



# **Annual Report**

## **2022-2023**



This report reviews the activities and accomplishments of  
Bosom Buddies ACT Inc during the elected periods  
of the Management Committee

It covers the financial year 1 July 2022 - 30 June 2023.

**Bosom Buddies ACT Inc.**

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**Pearce Community Centre**

**Building 1**

**Collett Place**

**PEARCE ACT 2607**

**Office hours : Monday to Thursday 9am - 2pm**

**Designated Gift Recipient**

**Donations over \$2 are tax deductible**



Dear members and supporters

Bosom Buddies has gone from strength to strength over the past year, and the Executive Officer, Catherine Rider-Aichholzer, has really made significant changes to raise the profile of the organisation and develop relationships with stakeholders. It is no mean feat to take on an organisation post a global pandemic, and help it build and develop to become the support that people with breast cancer need, at perhaps the most challenging time of their lives.

As I look back over the past year, I see new branding which meets the opportunity to reach people with breast cancer as never before. Our old branding was comfortable and rested in a sea of pink ribbons, and it did not stand out amongst all the other pink branding. As we discussed this at length, we knew that breast cancer touches everyone, and we identified that our branding should reflect that very premise. I am delighted to say that the new branding not only is inclusive to all, but has really made a splash and a point of difference to everything else out there.

We have stayed with our heads above water this year financially, it has been lean with fundraising activities which kept Bosom Buddies afloat in the past. Post COVID and the resulting drying up of some of the funding streams and opportunities has had an effect on Bosom Buddies, like many others in the community. In addition, many income sources are just unavailable which were relied upon in the past. However Catherine has been extremely successful in gaining new grant funding to help those financially struggling to purchase essential post-surgery garments, and sponsorship. We have spent these funds wisely to benefit people with breast cancer.

We were particularly sad to hear of the passing of Cheryl Tandy who was a significant advocate for education and support to the community, and who did such an amazing job even when she was so ill herself. I think of her often and know she would be very proud to see the direction that Bosom Buddies is going, we had many chats about this very subject.

I particularly would like to thank the volunteers, members and of course, the committee who have supported the work of the organisation through this year. Without your help, we would not be as successful as we are today.

I thank Catherine for the work and dedication she puts in everyday and often after hours. Her work ethic and professionalism is just what we needed at this time, and I am grateful to have been the President to see the changes she has been able to initiate.

And lastly to you all, thank you for your support in my role as President, I cannot believe that it is three years and I feel very fortunate to hand this on to the new President as my tenure is now finished at this AGM.

Yours sincerely

Carol Mead  
Outgoing President



Carol Mead  
President 2022 - 2023

## Management Committee

December 2021 : October 2022

Carol Mead : President

Lynn Bean : Vice President

Cloudy Wei : Treasurer

Shantanu Bhattacharya :  
Secretary and Community Liaison

Justine Gibbings : Public Officer

Vacant : Fundraising Coordinator

## Committee Members

Narelle Sargent

## Executive Officer

Catherine Rider-Aichholzer

## Support Team Volunteers

Lynn Bean

Margaret Kent

Lyn Pincott

Theresa Kerby

Marilyn Ward

*Thank you to Heather Jackson &  
Shelley Atkins, support team  
volunteers who stepped down in 2022.*

## Connecting People to Support

Bosom Buddies ACT Inc. is an independent micro charity that relies solely on the generosity of the community to keep the lights on.

Bosom Buddies has actively supported people diagnosed with breast cancer in the ACT and surrounding NSW region for nearly 30 years. We provide a **community, support, and resources** to help people dealing with breast cancer, and their loved ones on this journey.

Unlike a lot of our counterparts, our organisation relies on donations and does not receive funding from the government or the larger national cancer organisations. All donations stay local and directly support people affected by breast cancer in the region.

## Mission:

Our mission is to provide on the ground support to people diagnosed with breast cancer, and their families in the ACT and surrounding NSW region.

## Purpose:

- Provide practical and personalised support to people affected by breast cancer;
- To connect people to resources, information and services provided by Bosom Buddies and other organisations within the community; and
- Raise community awareness about the importance of early detection of breast cancer to enable people to support themselves.

## Our Priorities

As the World recovers from the pandemic, this year has proven challenging for many Not-for-Profit organisations and especially those, such as Bosom Buddies ACT Inc, that rely on the generosity of the community. There has been little opportunity to promote what we do, which in turn has had a financial impact due to lack of fundraising events and sponsorship opportunities. To address this, the 2021-2022 Strategic Direction was revised and approved by the management committee in December 2022.

### Raise our Profile

Due to limited activity during the pandemic, post-Covid meant that it was important to raise the profile of Bosom Buddies through cost-effective measures.

### Promote our Services

This year we focussed on promoting Bosom Buddies as:

- the “one stop hub” providing information on the services available in the region,
- encouraging people to use our services,
- inviting community involvement,
- providing resources to the community, and
- attracting corporate support and sponsorship.

### People not Research

Bosom Buddies is not a research organisation – our core business is to **support** everyone diagnosed with breast cancer and their loved ones in the community. To differentiate the charity from our cancer research counterparts, we started by reinvigorating the brand colours.

### Rebranding

We were approached by Vanessa Schimizzi, Canberra’s “Young Business Woman of the Year 2021”, who offered her services *pro bono* to rebrand our logo. Vanessa, the owner of *Branded Graphics*, wanted to ensure that as an established charity of over 25 years, the ethos and mission of Bosom Buddies remained strong in the logo, but had a contemporary twist. Our logo now shines with vibrant colours – reflecting the changes that have occurred in the world post-Covid.

Our new catch phrase **“Connecting People to Support”** also strikes at the heart of what Bosom Buddies does – supporting people who have been diagnosed with breast cancer and their loved ones in the ACT and surrounding NSW region.



Our new logo remains predominantly pink because women are affected the most; some blue for men who can also be diagnosed with breast cancer and pink and blue blend to purple to represent inclusivity, diversity and non-binary.

Vanessa Schimizzi  
Supporter and owner of  
*Branded Graphics*



## Support Based Activities

This year we were able to continue with most of our existing support based activities, although some of our programs such as representation at the Calvary Drop-in Clinic and hospital visits, ceased as a result of the pandemic.

### One-on-One Peer Support

Our support team volunteers are various ages and are at different stages in their lives; but they have one thing in common – they are all survivors who understand what it is like to have breast cancer. They provide one-on-one peer support to people from when they are diagnosed, during treatment and following their treatment. The support team continued throughout the year to provide personalised support via 'phone calls, emails, text and were mindful to take stringent health and safety measures when arranging face-to-face meetings.

### ACT & NSW Support Groups

*Studies show that support groups can enhance participants' self-esteem, improve their relationships, and reduce depression and anxiety. (Cancer Council NSW)*

At the beginning of the financial year, the coffee catch ups and after work drinks had a name change to **Support Groups** to better reflect the core service of the charity.

These regular support groups are facilitated by a support team volunteer for those going through their cancer journey – all in their own time and in a safe and supportive setting. These support groups allow participants to share how they are feeling, ask questions and connect with people who *get it* – who are going through, or have gone through a breast cancer diagnosis. Our support team volunteers now facilitate eight support groups – four held in the ACT in Woden, Pialligo, Nicholls, and Turner and in the New South Wales region in Yass, Braidwood, Goulburn, and Queanbeyan.

### Helping People Get The Support They Need

We help those diagnosed with breast cancer who are unable to afford post-surgery garments due to financial constraints. We are able to do this through the generosity of our supporters such as **The John James Foundation**.

### Advocacy

**It's never too soon or never too late to reduce your risk of breast cancer.**

Bosom Buddies conducts breast awareness and early detection presentations on how to be breast aware to the community. We called for presenters this year and five volunteers completed induction ready to conduct virtual or face-to-face sessions.

A huge thank you to **Hands Across Canberra** and **GIVIT** who donated laptops. This means that each presenter has a dedicated laptop in their kit.



As well as advocating through information sessions, we regularly join our community partner **BreastScreen ACT** at expos, fairs and events to spread the word about the importance of early detection and booking an appointment with BreastScreen.



## Buddy Bags

The Buddy Bag is a key support activity that is associated with our charity. Our buddy bags are full of helpful resources such as items made by our volunteers, information on post-surgery care and the services available in the region. These bags are given to patients' post-surgery in Canberra's public and private hospitals by the breast care nurses. We also provide buddy bags to the *McGrath Breast Care* nurses in Queanbeyan and Goulburn.

This year Bosom Buddies distributed over 800 buddy bags, packed by our volunteers, for breast cancer patients at a total value of \$8,000. It is predicted that the demand for buddy bags will increase in the coming years.

Many items in the buddy bag are created by our volunteers such as the pretty drainage bag that hides the bag of fluids that drain from the wound, a seat belt pillow that cushions the chest and protects the wound whilst driving, and a comforting crescent cushion gifted by our community partner **Zonta**. This year we included a stress ball lemon which includes instructions on how to exercise to strengthen the arm after surgery. We believe that this is a better fit for purpose than using the lemons at presentations as a promotional tool.



## Members : Building a Community

### Regular Support Groups

Bosom Buddies holds regular member support groups that are facilitated by a member of the support team. There's immense value in connecting with others and these events are a great source of support, sharing experiences and networking. These groups are open to everyone and after stopping during the pandemic, it is encouraging to see that member involvement is increasing again.

Some of the groups moved venues during the year, such as the very popular Monday morning Woden group that moved from *The Mawson Club* to support the *Canberra Southern Cross Club* because Bosom Buddies is part of the club's Community Rewards program. Thank you to the coffee shop owners who invited Bosom Buddies to host a support group at their venue.

Gold Creek Café - Nicholls  
Café Injoy - Nicholls  
Canberra Southern Cross Club - Woden  
The Duxton - O'Connor  
The Mawson Club - Mawson  
Rodney's - Pialligo  
The RUC (Rugby Union Club) - Turner

Bean Central - Queanbeyan  
Braidwood Servicemen's Club - Braidwood  
Café Dolcetto - Yass  
Galutzi's - Yass  
Kaffeine - Yass  
Queanbeyan RSL - Queanbeyan  
Queanbeyan Leagues Club - Queanbeyan  
RSL Memorial Bowling Club - Queanbeyan  
The Tattersall - Goulburn  
Thyme - Yass  
Tootsie's - Yass  
Trader & Co. - Yass

## Events

This year has been financially challenging. This has had an impact on member events.

Events that were arranged and promoted to members, such as the visit to Tulip Gardens in Bywong, and the offer of free tickets from the Canberra Symphony Orchestra to attend one of their concerts, garnered little interest from members. This suggested that people were perhaps still reluctant to join larger group activities after the pandemic.

The first member activity of 2022-23 was Sip & Paint. Although it was initially challenging to get members interested in the event, in the end it was a success.



Christmas festivities were held at the Lemongrass restaurant in Woden, ACT. Thirty members, some with their partners, joined us for a Thai buffet to celebrate the festive season.



## Membership Fees

Membership fees contribute to the purchase of the buddy bags that are given post-surgery to breast cancer patients, they contribute to enabling a member of the support team to facilitate the regular support group meetings and also contribute towards member events.

Due to inactivity in the past couple of years, membership has declined and there has also been a marked increase in costs. This has meant that the charity has had to use its small reserves to sustain its core services to support the community and to hold regular support groups for members.

So that we can continue to support the community and organise member events other than the regular support groups; membership fees will be reviewed in the next financial year.

## Volunteers : A Sense of Purpose

### Support Team

Our Support Team is the backbone of our organisation without whom Bosom Buddies would not be able to support the community. People contact the office to request support and may have heard of our services through various avenues such as through a friend, health professional or been recommended by the Breast Care Nurses.

Our trained team provides personalised support in the format that suits the person best; whether that be as a "buddy" through peer support, meeting up for a chat, online, via text, email or a 'phone call. The team also facilitate the support group meetings. They are there to support a breast cancer patient at any point in their journey.

Our support team are not medical professionals or counsellors; they are various ages and are at different stages in their lives; but they have one thing in common – they have lived experience and have walked the same path and are ready to provide guidance and practical assistance.

**Thank you to our support team for their contribution in 2022-2023**



## Lending a Helping Hand

Bosom Buddies is a volunteer-based charity and like many, the challenge this year has been to encourage new, and to welcome back, volunteers to the charity.

During and post-Covid there were few events for volunteers to lend a helping hand - however, our volunteers identified other opportunities and ways to help Bosom Buddies. Drainage bags and seat belt pillows continued to be made because the buddy bag packing continued throughout the year, and other volunteers created beautiful items such as quilts, cushions and beanies in anticipation of future fundraising events.

A monthly Working Bee commenced in October 2022. Volunteers were invited to help with activities such as folding, labelling, and packing items for the buddy bags and oncology packs and for presentations. This has proven to be a very successful activity.



In February Bosom Buddies was the first charity of 2023 to have the opportunity to promote not only the charity but to receive a gold coin donation from the audience at *Music at Midday*. This is a quarterly charity event performed at the **Canberra Theatre** by the *Royal Australian Army Band*.



In March 2023, we were invited to be the charity that assisted at the inaugural **Ramsay Triathlon Pink** at Stromlo, ACT.

Thank you to all our volunteers who rose at dawn to help at this event.

## The Chess Set has found a new home!

A beautiful chess set was created by Marcel Kievit to fundraise for Bosom Buddies. Unfortunately due to the pandemic it has laid dormant in our office at Pearce Community Centre. This year it finally found a new home at **Leo's Place**, one of our community partner's located in Braddon. The chess table sits pride of place and has been very popular with a number of guests.



**Bosom Buddies couldn't do what we do for the community without our volunteers. Thank you for lending a helping hand, it is really appreciated.**

## Grants : Helping People Get The Support They Need

Grants are different to general fundraising in that they are allocated for specific support activities such as post-surgery garments etc. and cannot be used to cover operational costs such as salaries, rent or support group activities.

When a person has been diagnosed with breast cancer and has had surgery, it is imperative that they are provided with post-surgery garments such as mastectomy bras, compression garments and after chemotherapy with head wear such as wigs. There are many who decline to purchase these garments due to financial hardship. The **Bosom Buddies Support Program** was implemented to provide support to breast cancer patients in the community who are financially struggling to purchase garments essential for post-surgery recovery and healing and in turn for their ongoing mental health and wellbeing. The funds were allocated across suppliers in the ACT who have expertise in post-surgery garments and practitioners who specialise in treating lymphoedema which often occurs after breast cancer surgery.

Thanks to the grant from **The John James Foundation**, we have been able to generate Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with organisations, to support those financially struggling.



For community awareness, each person that Bosom Buddies was able to support was given a card such as this. It advised that the financial support had been given by Bosom Buddies due to the generosity of one of our partners or supporters.

This year for greater transparency and accountability more detailed reporting was implemented for both the organisations that were part of this activity and Bosom Buddies. Clearer reporting on activities against the funding allocation identified that to meet demand there was a need for an increase in funding.

In March 2023, for a week Bosom Buddies was top of the chart for the annual *Hands Across Canberra* appeal.

This was thanks to the generosity of **Tour De Cure** who deposited the 2023-2024 grant to support those in the surrounding NSW region diagnosed with breast cancer.



**In FY2022-2023 Bosom Buddies supported 61 patients with 117 items thanks to the support from The John James Foundation grant.**

## Fundraising

The **Real Estate Institute of the ACT (REIACT)** held their Awards for Excellent Gala Dinner on Friday, September 2022 and partnered with Bosom Buddies as one of three charity beneficiaries on the night. Each charity was matched with a relevant painting with the proceeds of each auction going to the nominated charity. The painting that was chosen for Bosom Buddies was of the late and inspirational breast cancer advocate Olivia Newton-John.



Thank you to **Burgess Rawson Real Estate** who won the auction in support of our charity.



October 2022 : for Breast Cancer Awareness month, regional NSW town Gunning held a fundraiser on behalf of our charity. The regional McGrath Breast Care Nurse was the keynote speaker, and it gave our charity the opportunity to promote what we do for the community. A beautiful quilt made by Margaret Jenkinson was auctioned with all proceeds going to our charity.



Monday, 28th November 2022, **Peter Funnell Entertainment** organised a morning Devonshire Tea to promote Breast Cancer Awareness. Jodi Shepherd, a well-known Canberra photographer, owner of **Hot Shots Photography**, and a breast cancer survivor, gave an emotional speech about her journey and as a young woman how important it is to be breast aware.



A big thank you to Lauren Harkness of **The Sanctuary** for donating the venue to enable Jess Abbey of **Leverage Management Solutions** to hold such a great fundraiser for Bosom Buddies in May 2023. As well as an auction and raffle, there were innovative games such as "bra pong" which was great fun!



**We understand that this year has been challenging for everyone and we really appreciate and thank every organisation who generously held a fundraising event for Bosom Buddies or donated to our charity.**

## Community and Corporate Relationships

To maintain our strong relationships, this year we started connecting again with our community partners including:

ACT Branch of Breast Cancer Network  
ACT Branch of National Breast Cancer Foundation  
BreastScreen ACT  
Calvary Health Care  
Cancer Council ACT  
Canteen  
Casting for Recovery  
Colleen's  
Heads Up

Knitted Knockers  
Leo's Place  
Look Good.... Feel Better  
Pink Hope

ACT Health Care Consumers Association  
Australasian College of Road Safety  
Ink Printing Pty Ltd  
Positive Motion  
SHOUT

Thank you to the organisations who donated to help Bosom Buddies support the community:



Ngunnawal



Holy Family Gowrie



Chisholm



And we are grateful to continue our solid relationship with our corporate supporters:



## Organisational Governance

Bosom Buddies is represented at community and consumer committees by our volunteers and Committee members such as the ACT & SE NSW Breast Cancer Treatment Group, BreastScreen ACT Advisory Committee and BreastScreen ACT Consumer Focus Group.

If you would like information on how Not-for-Profit organisations operate, please check out:  
<https://www.acnc.gov.au/for-public/understanding-charities/charity-money-myths-facts-about-operating-not-profit>

The Bosom Buddies Constitution, updated in November 2016, defines our purpose and work to support those diagnosed with breast cancer and their loved ones.

It establishes a Management Committee of four (4) officers – President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer of Bosom Buddies and up to six (6) Ordinary members.

It acknowledges the authority of the Management Committee to create Sub-Committees/Teams within which volunteers implement the policies, objectives and budgets established by the Management Committee.

The Management Committee works closely with and receives regular reports from the Executive Officer on Support Team activities, breast awareness, events, advocacy, fundraising and the general business of the organisation.

## Auditor's Report

### **Bosom Buddies ACT Incorporated (BB)** **Review of the accounts, financial statements and records** **for the year ended 30 June 2023**

#### Background:

Under Section 70A of ACT Associations Incorporation Act 1991, (the ACT Act) the accounts and records requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (Cwth) (ACNC Act) apply in lieu of the ACT Act's accounts and audit provisions. Bosom Buddies ACT Incorporated is a small charity under the ACNC Act.

As such it:

- has an annual revenue of less than \$250 000. (ss205-25(1))
- can choose whether to use cash or accrual accounting. BB reports on a cash basis but maintains accrual accounts
- must submit an Annual Information Statement. This is an online questionnaire completed separately to the financial statements. (s60.5)
- does not need to have their financial statements reviewed or audited for ACNC purposes.

I reviewed financial information, specifically the profit and loss statement and balance sheet, for the 2022/23 financial year held in the Association's Xero accounting system.

#### Review findings:

All matters raised by me have been addressed.

#### Review conclusion:

Pursuant to section 60.50 of the ACNC Act, no matter has come to my attention that causes me to believe that the financial report does not satisfy the requirements of the ACNC Act.

#### Declaration:

In accordance with Section 60.40 of the ACNC Act I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the review.

#### Contact information:

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13 November 2023

