



Spring Newsletter
September 2007

An ACT organisation for women who have
experienced breast cancer

PO Box 717
MAWSON ACT 2607
ABN: 59 262 617 782

If you need us, call us, we will be there
0419 698 188 - 24 hour mobile phone service

October is Breast Cancer Month!

It is time to celebrate life.

MONDAY 23 OCTOBER AUSTRALIAN BREAST CANCER DAY

*Celebration of Life for members of Bosom Buddies and BCNA
and their families and friends.*

- Dinner
- Entertainment by a very special ladies' dance group
- Fashion Parade by Jean Townsend
- Raffle and souvenirs; and a great door prize
- A surprise finale to set your feet tapping!

Join us, renew and make friendships, and celebrate all our lives.
Yowani Golf Club, Northbourne Avenue, Lyneham
6:30 for 7:00 \$45.00 all inclusive

Please make your booking by Monday 15 October:
Contact Melanie Godfrey
Phone: (during business hours)
0406 376 500 (can leave a message) or (02) 6290 1984
Postal Address:
PO Box 717
Mawson ACT 2607

SATURDAY, 20 OCTOBER CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Annual Fundraising Event

- Arrival cocktails
- Live music
- Live and Silent Auction
- Dinner and dancing
- Fashion Parade organised by Ondina
- Lucky Dip and raffles

The Ballroom, Hyatt Hotel of Canberra
6:30 for 7:00 Dress is **Pink Tie**

Corporate Table for 10 \$1500 Individual tickets \$150 each
Members are welcome, and are invited to Donate items valued at \$20 or more for a lucky dip.

Please make your booking by Friday 12 October: Contact Melanie Godfrey
Phone: (during business hours) 0406 376 500 (can leave a message) or (02) 6290 1984
Postal Address: PO Box 717 Mawson ACT 2607



BCNA Field of Women in Sydney

13,100 people attended the recent BCNA field of women held in Sydney at the Telstra Dome on 11 August 2007. Amongst those present were our own Val, Di, Pam, DJ, Edna, Barbara, Libby and Marilyn to name but a few.

Friday, 30 November Save the date for the AGM and Holiday Dinner

Dinner
Annual report to members and sponsors
Update on achievements and plans

Fun and networking to start off the holidays

Yowani Golf Club
Northbourne Ave, Lyneham
6:30 for 7:00
\$35.00 for dinner
Please book by Friday 23 November

Bosom Buddies Committee

Executive:

President: Di Summerhayes
6290 2132
disummerhayes@hotmail.com

Vice President: Ondina Gregoric
6162 4488
admin@ondina.com.au

Secretary: Val Lee
6241 2816
val_lee@tpg.com.au

Treasurer: Bruce Glendinning
6239 5766
bruce.glendinning@palmcg.com.au

Subcommittee Chairs

Support and Social Activities:
Gheorghita (Gigi) Lungu
6230 1070
lungu@spitfire.com.au

Communications and Breast
Awareness: Sally Saunders
6238 3131
sally.saunders@bigpond.com

Bosom Buddies Fellowship
Pam Robertson
6281 0957
pamrobertson@grapevine.com.au

Fundraising: Di Summerhayes
(as above)

General Committee Members

Calvary Hospital Liaison:
Marilyn Ward
6254 5203
wards@grapevine.net.au

Heather Millar
6288 0787
hamillar@cybermac.com.au

Kaye Johnston
6238 1983
wa_ky@ozemail.com.au

BOSOM BUDDIES
24 HOUR MOBILE PHONE:
0419 698 188

**The phone will be answered
by a Bosom Buddy who will
listen, provide information
and connect you to others
as appropriate.**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS

Hello there everyone,

Spring is almost upon us and the warmer weather certainly is appreciated. We have had a busy time in Bosom Buddies since our last Newsletter and I shall outline just a few of our activities for you.

Our first "Life After Breast Cancer" workshop in June was a great success, with a featured presentation by our patron, Annette Ellis MP. Participating in the day of information, networking and support were Encore, Look Good Feel Good, and Hazel Hall & Chris Dorman, Naturopaths and Massage Therapists. We plan to sponsor two workshops next year; new patients and supporters found it especially helpful.

We all had a great time at Christmas in July on 27 July. Heather Millar did an extraordinary job organising an evening to remember. Our special thanks go to her and also to her team of helpers. Bosom Buddies, BCNA, nurses, friends and supporters all joined to enjoy music by DJ and the KarismaKatz and Blues Cowgirls. DJ even made a special CD with a share of the income coming to Bosom Buddies. Everyone enjoyed a surprise present from the gift exchange. The Swedish choir sharing Swedish Christmas customs was my special memory-- entering the dimly lit room with their candles providing a wonderful soft light. The singing was wonderful, and the small children were especially cute in handing out the traditional gingerbread biscuits to us all.

A special reminder to you all that October and Breast Cancer month are not far away. For just our members their families, friends and supporters we will have a special evening on Monday 23 October at the Yowani Golf Club. See the promotion on page one. We want it to be a fun night, filled with laughter and enjoyment so please spread the word.

Our annual Celebration of Life Gala this year will be on Saturday 20 October at the Hyatt Hotel. This year our focus will be on fund raising to support our many activities and our Bosom Buddies Fellowship. Applications to our Bosom Buddies Fellowship this past year have allowed us to assist individuals, medical professions and others. In order to do this, we need to fundraise and this is the main purpose of the Gala event this year. A team of Bosom Buddies volunteers is gathering silent auction and lucky dip prizes to add to our fundraising efforts. If you would like to contribute, please let me know.

Having been to the Field of Women held in Sydney on 11 August, I am still in awe of being amongst 13,000 people in pink ponchos (and some blue ponchos for the men who have been diagnosed with breast cancer) at the Telstra Stadium prior to the Sydney Swans and St Kilda game. I met up with dear friends, enjoyed the company of friends Pam and Graham and floated home on the Pink Bus in a sea of pink! I will always remember singing the words to "Up there Cazaly" which were specially rewritten by the song's author to start off "Up there Pink Lady". That brought a tear to many eyes on the Field of Women. Well done BCNA – a fantastic effort. I look forward to catching up with many of you during the next 2-3 months which promise to be a very busy and enjoyable time for Bosom Buddies

Kind regards,

Di Summerhayes
President Bosom Buddies

"Scientists step up research into ABC breast cancer"

ABC News Online, 17/07/2007

Medical researchers from Brisbane's Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH) and Sydney's Garvan Institute of Medical Research are to investigate the breast cancer cluster among current and former Brisbane ABC staff to see if there are similarities in the women's tumours. There have been 15 confirmed cases since 1995, with the latest revealed just last week. An independent report found the breast cancer rate at the Toowong studios was up to 11 times higher than normal, prompting ABC management to abandon the site late last year. Angela Eckersley, a former news assistant, has become the 15th woman diagnosed with the illness. The mother of four worked at

the same newsroom production desk as a significant number of the other women diagnosed with the disease. She is the wife of Ian Eckersley, the former ABC TV sports presenter.
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/07/17/1980164.htm>

BREAST RECONSTRUCTION

Dr Peter Barry
Onco-plastic breast surgeon.
Dr Vlad Milovic
Plastic and reconstructive microsurgeon.

Breast reconstruction is one of the many complex issues and decisions that women diagnosed with breast cancer may be faced with. Yet it is unique in that the decision can be delayed until all other treatment is finished. Indeed, this decision is often made years after a woman has survived a diagnosis of breast cancer.

While there are advantages to immediate reconstruction, both aesthetically and psychologically, it must not compromise the primary treatment of the cancer. Similarly, cancer treatment should not interfere with the final outcome of reconstruction. Delay is a safer option in these cases.

Mentioning reconstruction to patients may evoke a fearful or apprehensive response often due to misconceptions surrounding it. Feelings of guilt over vanity and confusion are not uncommon. Friends, family and even health professionals may chide patients over what they perceive to be a trivial and cosmetic self-indulgence.

Of course, breast reconstruction after cancer aims to restore normal anatomy and body image; "the whole".

While not every patient is suitable for all methods of reconstruction, most patients are suitable for at least one method. The role of the breast and reconstructive surgeon includes providing information and support through the entire process. It is the onus of the patient to understand the risks and to have sufficient motivation and realistic expectations.

In deciding on the method of reconstruction there are usually three options:

1. Use of foreign material known as a prosthesis. This consists of a silicone shell filled either with saline or a silicone gel.
2. Use of patient's own tissue, ie a flap. An example of this is the TRAM flap which utilizes tissue of the abdominal wall to reconstruct the breast. The patient receives an abdominoplasty (tummy tuck) in the process. This procedure requires a skilled micro-surgeon.
3. A combination of the above two techniques utilizing the patient's tissue augmented by an implant. The commonest example of this is the latissimus (back muscle) flap.

In general, the simpler the technique, (Option 1), the more long-term maintenance is required whilst the more complex techniques (Option 2) usually give a more natural and robust long-term result. All methods carry risks. An acceptable level of risk of failure of the reconstructive method is approximately 2% for each technique in appropriately selected patients.

In the ACT, the good news is that all these techniques are now available in both the public and private sectors in both the immediate and delayed settings.

Cost should not factor in the decision-making as for other aspects of cancer treatment. Reconstructive procedures all have a rebatable item under Medicare.

In summary, it is important that women are given the opportunity for an honest guilt-free discussion outlining the options and their expectations of breast reconstruction at a separate time to the breast cancer consultation. The restoration of normality and reduction of the sense of loss is the emphasis rather than issues relating to cosmetics.

WANT TO HELP OTHER WOMEN DURING THEIR BREAST CANCER JOURNEY?

Bosom Buddies committee and members are busy with a number of projects and programs that will benefit from your help. We are going to make a little list and get active about getting volunteers involved.

- Give support to individuals going through treatment
- Make supportive calls to women who have called our help line
- Chauffer women to doctors' appointments or to chemo or radiation
- Baby sit or deliver a meal
- Help sew the "fluffy ducks" that women receive after surgery.
- They only take about 10 minutes each and we provide the fabric and cotton filling
- A sewing bee can be a good reason to gather a few friends around a teapot.
- Help prepare for our gala fundraising event on 20 October
- Help get donations of small gifts for the lucky dip
- Help design a PR campaign
- Make table decorations
- Represent Bosom Buddies to other related groups in our region
- Write an article for our quarterly newsletter
- Take photographs at our events for the web site gallery
- Help prepare for a members' event – a workshop, a lunch or dinner.
- All Bosom Buddies Volunteers will have an information and orientation session so you are prepared, meet new friends and networks, and understand the requirements for us as a volunteer organisation.
- To Join Bosom Buddies Volunteers Contact Melanie Godfrey, who works in our office two days a week, and a member will get back to you.

Phone: (during business hours)
0406 376 500 (can leave a message)
or (02) 6290 1984

A PERSONAL GLIMPSE

This section of our Newsletter is to help you get to know members of Bosom Buddies better.

NAME: Marilyn Ward



MARILYN HAS BEEN THE DRIVER BEHIND THE MAKING AND SUPPLY OF FLUFFY DUCKS FOLLOWING THEIR INTRODUCTION BY LORRAINE ECKERMAN. SHE HAD HER FIRST MEETING TO DISCUSS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SERVICE WITH THE CLINICAL NURSE CONSULTANT

OF THE PUBLIC WARD AT CALVARY IN 1997 AND HAS NEVER LOOKED BACK. IN THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR HER GROUP MADE OVER 600 FLUFFY DUCKS, MOST OF WHICH WERE GIVEN TO CALVARY HOSPITAL FOR THE PATIENTS' USE. MARILYN CELEBRATED 14 YEARS SINCE HER SURGERY WITH HER DAUGHTER AT THE RECENT FIELD OF WOMEN ON 11 AUGUST.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER OF BOSOM BUDDIES?:

I have been in Bosom Buddies since the beginning. I had breast cancer in 1993 and Bosom Buddies started not long after that.

LIKES AND HOBBIES

Being outside. Gardening, walking, sewing and reading.

DISLIKES

Housework.

WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY READING/WATCHING/LISTENING TO?

I am reading a Jodie Picoult book at the moment. Last weekend we were given a gold pass to the cinema and we went to see "Die Hard Four" – it was good, the whole experience – total escapism.

WHAT IS YOUR IDEA OF A GOOD WEEKEND?

A walk around the lake and good lunch out somewhere.

NAME THREE PEOPLE YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH, AND WHY?

My husband, kids and grandchildren, friends who have been a great support to me and my family, brothers and sisters and all their families.

MY MUMMY HAS BREAST CANCER

My Mummy has Breast Cancer



By our own Kerry Glover
with illustrations by Racheal Brühn
\$22.00 including GST

This paperback is a wonderful book for families of patients with young children. Kerry and Racheal published this book in 2002 with financial assistance from Bosom Buddies. Now we have discovered that Kerry has a few copies in her garage and we want to make them available again. Support a young patient or family by buying this book. Order through Melanie in our office. Some of the proceeds will go to Bosom Buddies to help us with our important work.

HELP BUILD BREAST CANCER AWARENESS...

Do you know a group who would benefit from a presentation on Breast Cancer Awareness?

- Your place of employment
- A social group
- A social organisation
- A school
- A club

Help us expand this well received program. We now have four presenters and our target for 2007-2008 is to make more than 24 presentations.

Program Coordinator

Sally Saunders 6238 3131 (home) or 0419 303 229.

RECENT NEWS RELEASE

"Cancer breath test trialed"

Sunday Telegraph, 14/05/2007 - Robin Riley

A revolutionary invention that checks the breath for early signs of cancer is being tested on Australian patients. A team at the University of Western Australia is investigating if Breathscanner - a device developed by former Australian scientist Michael Phillips - can accurately detect breast cancer. Later this year, a group in Brisbane hopes to conduct a similar clinical trial to screen for early signs of lung cancer. Dr Phillips said US trials confirmed the breath test could predict patients with lung cancer at all four stages of the deadly disease.

<http://www.news.com.au/dailytelegraph/story/0,22049,21720353-5006010,00.html>

The Cancer Council ACT

The Cancer Council ACT holds the following support groups for all people requiring information or support:

Breast Cancer Support Group – for women who have experienced breast cancer. Meets on the 2nd Saturday of the month. St. Luke's Parish Centre Newdegate Street, Deakin. 10am – 12pm.

Pink Links – A support group specifically for younger women who have breast cancer. Meets on the 1st Tuesday of the month. The Cancer Council ACT, 5 Richmond Avenue, Fairbairn. 7.30 – 9.30 pm.

All groups are professionally facilitated

For more information please contact (02) 6257 9999 or The Cancer Council Helpline on 13 11 20

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