

Breast Cancer Support Inc.

PO Box 10150, Dominion Road, Auckland 1446



Newsletter

September 2008

Chairperson: Marie Goudge 835 1890
Secretary: Joan Parker 376 1466/ 360 3039
Editor: Sarah Tantrum 377 9391

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR



How many of you spent far more time than usual watching television during the Olympics?

I confess I did. In our house the television is rarely on in the daytime but during August it ran from midday until midnight, with me periodically getting glued to it for an hour or more as I watched the extraordinary achievements of all those athletes. I marvelled in disbelief, held my breath and cheered (audibly for the New Zealanders) as I watched the amazing capabilities of the human body and mind; I include the mind because it seems clear to me that strategies and tactics along with a self-belief are as important as physical fitness.

Did you notice that most of the athletes wanted to acknowledge the help and support they received from their support team -- their coach, their family, and other athletes?

I wonder how many men and women left those games having recorded PBs? (personal bests) I don't believe you can ask more of yourself than a PB.

Why am I prattling on about the games you may ask? Well I've been thinking about the race of life that we are all running, about all the PBs that occur every day and in particular the PBs that so many women diagnosed with breast cancer run. Many know about the disappointment of tripping over a hurdle, the agony of a protesting body and the determination to complete the course. These people too work out strategies to manage their situations, they hold onto self-belief and they too are champions.

Breast cancer athletes also have support teams. Their professional coaches are the surgeons and the medical personnel; family and friends frequently play a major support role and those who have already been through a breast

cancer diagnosis (the equivalent of the other athletes) are often a source of encouragement and hope. Groups such as Encore, the Dragon Boat teams and Breast Cancer Support are examples of organizations where women can share their experiences and receive support.

No great athlete works alone and neither need any woman experiencing breast cancer. I believe we should be talking about the services available from the Cancer Society and other providers. PBs are not easy but with the right support they are possible and very satisfying.

In the last Newsletter I introduced the members of the newly elected central committee of Breast Cancer Support. Their special areas of responsibility are:

Chairperson	Marie Goudge
Deputy Chair	Joan Kerr
Secretary	Joan Parker
Treasurer	Jennifer Woodroofe
Editor	Sarah Tantrum
Website	Carol Scott-Dye
Brochure	Deirdre Parr

Karen Kranz was also elected to the committee but has subsequently resigned because of other commitments. We are delighted though, that she is available to serve on a subcommittee.

Thank you for the excellent response to the survey about the BCS website. The results have given clear guidelines to Carol and others designing the site.

At the 10th birthday celebration of the dragon boat team, "Busting with Life", I met up with three past Chairpersons of BCS (BCSS as it used to be known). They were Frances Robinson, Pam Lewis (James) and Lois Dye. It was great to reminisce and also rejoice in the future of our organization. Pam has written a report for this newsletter.

A highlight of the year has been the fund raising dinner organized by the business people of Conifer Grove in Papakura. This was unmistakably a PB by these extremely generous people. Further on in the newsletter you can read what Deirdre has to say about this outstanding event. From me it's Gold Medals to everyone!

The winter has been cold and **WET!** Perhaps by the time you receive this Newsletter the cheerfulness of spring will have arrived.
Kind regards

Marie Goudge,
Chairperson BCS

GRIEF



This is a summary of the presentation on grief that guest speaker, Lesley Brokenshire, gave at the recent Coordinator's Training Day.

Grief is a natural response to loss or change. It takes time; it takes as long as it takes. We each have our own unique way of grieving and there is no right or wrong way. Lesley talked about Breast Cancer changes and losses, mentioning possible issues such as relationship with body, invincibility, body shape, breast/s, freedom to wear a variety of clothes, naivety about health care systems, feelings about sex and relationships with others.

Commonly there are many intense physical, cognitive, emotional and spiritual responses we may experience; these are often chaotic. They may be potentially transformative. Examples of these different responses include:

Physical: feeling sick, sweating, palpitations, feeling breathless, diarrhoea, constipation, yawning, restlessness, under or over-eating, lack of energy, fatigue, sleep disturbance, insomnia, changes in sexual patterns and menstrual changes.

Emotional: sadness, crying, wailing, numbness, shock, detachment, anger, rage, hostility, irritability, relief, confusion, guilt and self-blame, anxiety, panic, loneliness, despair, loss of purpose, fear, terror and helplessness.

Cognitive: lack of concentration, confusion, disbelief, preoccupation, dreams, nightmares, avoiding reminders, blaming self, others, God or genetics, disturbance of thoughts, trance like blanks, and absent-minded behaviour

Spiritual: questions such as: Why? What do I believe now? What is death? Who am I? Why me? She spoke of the possibility that we may redefine our beliefs and values or take new spiritual directions.

Lesley also spoke of the transformative potential of grief. We may ask ourselves questions such as: What is important to me now? Who is important to me now? How do I want to spend my time? Who am I now? Who do I want to become? We may consider or ponder on our sense of purpose and think about new life goals

Lesley talked about how we can be alongside others in supporting them through their grief: We can listen, open the doors to communication, possibly anticipate rough spots if appropriate, share our own experiences if appropriate and helpful, and allow others to talk. Talking and being heard are really important.

She also discussed ways we can draw on support from ourselves and others if we are grieving, such as: self expression (could be writing, drawing, painting, dancing, poetry, etc) and

taking the time to feel and make sense of the losses and changes. Recruiting our own support systems for specific tasks can be helpful, including friends who can listen without giving advice, and maintaining connection and support. We can try to set achievable goals, creating the future, and find healthy ways to relieve stress e.g. exercise, relaxation, and prayer. We can allow ourselves to change, recognizing the gains and growth and the losses and the changes.

THANK YOU

Many thanks to "Beca Engineers. Planners. Managers" for photocopying this newsletter.



PAPAKURA RETAILERS RAISE FUNDS FOR BCS

by Deirdre Parr



Annie Herring from the Papakura Breast Friends group was one of the models.

The night of 30 June was dark, cold and wet in Auckland, but in the Old Flame Memory Lane Restaurant in Conifer Grove, Papakura, mid-winter Christmas

martini glass very similar in shape to Madonna's infamous pointy bra.

Between courses, models showed off gorgeous garments, complete with hats and 'fascinators' (very Audrey Hepburn!), from Cheryl Christine's striking FASHØN label.

The opening parade of matching hats, gloves, and faux fur shoulder capes worn over cheeky pink bras was a definite crowd-pleaser. After dessert, a series of dreamy bridal gowns from Golden Gowns of Papakura rounded off the fashion component of the evening.

The final auction of the night was of a stylish, black hooded cape, donated by Cheryl Christine. Having just spoken to the gathering about my own experience of breast cancer, I was asked to model it – which I happily did, as it was rather gorgeous and I enjoy dressing-up. The

was in full swing, as 75 diners enjoyed a convivial evening of food and fashion.

The event was the brainchild of three of the Conifer Grove Shopping Centre retailers – fashion designer Cheryl Christine, restaurateur Jacqui O'Connor, and beauty salon owner Dianne Morgan – to raise money for Breast Cancer Support. Other local businesses also generously donated goods and services to be auctioned throughout the evening.

Stan Goudge, Marie and I from the BCS committee joined the table of Annette Coutts, Jill Mellow and a lively group from the Papakura Breast Friends. Following an introduction by the evening's MC, Adelaide Tucker, Marie gave a brief outline of BCS and its aims to the assembled guests, explaining how our emphasis on friendship, empathy and shared experience differentiates us from the many other breast cancer organisations around. Dinner was a sumptuous smorgasbord of Christmas fare, plus other delicious offerings from the kitchen (I was particularly taken with



Jill Mellow tries out the new cocktail

the salmon fillets, which we cooked ourselves on a large hot-plate). Liquid refreshments included a cocktail that had been developed especially for the evening. Needless to say, it was pink, potent, and served in a



Advertising in the ladies' loo!

auction was about to close when a man from our table jumped to his feet and put in a final counter bid. Imagine my surprise to be told, as I was giving the cape to him, that he wanted me to keep it! You could have knocked my socks off – but he insisted, leaving me to wonder how was I going to explain this to my husband?

The donor turned out to be Alan Hawke, Annette Coutts' twin brother, who was visiting from China and is himself a cancer survivor. His impulsive act of generosity made an already wonderful evening unforgettable – not only for me, but for many of the other guests, too.

The evening raised over \$2000 for BCS at a time when our organisation is facing some significant expenses, and our

thanks go to all the people and businesses who gave so generously of their time, goods and talents to make it possible. Our particular thanks go to Cheryl, Jacqui and Dianne of Conifer Grove Shopping Centre, who had the idea, and without whom it

would never have happened.

Postscript: My husband was very taken with the cape, and – I must say – has been just a little bit more attentive since I brought it home (thank you, Alan!).

BUSTING WITH LIFE DRAGON BOAT 10TH ANNIVERSARY

What a real pleasure to be invited to attend the 10th Anniversary of the original NZ Dragon Boat Team “Busting with Life” – and such a truly memorable event to attend. Being greeted by a MASSIVE pile of pink leis was an all-encompassing welcome for each attendee as well as becoming a personalized, tangible and individual item.

Many new faces were intermingled with several of my fellow original paddlers, many of whom I had not seen since moving to Australia with my new husband in 1999. The level of fellowship was almost tactile, and the sincerity of all the speakers very obvious.

I am in awe of just how far the concept has developed, enlarged and spread since Trish first approached the Cancer Society for support, and we (BCSS, as it was in those days) agonized over our decision to take some of our very modest “legacy” from fixed deposit to fund the establishment of Busting with Life. This name was coined by Frances Robinson and Lois Dye designed the logo. What good choices were made all those years ago, and what a delight to see what a success the whole project continues to be. However, the real success was felt in the camaraderie and unity of every person in that room. A truly positive and uplifting experience -- just like participating and paddling in the boat.



From left to right. Lois Dye, Evelyn Fickling, Frances Robinson, Pam Lewis, Jennifer Terry, Marie Goudge. Some of the original members of BCSS now BCS celebrate the Busting With Life's 10th Birthday Dinner. Frances, Pam, Lois and Marie have all been Chairpersons of the BCSS or the BCS.

Another special and delightful experience for me was to meet and spend time with Marie Goudge from BCS (as it is now) and to hear the journey of becoming an individual group no longer under the Cancer Society umbrella. I can see that “things are indeed in good hands”. I sincerely congratulate the Busting with Life Team in being a success in more ways than one, and wish them well for the next 10 years and beyond.
Fond regards to all

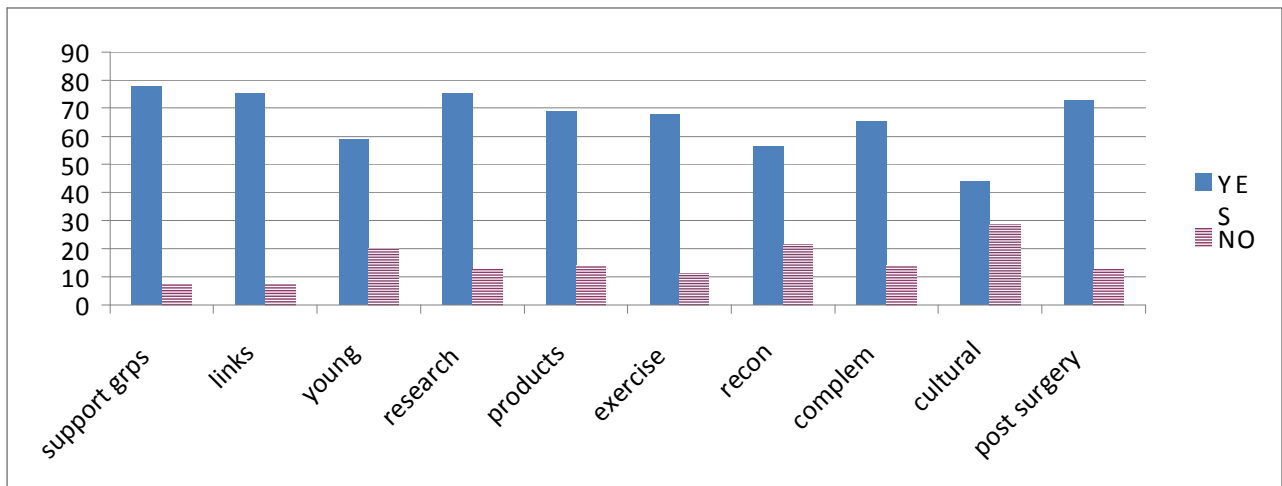
Pamela Lewis (formerly James)
Life Member BCS

BCS WEBSITE SURVEY APRIL 2008

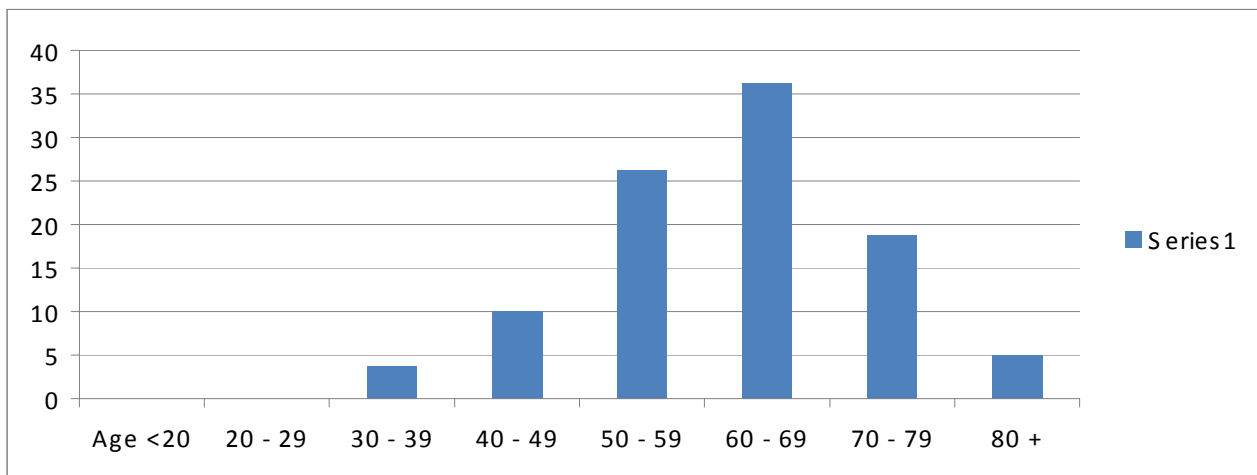
A big thank you to the 80 plus respondents to the website survey. Currently the committee is considering website development quotes. The plan is to get this done in the next couple of months. Will keep you posted.

Have you had a breast Cancer diagnosis?	Yes 83%	No 5%	Blank 12%
Would you find a BCS website useful?	Yes 84%	No 14%	Blank 2%
Would you use the website to access BCS Newsletters?	Yes 67.5%	No 16.25%	

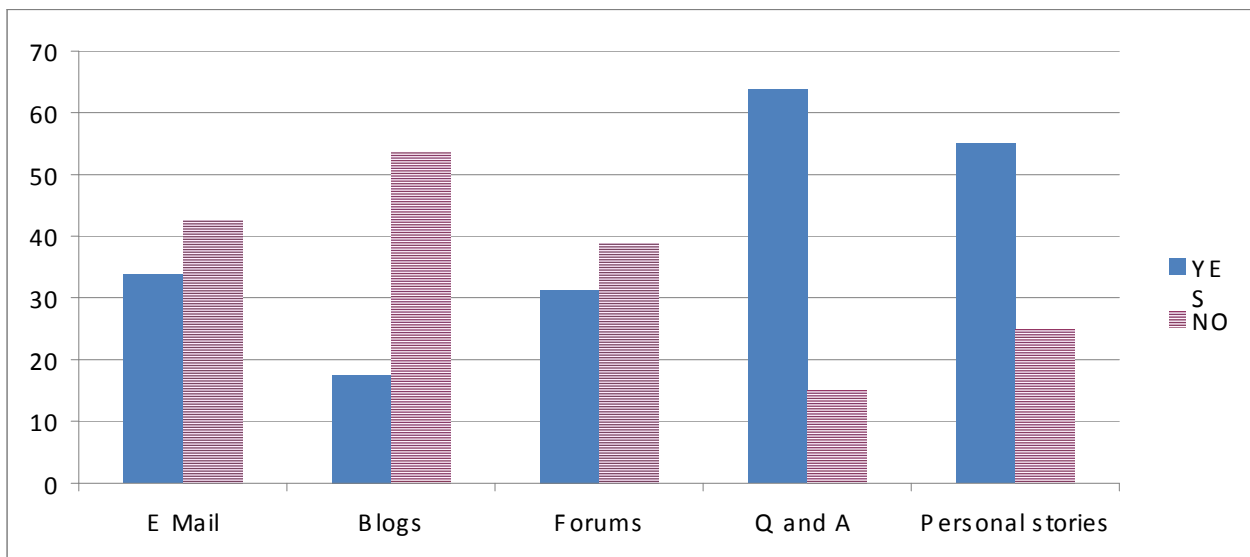
Would you use a web site for the following?



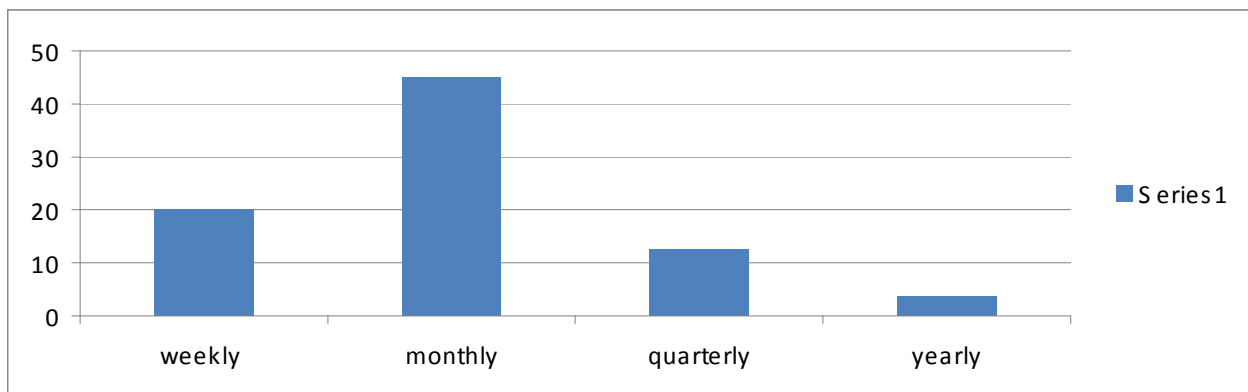
Which age group do you belong to?



Would you be interested in using the website to participate in the following?



How often would you use a BCS website?



REPORTS FROM THE BREAST FRIENDS

Pakuranga

The Pakuranga Breast Friends group met for their mid-winter Christmas dinner at the Howick RSA. Eleven women attended. Everyone had a great time. There was a lot of fun especially when we conned a local Real Estate agent into taking our photos!

At the August meeting there were eight ladies present. One of our members had just returned from six weeks holiday in USA. She brought along a CD with some of her photos on it and gave us a commentary. What a trip! The sights around the State of Maine are really something we do not see here. Lots of laughter and the evening ended with supper but not before two of our Scottish members had given a vocal rendition of a popular Scottish song!

West Auckland

In June, eleven women met to hear Jane Bissell speak about her two books, "Welcome to the Amazon Club" and 'The Pink Party'.

"As a child I was always writing stories and jotting down ideas for stories," said Jane, "but I didn't think anyone would want to read them and I was always too shy to show them to anyone".

It was after her brush with breast cancer that Jane decided to use the entries in her journal as a basis for a book. Later she continued her story along

with the stories of two of her friends and produced, "The Pink Party". Jane sees this book as a celebration of life.

The speaker in July was Anne Myers from Naturalwear who showed the twelve women a wide range of pretty but practical bras, along with swimwear and compression garments. It was good too, to get clarification of the subsidies that are available and how to access them.

"Skip for Life" is a new organisation founded by Jacqueline Harrison. At our August meeting Jacqueline explained how she feels moved to raise money for women who need to pay for the drug, Herceptin. The ladies were especially interested because one of our group is raising money for her Herceptin treatment.

Auckland South

In June we discussed the forthcoming Mid Winter Xmas Dinner and Fashion Parade at the Old Flame Restaurant organised to raise money for Breast Cancer Support.

Several of the ladies with their partners attended this evening and what a superb evening it was. With scrumptious smorgasbord dinner and fashion parades from Cheryl Christine at Conifer Grove, and bridal wear from Golden Gown, Papakura. The MC for the evening was Adelaide and KC Hair did the hair and makeup for the models, one of whom was our own Annie Herring.

In August Kathy Bray was back to talk to us about reflexology. We learned a lot about reflexology and enjoyed having our feet massaged.

Kathy handed out a sheet listing the Ten Commandments for reducing stress. It started with:

"Thou shalt not be perfect, or even try to be," and ended with, "Especially thou shalt NOT be thine own worst enemy, but be thy best friend."

Hibiscus Coast

Eighteen ladies met for our mid-winter dinner. We enjoyed the ambience of a cafe called B.A.D. in Silverdale. B.A.D. stands for bar and dine and that's exactly what we did! It was wonderful to see some ladies we had not caught up with in a while especially one who had returned from Australia.

It was cold and wet for our meeting in July but that did not deter twelve women venturing out to attend. Our questions. A general discussion about health and wellbeing followed and travel plans were shared.

In August sixteen women enjoyed a presentation given by one of our group. We heard a little of her own breast cancer story She also spoke about how she got into Reiki and how that led her step by step into her present set-up with her healing centre.

The ladies are rejoicing with three of their members who have recently been "signed off" by their specialists -- great news!

North Shore

Winter ills and chills have meant the numbers at our meetings have been small during this period. It is unfortunate that so many women were unable to hear Elizabeth Meadows talk about Shiun Jin Jiyutsu (acupuncture without needles) as it was one of the most inspiring and professional deliveries we have had since our group reformed last year.

Shiun Jin Jiyutsu is not a form of self-defence, it is a 5,000 year old healing art known and used before the time of

Moses, Buddha and Jesus.

In 1950 the art was taken from Japan to America and is now practised worldwide. It is a simple technique; the fingers on the hands relate to various organs in the body and by learning how to stimulate them the aim is to boost the endocrine system. Some people have found this therapy helpful during chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

Some of our members have continued to Nordic walk each week

in spite of the miserable weather. Cancer Society nurse, Lyn Mourant, was there to answer our medical

Auckland Central

Important -- Because of problems with parking we have changed our meeting time from 10.30am to 1.00pm on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Thank you to the Cancer Society staff for helping us with this difficulty.

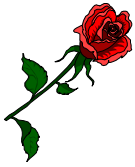
Fifteen women were at our June meeting, several for the first time. Our speaker was Kelle Dore from the Health and Disability Commission. She talked about our rights and responsibilities when dealing with the medical profession and the work of a patient advocate.

Tracey Gee, a registered psychologist was the speaker in July. Tracey spoke about coping with stress and the need for good food, sleep and exercise and gave a PowerPoint presentation about sleep.

In August there were five new ladies in our gathering of twelve. Our speaker, Janene Cooper, a dietician, was so well received that by popular request she has agreed to speak to the group again. Janene has a special interest in the place of diet in the treatment of breast cancer and of diabetes.

Franklin Breast Cancer Support Group Inc

News from our friends in Pukekohe/Waiuku reports that they had a highly successful "Pink Ribbon Day" dinner at Waiuku in June and that in August they learned about Indian cooking. Friendly support is always available.



ACHIEVER'S COLUMN

Ten years ago in March I was diagnosed with ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS) as the result of my yearly mammogram. Because it seemed to be widespread I was strongly recommended to have a mastectomy. I questioned this because it seemed to me that early diagnosis should mean a less drastic treatment. However, I was eventually convinced that I really did need to have the surgery. So I had the mastectomy with reconstruction in the same operation. It was just as well because the subsequent pathology showed that I already had a cluster of five very small tumours beginning. However my lymph nodes were clear and there was no indication of needing any other treatment.

It meant being away from work for about five weeks. When I returned to work it was difficult to work a full day at first. Around two o'clock in the afternoon I would hit a wall of overwhelming tiredness and have to go home for the rest of the day. After a couple of days I decided that I would go home to lunch and then lie on the couch for at least 30 minutes, consciously emptying my mind. A little very quiet music helped this process. I was then ready to return to work for the rest of the day. It was fortunate that I lived close to my place of work, a deliberate choice that I had made some years earlier so as to avoid the traffic problems. Ten years later I am still going home to lunch, though not to lie down and rest. It is simply a restful interlude in the working day.

At the time of the diagnosis and all that followed, my large extended family and friends provided me with great support. One of my work colleagues who has become a friend had had breast cancer

some years before and had looked into the possibility of a reconstruction at that time, although she had not gone through with it. She was very helpful and supportive. The medical and surgical care given me was also excellent. However, despite all this and although the detection of my breast cancer was early and my prognosis good, I still had to come to terms with the maelstrom of emotions that come with being diagnosed with cancer and being advised to have a breast surgically removed. One of the ways of doing this was by writing about it in order to identify and express the feelings that flooded over me. This seemed to process them in a way that enabled me to move forward in a positive frame of mind.

Less than a year after surgery I was able to travel to India for two work-related conferences, one in Bangalore, the other in Hyderabad. Since then I have attended similar conferences in Durham, Los Angeles and more recently Santiago in Chile. Fortunately there have been no particular difficulties for me in such travelling other than the usual things that anyone might suffer from in long distance flights.

I have been a member of BCS for nearly nine years and for several years was a visitor. The referrals to me were often of women who wanted to talk about the experience of breast reconstruction. For a number of years I have been doing the layout of the BCS Newsletter. In June of this year I agreed to being nominated for secretary and have subsequently been elected to that role. This is a new challenge for me, one that has the potential for being quite busy and interesting.

Joan Parker

To become a member of Breast Cancer Support Inc please send your name and address to Breast Cancer Support, PO Box 10150, Dominion Rd, Auckland 1446. Subscriptions: \$20 individual, \$15 unwaged, \$30 groups and joint. Extra donations are greatly appreciated! For further information, please email us admin@breastcancersupport.co.nz or phone (09) 274 1192 or (09) 835 1890.

Name: Mrs Miss Ms Mr Dr _____

Address: _____

_____ Postal Code _____

Phone Home (0) _____ Work (0) _____ Fax (0) _____

Email _____ Mob _____

I am a Breast Cancer survivor I am interested in volunteering/helping.

I agree to BCS contacting me by email with news, information and updates

DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of Breast Cancer Support Inc.