"One woman dying from breast cancer alone and unsupported is one too many. I want to give back to those who helped me overcome my dark days of fear and isolation."**



Bei visited Ms. Yang (centre) at Dali Hospital, Yunnan, 2017.

Before her most recent trip home, Bei reached out to Don McKenzie and IBCPC President Meri Gibson to share her vision of China one day hosting an IBCPC event with local teams participating gunnel-to-gunnel with teams from around the world.

"We all shared the same vision," says Meri. "We agreed that the best way to get there was by organizing one team, then another, steadily building up interest and participation in ways that would be scalable across other communities. We are bringing women with breast cancer together with oncologists and water sports venues – **those early adopters who can see the benefits of dragon boating.**"

"Bei and IBCPC hope to have a team established in Beijing in 2019, and will be bringing our Out Reach Clinic to doctors and breast cancer survivors there to help make this happen."

"The long march starts with a single step," says Bei. "We need all the support we can get from our sisters far and wide to make this happen. In the not-so-near future I can picture BCS paddlers from around the world coming to China to show their dragon sisters a great life awaits them after cancer. **Seeing is believing.**"



Bei with her team mates in left front of the dragon boat.

Follow the progress of our Awakening the Dragon Sister initiative in future editions of this newsletter.

## What is happening Downunder?

*While those of you in the Northern Hemisphere are rugged up out of the cold and desperately trying to stay warm we down in the Southern Hemisphere have been out on the water and enjoying the sunshine. Here is a little snippet of what has been going on Down under in the summer sun, while those of you in the Northern Hemisphere have been trying to stay warm in the much colder weather, we have been basking in sunshine and record breaking heat-wave temperatures. Below are stories from adventures in Australia and New Zealand.*

*I was lucky enough to meet the lovely Linda Papworth a number of years ago and we also paddled together as part of the Dambusters team at the IBCPC festival in Sarasota. Linda is a very talented artist and she writes beautiful, articulate, and thoughtful stories to accompany her drawings. I know that many of you across the globe do follow Linda already on her Pinkoala page. Each October Linda challenges herself to create a drawing every day of the month of her little character who is traveling along the path of breast cancer. I will let Linda tell her own story here, but I do encourage you to visit her Facebook page to see the little movie she has created of Adalinda and Pickles marching through Pinktober. You will find it here at:*

## INKTOBER

The month long, American illustrator Jake Parker created worldwide participatory art challenge **"Inktober"**, runs throughout the month of October.

Essentially, every day throughout the month, artists everywhere are challenged to draw an illustration in ink, and post it on social media. As part of the challenge, Jake Parker also created a prompt list for artists to follow. The challenge is a fun way to improve artists drawing skills and engage with the wider community.

## PINKTOBER

I am an artist and Breast Cancer survivor. I was diagnosed with Breast Cancer at the age of just 31. For the last few years, my Octobers have always been centred on Breast Cancer awareness month.

**I decided to follow Jake Parker's Inktober prompt words, whilst making my illustrations for the challenge** reflect my Breast Cancer story. My aim was to present a very real perspective of life living with cancer, to raise awareness of Breast cancer charitable organisations and promote the importance of early detection as we search for the cure.

Pinktober can be a very daunting month for many Breast Cancer Survivors to get through. Pink represents **Breast Cancer, and it's everywhere**- in your face and inescapable for a whole thirty-one days. **Pink is a pretty colour masking the truth about a pretty colourless disease. To demonstrate this, I've** added a touch of pink to my black and white Pinktober illustration series and encourage everyone to look through the pink, and discover the real message behind each drawing, and the accompanying words. This is what Breast Cancer survivors want you to know is really behind the cute pink ribbon.

My original characters Adalinda the dragon boat paddling girl, and her pet cat Pickles are the protagonists of this story, tallying the ups and downs of life with Breast Cancer. The illustrations were drawn and posted daily along with a short narrative to my Art Facebook Page Pinkoala and my Instagram account throughout October. The posts were also shared amongst the online Breast cancer survivor community, too much acclaim.

**The interest, support and overwhelming, emotional and positive responses I've had from everyone** have been incredible. Thank you all so much.

**I hope you enjoy "Surviving Pinktober" and of course**-always remember to check your boobs!

Xx

Linda





Adalinda and Pickles off on an adventure.

## More Downunder stories...

*I have known Alexandra (Alyx) Stewart for a number of years and she never ceases to amaze or inspire me with what she is working on at any given time. Her diagnosis of breast cancer at a young age has taken her on an interesting path of learning, growth and development of new business ventures. It seems that her life's path is now intrinsically inked with breast cancer and how to help others with that diagnosis live more fulfilled and happier lives.*

### Life As A Business Woman

How did I end up in the food industry? This is a question I ask myself daily. It is a far place from what I had envisioned during my school years.

After I left high school, I studied a Bachelor of Applied Science (Orthoptics). I had my own clinic in Perth and travelled the state with other specialists. After some years I moved to Melbourne and worked in an ophthalmology clinic and assisted in eye surgery. This was my career for a couple of decades. I also studied Forensic Science and this would have logically, been my next career move. But life had a master plan for me and conspired to make sure I was steered in quite another direction.

People say I am a businesswoman and I guess that is strictly true. I say that I simply respond to my life's evolving situations and develop 'things' and strategies to fill the gaps I discover through my own

experiences. I guess you could say that I am a kind of human Poly-filler, filling in the niches that are presented to me.

**To quote one of my favourite movies, "If not now, when? If not us, who?"**

**I have become the 'who' in this life and I owe that to breast cancer. Breast cancer has taken me down a path that I could not have foreseen and one that I would not want to change. Breast cancer was the start of living outside my comfort zone and the segway into my business world.**

I can remember the precise moment when my journey into my current business world began. I had been back at work about two years after I finished chemo and a patient said something I had heard a thousand times before. This **patient said, "Don't get old."**

I came home in a rage and felt the need to write — to write down all the daft things people had said to me during my cancer treatment and beyond. All the daft things they were still saying. I titled the work, **"From The Horses' Backside". I shared my writings with my support group and they were amazed that I** had actually been able to capture exactly what they were thinking and feeling about the silly things people were saying to them everyday. They said it helped knowing that **they were not the only one's** in this situation.

**It got me thinking... What else had I learned from my cancer experience that may help others during their's. I walked into work and resigned. I had bigger things to do now (and a very understanding hubby).** One of my bugbears during my treatment was not only people not knowing what to say but **also people not knowing what to do for someone with cancer. Apparently they don't and they need** direction. I took pen to paper and produced a little sheet with things cancer patients need doing or would appreciate help with.

However, it was addressing my biggest bugbear that lead me into a business world I knew nothing about - book publishing. The loss of friendships during cancer treatment is an all too familiar story. It has a lot to do with friends and family not knowing what to do and say, and why they have a difficult **time dealing with your diagnosis. I wrote a book titled, "Friendships, The Hidden Victims of Cancer"** and had it published. This process took about 18 months and taught me that I could trust in my abilities as a businesswoman. I was becoming quite capable of seeking out what I needed to learn and even learning how to ask for help.

I must have been either feeling really good about abilities or was completely delusional about them on the day I decided to have an app developed. No matter which it was, I jumped head long into the real techy world of app development. Why? I saw an opportunity to help people stay connected through a cancer journey by connecting them in the virtual world so that they could get help in the real world.

iCare4u app was born. Clearly I did not have this skill set but I sort out an app development company in India that could make my dream a reality. iCare4u allows you to list the tasks you need help with and then allows your friends to assign themselves to the tasks that they can do for you. By doing all the asking in the virtual world, it removes the awkwardness of asking for help in the real world. It also meant many late nights. Nights spent on Skype calls to the developers in Ahmedabad, India. Countless hours of testing, retesting, beta-testing to find the bugs. Rinse and repeat. I found I was learning a new language and new technical skills, the type of skills I never knew I was capable of learning. The people the app would help kept me going.

Then we come to how I ended up in the food industry. Kee-moh Snacks was born from the eating and nutrition issues I had during treatment, and that thousands of other people have during their treatment.

Everyday is a juggle between my businesses and some days, one business requires more attention than the other. At the moment, iCare4u is in re-development to bring it up to date with software and algorithm changes within the different app stores.



## Kee-moh Snacks Journey

**In 2005 I was diagnosed with breast cancer. There's never a convenient time for cancer** and nine weeks before my wedding made it even less convenient. I struggled through every aspect of this hideous disease, particularly chemotherapy. The side effects were brutal and took an inordinate toll on my body - they still do. Many people are aware that cancer treatment causes a number of side effects but most **people don't know that these side effects actually make it very hard for the cancer patient to eat. As a** result, the treatment journey is miserable when the enjoyment of food has been taken away and recovery is compromised due to a lack of nutrition.

This lack of nutrition leads to treatment-related malnutrition. This condition is far more common than you would think. It affects up to 80% of patients undergoing cancer treatment. Treatment-related malnutrition is often not addressed because the hope is you will go through your treatment without side effects and you end up feeling extremely under-prepared when side effects inevitably become part of your everyday. I lost over 10kg quickly and it did not ring any alarm bells. My big issues were difficulty getting food in because of mouth ulcers and actually getting it to stay in because of debilitating nausea. Hence, for months I lived on a diet of fresh white bread and strawberry jam.

Many people think that weight loss during chemo is normal and expected but it is not. Weight loss **during chemo shouldn't be expected at all. Doctors look for you to be able to maintain your weight over** the course of your treatment. Even losing a small amount of weight, say 3-4kg, can be of concern - and **it doesn't matter what your starting weight is. Even if you are overweight, you are still very much at risk** of malnutrition.



I volunteer a lot in the cancer community and undertake a large number of speaking engagements. People would tell me of their struggles with side effects and food. I listened very closely to familiar **stories. Everyone's cancer is different but their stories shared many similarities. There was a need to be filled here. When you feel wretched with illness, you don't have the capacity or the energy to investigate what you can eat. What you need and want is something that says, "I am right for you",** something where all the decision-making has been removed.

Kee-moh Snacks was born.

I set about developing a nutritious food range with side effects in mind. Common side effects include a sore, ulcerated dry mouth, nausea, metallic taste, constipation, loss of appetite, loss and gain of weight to name a few. Kee-moh Snacks foods can be eaten regardless of side effects. They are designed to work with your side effects and to be enjoyed. In this way, Kee-moh Snacks products and gift boxes are unique.

My ultimate goal for Kee-moh Snacks is as large and as widespread as cancer. **It's global. Is it possible** for one small girl from Ballarat affect change on a global scale? Just watch me. Knowing that my journey has been to ultimately ease someone else through his or hers — **that's ok with me.**

Kee-moh Snacks is still in it's infancy and my five year plan for it is ambitious to say the least. We have started gift boxes again for people wanting to send a heartfelt gift to a friend with cancer. The coming year will mean a lot of work to bring the gift boxes to the wider community. I am again working across time zones so the products can be manufactured in the UK and USA. There is much searching for manufacturers and logistical issues to consider. Locally, we are looking at producing readymade protein drinks with clean ingredients and readymade protein balls.

I am lucky that work excites me. I love starting early and finishing late simply because I can. Time is a gift and I would like to think I use it wisely. On occasion I feel a bit of imposter syndrome coming on because I work in areas in which I have no formal training. I have life experience though and I draw strength from that — enough to keep me going when I think of how many lives I could possibly make **just a little better. I've stopped thinking that sounds conceited too.**

There is no such thing as a coincidence. To be where one is at this very moment is to be precisely where you are meant to be. I would never say I was glad to have had cancer but I certainly consider myself fortunate to be where it has taken me.

To quote from The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel again, **"Coincidence is just a word for when we cannot see the bigger picture."**

[www.kee-mohsnacks.com.au](http://www.kee-mohsnacks.com.au)

[www.icare4u.net.au](http://www.icare4u.net.au)



## Dragons Abreast Australia celebrates 20 years.

'Flourish and Grow' - DAA celebrates important milestone and looks forward to the future.

Dragons Abreast Australia celebrates 20 years at a special celebratory gala dinner. During the celebration, Dragons Abreast Australia (DAA) stylishly celebrated 20 years of providing the emotional, physical and social benefits of dragon boating to Australians diagnosed with breast cancer.

Following a fantastic 11th Corporate and Community Festival on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2018, the sell-out gala dinner, aptly themed 'Flourish and Grow, was a nod to both Dragons Abreast Australia's growth and individual members' transformations.

To start the evening a special photographic tribute depicting scenes from the twenty years played, with special acknowledge from Dr Don McKenzie and Meri Gibson (IBCPC President). A special panel discussion followed with DAA founders Michelle Hanton OAM and Janelle Gamble, as well as two dynamic members Alyx Stewart (DA Melbourne) and Gillian Brown (DA Penrith). Although each of their introductions to dragon boating and paddling for their breast cancer recovery were all very different, **they all shared the positive aspects and multiple benefits 'belonging' to DAA has brought into their lives,** and acknowledged the importance of these benefits for future paddlers.



Left to right: Michelle Hanton, Janelle Gamble, Alyx Stewart, Gillian Brown.

Our National Ambassador, Robyn Moore, motivational speaker, comedienne, breast cancer survivor, delivered her passionate and engaging voice to the evening in a speech that had the audience in tears of laughter, reflection and gratitude.

Kerry Nash, Sales and Marketing Manager of gala dinner sponsor, Amoena Australia, spoke of her experiences working with women, post breast cancer surgery, in providing beautiful, but practical garments to help restore their self-confidence and femininity.

The DAA 20th Anniversary Gala Dinner embodied the remarkable journey Dragons Abreast Australia has been on over the past two decades.





Left to right; Michelle Hanton, Francis Heaney, Mabel Sansom, Janelle Gamble.

**Mabel Sansom, Chair of DAA, summed up the evening with, 'tonight we have reflected on how we have made a tangible difference to thousands of people following a breast cancer diagnosis. While celebrating DAA's milestone, we are looking forward to a fantastic future. Our combined commitment has played a vital role in enabling people to rebuild, and even better their lives, after their diagnosis and we will continue to enable paddling for recovery in the years to come.'**

About Dragons Abreast Australia:

Dragons Abreast Australia is a national organisation comprised of breast cancer survivors (and some very special supporters) of various ages from a great variety of backgrounds, athletic abilities and **interests. Dragons Abreast members provide a "face" for the breast cancer statistics** whilst spreading the message of breast cancer awareness through participation in the wonderful and strenuous sport of dragon boat racing. For more information about the origins of Dragons Abreast Australia and how the movement started in Australia, please

Go to: [dragonsabreast.com.au](http://dragonsabreast.com.au)



## Margaret Hockey's story.

*The people that I meet on this incredible adventure of breast cancer survivor dragon boating constantly inspire me. One of those people is Margaret Hockey from Blenheim, South Island, New Zealand. I have known Margaret for a number of years, mostly just in passing, as we live a four hour drive apart, and at times we would just have a brief chat at regattas. Margaret is the helm/sweep/steer for the only other BCS team in the South Island, Simply **the Breast**. Margaret is by her own definition "not a people person" and "does not do people", she is quiet, reserved and very respectful, but when she said to me one day that her diagnosis of breast cancer had saved her life, I sat up and took notice and wanted to know more. Margaret will tell the story in her own words, but suffice it to say that she was close to being morbidly obese when she was diagnosed and that the diagnosis flipped a switch in her brain that took her on a path that she has not for one moment looked back from.*

My name is Margaret Hockey, I will be 70 years old this year. I was born in the Hague, Netherlands and came to New Zealand in October, 1950 at the age of ten months.

I was diagnosed with stage 3 Breast cancer in early January 2003. Not a great start to a new year. The first decision I made was not to ask 'Why me', instead I purposed to see what I could learn from it. Having cancer literally changed my life and several things contributed to that. The first happened when I was having my first round of chemotherapy...The nurse had trouble finding a vein to put the line into, and it was eventually up to the 5th person to try, even after a doctor **failed; that I said "I don't know why you're bothering as I'm going to die anyway", and that nurse said, "we wouldn't be spending 10's of thousands of dollars on you if we thought you were going to die!" That comment pulled me up very sharply, I didn't know it cost that much, and to someone born in The Netherlands if someone invests that kind of money it's got to give a huge return!**

I won't tell you about the treatment...it was awful; chemotherapy, radiation, and a massive infection that almost killed me and put me in hospital again. It was while I was recovering from that infection that I considered taking my life, but the vision of my 3 grandsons and 1 granddaughter growing up without me stopped me in my tracks and I took the drugs back to the pharmacy. Then I met the wonderful Manager of the local Cancer Society who sent me to my doctor and that put me on the track to recovery...but it took months.

I then remembered that felt I needed to make a return on the money invested in me and decided to change a few things....particularly my weight....I was 107kgs. Margo at the Cancer Society was a great help there with changing my diet, and suggested exercise as well, so I started walking. There were two homes close to mine that I had cleaning jobs at so I walked to them instead of driving. One of the

homes belonged to a couple and they were both Physiotherapists and into all sorts of sporting activities mostly involving bikes and running!!! The husband was usually home when I arrived for work and when he saw me walking suggested I ride a bike instead! Of course I put up lots of excuses why that was not possible...No bike, overweight, haven't ridden a bike since my 20's. Then he produced a bike and helmet and offered to run beside me as I had a go...I couldn't say NO to that now could I. I actually found that I hadn't forgotten how to ride a bike and really enjoyed it, so he told me to keep the bike and helmet **for as long as I wanted. But that wasn't all, he then gave me an entry form for the 2004 MARLBOROUGH WOMEN'S TRIATHLON!!!!**

**And I still couldn't say NO...That's been my problem all my life!!!**

I told him I would think about it and went on with the cleaning. I decided that if he didn't think I would look weird riding a bike and being in a pool and even walking the run...and he was young, fit and healthy, then maybe I shouldn't be so self-conscious about it either. So I paid my money, being Dutch that committed me 100% and told him and he gave me the biggest hug ever, he was so pleased. I really enjoyed that triathlon and found that even the most serious athletes, I call them the Lycra Brigade, were so very encouraging and supportive, that I decided I wanted to be around people like that all the time. I gave the bike and helmet back, as the bike was an antique and I needed a better one!! And I bought my own, with fat tyres, I didn't trust those skinny ones yet, my weight was coming down but not far enough for skinny tyres!!

Thus I entered into as many triathlons in Nelson and Marlborough as I could. I also started running instead of walking, well you get a better time if you run! I did the Buller Gorge Half Marathon 5 years in a row. The first one I walked and then I ran the others. I did the local Grape Ride from Renwick to Picton to Havelock and back to Renwick 5 **years in a row as well, that's a** ride of 100kms. And about 3 years ago I did the Lake Taupo Challenge, a ride around Lake Taupo which is 160 kms. I stopped doing these events for a couple of reasons, they cost a lot of money and I had family in South West Australia that I wanted to see more often. I was also now self motivated enough to do the Grape Ride route on a regular basis for free. I also got up early every morning, 4.30am to do a series of warm-up exercises before going for a 10 km run followed by a series of yoga type warm-downs. With all that and a regime of healthier eating my weight came down to 57kgs (126 pounds), a loss of 50kgs (110pounds) altogether.





Remembering that I wanted to see my grandchildren grow up, I also decided to give them some experiences and memories. I had 3 boys living close to me in Blenheim and when they came to stay I instigated some fun activities, like chocolate before breakfast walking up the hill to the local cemetery in pajamas to watch the sunrise, picnics in bed, which involved Fluffy milos, and a wee dish of mini M&Ms and mini marshmallows while I read them stories and played them the type of music their parents would never listen to! I also took them on camping holidays. I owned a campervan which I slept in and the boys had first 1 tent and then as their cousins joined in once they were 5 years old we took 2 tents which they had to erect every time. So the first trip was to the West Coast of the South Island where we had lived for 15 years, as I wanted to show them where their mother had lived and the second trip was to Golden Bay to show them places my father had taken me when I was a kid. I was lucky enough to do a very challenging an Outward Bound Course and after this I took the grandchildren of a number of trips around New Zealand. Each of the grandchildren received an album full of photos with captions of each holiday and now that they are aged 14 to almost 20 they still talk about all the holidays we went on and the adventures we had.



In 2007 Dragon boating for BCS came to Marlborough and I was into that "boots and all" and am still enjoying being part of a wonderful supportive group of Breast Cancer survivors and supporters. This year is my 12th year in the sport and I have occupied every position in the boat including paddler,

drummer and more latterly Sweep/Steer, having gained accreditation as a Sweep several years ago. Now that we have another member training as a Sweep, I still love an occasional paddle.

Before I had cancer fun was an element that was largely lacking in my life. When I recovered and decided I was going to live, I felt that I had wasted a lot of opportunities in the past and that I would do all I could to take advantage of opportunities as they came along and FUN became a great motivation and element in my life. Dragon boating has provided untold moments and opportunities for fun and fellowship with women who have had similar experiences. We have been to regattas here in New Zealand, **I've been to Sydney twice for an amazing** regatta on Darling Harbour, and subsequently have done some awesome walks around the harbour, and I also did the 7 bridges walk which coincided with the regatta. In 2018 a group of us joined members of 2 other New Zealand teams to make up a team to participate in the Pan Pacific Masters Games on the Gold Coast. That was such a wonderful experience that. I helmed in the 4.8km race, the longest race we'd ever done!!

As I mentioned above I had done an **Outward Bound Course, It's very challenging and usually reserved** for much younger people. I did wonder about whether I could do an Outward Bound Course, as I needed a good deal of money to do this, I told my family I needed money for gifts to pay for it. In August 2009 with the help of my daughter writing an article about me in a competition in which the prize was a full scholarship for Outward Bound, I received a part scholarship and had no trouble getting gifts from various organisations including Blenheim Lions, the local Cancer Society, Toll Translink, 2 garage sales, the Dragon boat team, and others. Outward Bound was such an amazing experience and I would recommend it to anybody, regardless of age. I did the 3 week Masters Course and at almost 60 years of age at the time, I was the oldest one in our group. I still have lovely memories of that time and am still in contact with a few members of the group.

I had to give up running recently, as my knees had started to object. I still get up at 4.30am on Tuesdays and Thursdays and after those warm-ups walk 8kms including 2 rounds of the cemetery hill, which is so steep I still can't bike up it. On Saturday mornings I get up a little later and walk 10-12kms. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays I get up at 3.30am and bike 12kms into town to clean offices and then bike home for breakfast. Sundays I still wake early but I make a proper coffee and take it back to bed.

I am self-employed and at coming up to 70, I still work up to 35 hours a week window cleaning, housework, and gardening. I am a Companion Driver Service driver for the Florence Nightingale Agency and take the elderly and infirm out for appointments, shopping, or just a wee tour to get out of the rest home for an hour or so.

When I moved from Hokitika to Blenheim in 2001, and met my neighbour walking past early one morning, she asked if I wanted to join her in her **before breakfast walks. I told her "I didn't do mornings or people". Cancer** fixed that attitude and we are now good friends, she has had breast cancer too, but has not joined the dragon boat team despite my **efforts. "Mornings are easy but people are still a challenge". Early morning** walks have enabled me to learn so much about the habits of the birds and the wonders of the beautiful night sky. So now I can recognise many stars, planets and constellations and greet them like old friends as they come round in their seasons.

## **Naming dragon boats.**

*Its always fun when you get to buy a new boat and then to name and bless them is even more special. The Bay of plenty dragon boat club which encompasses four teams including the mighty Boobops..... Names of boats and meanings of those names.*

### **Boobops**

Boobops is a BC dragon boat team from the Bay of Plenty in Tauranga New Zealand. In NZ we

frequently refer to female breasts as boobs so our name reflects boob operations (ops) and also coincidentally we are from the Bay of Plenty (BOP) which is incorporated into our name. The bay of Plenty is an area where the sea provides lots of Kaimoana (seafood) along with kai (food) as huge amounts of kiwifruit and avocados are grown locally along with dairy production of milk, butter and cheese. Tauranga has a wonderful climate and is surrounded by the sea with a large port through which a lot is imported/exported and nearby is a harbour which is where our team train.

Boobops are part of a club consisting of 4 teams and the other teams are hugely supportive of us BC ladies.

These last 2 seasons has seen the club and Boobops grow in numbers so we talked to the wonderful Meri Gibson, President of IBCPC and also Equipment Director for New Zealand Dragon Boat Association, which holds the licence to import dragon boats into New Zealand about buying 2 x 10 man boats to go with our 2 x 20 man boats. Much fundraising was required to pay for them and the shipping costs from China.

It was a wonderful day when team members gained permission to enter the port facilities and open the container to de-van and unpack the boats to then push the boats down the road on trailers to storage. This was certainly one way to gain the attention of the local port workers.

Recently at Christmas 2018 we opened the eyes of the dragons on the 2 boats and voted on names for them with one boat named Toa, meaning woman of the sea in Africa or in Maori showing courage, bravery and being a valiant Polynesian warrior/winner/champion.



The other boat was named Manawanui; which means in Maori steadfast, patient, dedicated, determined and persistent.

Both very apt names for dragon boats whether you are a BC survivor or not.





So if you find yourself visiting the Bay of Plenty from overseas or coming ashore on some of the huge cruise ships which visit daily at this time of the year with thousands of tourists disembarking each day; the Boobops would love to take you out for a paddle on our lovely harbour, in our new boats. Please google Boobops and you will get some contact phone numbers or email:

[www.boobops.org](http://www.boobops.org)

Colleen Harris a Boobop and President of Bay of Plenty Dragon Boat Club.



## A Brief European update.

*A quick update from Cecilia Picchi our European rep who attended the European Dragon Boat Federation (EDBF) conference in Sevilla, Spain ahead of the EDBF championships in Sevilla in August 2019.*

In the middle of the Christmas vacation I dedicated time to emails and ordering the team database (lots of photos and video to save.) I had a vacation at home with family and friends, walking in downtown Florence (this year the Christmas decorations are beautiful), concerts, exhibitions and good books.

About Sevilla. Whilst there was no official space allocated for BCS, BCS has been mentioned by Pat Bradley (referring to Sarasota), and Mike Haslam (who said IBCPC festivals attract many teams) and Claudio Schermi who introduced Maria Pia Dionisi (President of the BCS commission inside Federation of Italian Dragon Boat ) and myself. I talked about the attraction to the Florence Festival at which there were 120 teams in attendance, but that there were also many more around the world. I also explained the importance that all members of a BCS team must be survivors if they wish to compete internationally, and I highlighted the importance of dragon boating as a part of the team rehabilitation experience.

**I also spoke with Anna Socratous, the new Women's Commission President in the EDBF. Anna is from Cyprus and she tells me that the Pink Mouflons team there are growing slowly; she has also met a little group of BCS ladies practising in Limassou and hopes that they will; build to a full team.**

I advised Julie Doyle to include in the first bulletin regarding the EDBF Championships in Sevilla, the rules for BCS racing.



I had the opportunity to speak further with Ute Becker, the President of the German DB Federation, who has been so incredibly supportive of including a breast cancer division in the German National Championships.





*Cecilia has also been in contact with one of the ambassadors from the Florence festival and this lady is keen to help establish a team in Thailand, Cecilia advises below:*

Suzanne from Florence went to Thailand, she got in contact with Patti, a nurse who speaks English and she was informed me that Thai ladies are shy and do not want to talk about having had cancer, Suzanne will keep in touch with Patti in the hope that we can pursue this further.

*Cecilia has been working really hard to track down any events in Europe and she writes:*

I have also updated the European Calendar of events:

<http://www.florencedragonlady.it/dragon-boat/calendar>

and I have asked for more information about:

29-30 June 2019 Le Temple-sur-Lot (France), Dragon Ladies Tour Lot-et-Garonne Edition

The aim of this calendar is collecting dragon boat events in Europe to offer breast cancer survivors (BCS) 'pink ladies' the possibility of meeting, paddling together and sharing experiences. As soon as you write with any information about your event to [cecilia.picchi@gmail.com](mailto:cecilia.picchi@gmail.com) I will update the webpage (so feel free to communicate any time of the year).

In recent years the BCS paddling movement has had an extraordinary growth in Europe, there are more than 100 teams in 10 countries (Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Sweden), please consult this map to get a general idea of their location ([https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1sS1sn5Zk1Vs8gvBvIIA3mkm8h\\_A&ll=46.52630136015813%2C12.044602899999973&z=4](https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1sS1sn5Zk1Vs8gvBvIIA3mkm8h_A&ll=46.52630136015813%2C12.044602899999973&z=4)) and we definitely want to meet with you all, to know each other and to paddle together. IBCPC Florence Festival in July 2018 was an extraordinary event, with a massive number of teams. This has created an environment of wanting to meet more often, and to paddle together more regularly. For this reason, we should choose between us all the 'main event for Europe 2019', in order for as many teams as possible to attend.

I look forward to hearing from more Europeans and helping to grow this fantastic sport across Europe.





## More Action in Brazil.

*BCS Dragon boating continues to grow in Brazil and Brazilian BCS try a different kind of dragon boat.*

ROAMA! Stand Up! North East Brazil December 2018

A new event was held in the North East of Brazil on December 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018 in the state of Bahia. The outreach to Brazil started in Brasilia (central-western Brazil) and Sao Paulo (located in the South East) in 2016. In a country of a comparative land size to the USA, there was no doubt that these two events were not going to be enough. The KA ORA I, 2016 Participatory Breast Cancer Dragon Boat Festival brought together for the first time the two extremes of the country North and South. Paulo Afonso was the venue for ROAMA Participatory Breast Cancer Dragon Boat Festival that was launched to spread the word in the Brazilian North East.



The ROAMA festival hosted 10 local BCS paddlers and 6 paddlers from the Remama Dragao Rosa, Sao Paulo and Rosa Fenix Patagonia, Argentina. A steering and drumming course for the new BCS dragon boat teams was provided as part of the activities of the festival. This event showed the community and Brazil the benefits of dragon boating for breast cancer survivors, while generating awareness for early detection of the disease. The message was embraced by the community in such a strong way, that the **very first cancer clinic "Núcleo Vida" and chemo room has been established to serve patients that are in treatment in Paulo Afonso and the 8 nearby cities of Alagoas, Pernambuco and Sergipe. Treatment will commence from February 2019. This initiative will save chemo patients from having to travel the 800 to 1,000 km (620miles) round trip to Salvador or Recife to receive each treatment.**



These **special "dragon boats" have been** developed locally. They are called Carranca boats after the colourful story that tells that the Carranca is a protective "figurehead" in Brazil and it is usually attached to boats and attributed with the power to give protection from the river's evil spirits. Many people in these areas are scared of the water, but with these protective figureheads they are venturing into the water a lot more confidently.

As a result of this event a new breast cancer dragon boat team is forming in Paulo Afonso! There are not enough ways to thank Cesare Decarli from the Carranca Boat Association and the ROAMA team for making this dream come true.



Dream the Dream and what you see will be!  
For more information follow the links below:

<https://www.facebook.com/roama.silva.520/videos/156604025298950/>

<https://www.facebook.com/ivecanpauloafonso.ivecan/videos/444019679462730/>

## Around the World

Don't forget to visit the IBCPC website [events page](#).

If you have an event you think would be good to have listed, please send the details to [committee@ibcpc.com](mailto:committee@ibcpc.com)

## Shopping

We are very fortunate to have an exclusive merchandise relationship with Hornet Water Sports. They have some fantastic IBCPC merchandise for sale such as paddles, seat pads, gloves, paddle bags and so on.

[IBCPC Merchandise](#)



**IBCPC regularly updates the website with updates, stories and news. Keep abreast with IBCPC will include some of the latest links. Feel free to explore all stories on the website.**

A personal recollection of the beginnings of BCS dragon boat paddling.

Read this interesting and informative article about the research which led to the establishment of breast cancer survivor dragon boat paddling told from a personal first hand viewpoint.

It has an option to play audio as well.

Breast Cancer And Dragon Boat Racing: The Story Behind A Movement





[More about A personal recollection of the beginnings of BCS dragon boat paddling.](#)

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