



Profiling our Member Groups

Amazons Perth Dragon Boat Club

In this issue about living well beyond breast cancer we profile one of our WA Member Groups, Amazons Perth Dragon Boat Club.

Amazons' members range in age from early 40s to early 70s and come from a wide variety of backgrounds including doctors, librarians, tax consultants and courier drivers, just to name a few. They meet twice weekly to train at the Maylands Sport and Recreational Club.

Founded in 2000 as part of Dragons Abreast Australia, the Amazons passionately promote the benefits of dragon boating, with their motto *Through Hell and High Water*.

'We feel this describes our various journeys, for we all have been touched by breast cancer in some way,' says Amazons member **Jennie Ellis**. 'We wanted more than survival, we wanted quality of life. Paddling dragon boats gives this to us!'

Jennie says the name Amazon comes from Greek mythology and has great significance for the group's members.

'The Amazon warrior women had a breast removed to allow greater accuracy when shooting arrows,' she says. 'They were protective and loyal to each other and even when wounded would continue to battle on.'

'That's how our team operates. We care for each other and



The Amazons in action

show that there is life after a breast cancer diagnosis. We find the active, vigorous exercise of paddling enhances physical and emotional wellbeing within the context of caring companionship.'

With a name like Amazons it is not surprising that the group's members are no strangers to a bit of healthy competition. In 2008, they competed at the Sixth International Dragonboating Federation World Cup Championships in Penang, an invitation-only event. They secured the invitation by winning two bronze medals in the Australian Nationals in Perth

earlier that year. The employer of one of the Amazons' members was so thrilled for the group that he sponsored their uniforms.

'It's a terrific feeling to be in the boat doing your best as an individual, yet moving forward as part of a team... sometimes even winning races,' Jennie says.

But it isn't all about the big events. 'We are serious about our paddling, but we are really serious about having fun.' After the first regatta of each season the Amazons head to Fairbridge Farm for a fun 'sleep-over'.

If fun, companionship and water-based exercise with like-minded women sounds good to you, the Amazons encourage you to look up your local dragon boat club and have a go.

To find out more about the Amazons Perth Dragon Boat Club and the physical benefits of paddling visit their website www.amazonsperth.com.au or email Jennie at jerb@westnet.com.au.

Further information about Dragons Abreast clubs in other parts of Australia can be found at www.dragonsabreast.com.au.