Annual Report 2016 - 2017

To our members and supporters

This report reviews the activities and accomplishments of Bosom Buddies ACT inc during the elected periods of the Management Committee: December 2016 - November 2017.

It covers the financial year 1 July 2016 - 30 June 2017.
Dear members and supporters

Bosom Buddies has just completed twenty-two years of service and support to the Canberra community, and here we are again, ready to continue for another year and venture into new territory.

We really are a local community group, reaching out to Canberrans and people in our region: our members are local; the people we support and make aware of the importance of the early detection of breast cancer are local, and our supporters are local. I am deeply impressed that for year after year a small group of volunteers has reached out to others; some have been committed to Bosom Buddies for more than twenty years, others have joined more recently and brought new energy to Bosom Buddies, but fundamentally what we aim to do hasn’t changed. Bosom Buddies wants to support women, and men, experiencing breast cancer, and make people aware of the importance of the early detection of breast cancer. How we do that does gradually change, and our volunteers have undertaken new ventures this year.

Last year I talked about changes about to occur to SHOUT, the self-help umbrella group from whom we rent space and through whom we employed our Office Manager. It took some time before the impact of those changes became clear. SHOUT has undergone a radical change and has employed a Change Management Agent to oversee its activities. We are now employing our Office Manager directly, but otherwise, in the short-term, very little has changed for us and we believe that we are in a good position to manage whatever further changes may occur next year.

To support and educate people, we have to know our limits. We are not health professionals, but we work closely with ACT Health. We work with the specialist breast care nurses and we work with BreastScreen ACT. We recently launched an updated version of our shower tag and a support pack for oncology patients – we needed professional input for both of these ventures and thank the nurses and others who helped us.

To help others we need the support of the local community, and a wonderful example of that was ‘TNA Turns Pink’ held in June. The Tuggeranong Netball Association have been helping us for some time now, but this year they went all out and managed to excite the interest of a broad range of families, sporting groups and businesses and achieved a fantastic result for us and for Red Nose.

Another way the local community supports us is through the Canberra Southern Cross Club Community Rewards program. Many club members have nominated us as their charity and as a result we have received a generous donation.

We have many individual and business supporters who have made a financial contribution to enable us to stay afloat. We have no government funding and without community support we would not be able to meet our costs.

Shortly we will elect a new management committee that will have a number of tasks ahead. One is to update our Strategic Plan and another is to carry out some of the plans that came out of a fundraising meeting held in the middle of the year. Although we are currently financially stable, we need to increase our annual revenue to cover our costs. We are fortunate to be cushioned by the wise investment of past donations, but this cannot go on indefinitely.

We are grateful that two people who are recent graduates of the Institute of Company Directors course have expressed interest in joining our Committee, but some of the current Committee are stepping down and we are looking for people with energy and enthusiasm to join us.

I want to thank our volunteers who carry out our core business and the members who turned out to help us when needed. I also want to thank all our generous supporters. Staff from the Independent Property Group helped us sell raffle tickets for the canoe at the Convoy for Cancer; members of Women in Racing helped to sell tickets at the Canberra Show. Many members and their friends came along and helped us hand out thousands of shower tags at the Love Your Sister event and allowed us to have a presence at the Mothers Day Classic.

I will stepping down as President this year and I want to thank you for allowing me to hold that position for three years. I especially want to thank our Office Manager, Kareen Tait, who makes things happen efficiently and effectively, and all the volunteers and the people I’ve worked with on the Management Committee over the last three years. I believe that Bosom Buddies can continue to evolve and grow with the support of our community and our wonderful members and volunteers.
Management Committee
December 2016-November 2017
Shelley Atkins - President
Cheryl Tandy - Vice President
Jess Pateman - Treasurer
Stephanie Norris - Secretary
Fundraising Coordinator - Vacant
Theresa Kerby - HVST Liaison

Committee members
Larissa Sinclair - Public Officer

Other key positions:
Kaye Johnston - Coordinator HVST
Marilyn Ward - Calvary Hospital Liaison
Tania Willis - Queanbeyan Hospital Liaison
Theresa Kerby - Coordinator Breast Awareness
Karen Tait - Office Manager

Patron

Our purpose

The mission of Bosom Buddies ACT inc is to provide friendship and support for women experiencing breast cancer and for their families and supporters.

In carrying out our mission, Bosom Buddies ACT inc is seeking to:
- Continue with support based activities:
  - Hospital presence, phone calls, social gatherings, workshops and events.
  - Continue our efforts to raise awareness in our community about breast cancer and how to detect it early.
  - Develop rosters for social activities.
- Expand our volunteer base.
- Expand our support work to be inclusive of younger patients and family members as well as carers.
- Continue to advocate for better services and treatment.
  - Continue communication with medical professionals.
  - Ensure they provide our literature to patients and recommend us.
- Achieve ongoing secure funding (as we don’t receive any funding from national cancer or breast cancer organisations or from any government):
  - Measurably increase community and corporate awareness of our work.
  - Ensure administration support is funded to the level needed to continue all activities.
  - Develop alternative and attractive options for individual donations.
- Raise the Bosom Buddies profile within the community, businesses and media such that:
  - Bosom Buddies ACT inc is acknowledged for the support work it does and attracts community and corporate support.
- Continue active relationships with breast cancer related services and organisations:
  - BreastScreen ACT.
  - ACT branch of BCNA and BCF.
  - Dragons Abreast ACT.
  - HeadsUp.
  - Look Good ... Feel Better.
  - ACT Health Care Consumers Association.
  - Rise Above (formerly Eden Monaro Cancer Support Group).
  - Knitted Knockers.

Bosom Buddies volunteers and committee members are currently on ACT Health committees, including:
- ACT & SE NSW Breast Cancer Treatment Group
- BreastScreen ACT Advisory Committee
- BreastScreen ACT Consumer Focus Group
**Programs**

**Buddy Program** includes our personalised support via phone, at the Calvary Drop-in Clinic or through visits by our accredited support team. It also includes morning teas, after work get-togethers, and social events and informative events for members both during and after treatments. We support women with secondary breast cancer when we can and on request.

**Blue Buddy** is the blue gift bag we provide, into which our support team put handmade drainage bags and under-arm cushions made by women across our region, literature from all the other support groups and services in our region, and medical information from the breast care nurses. The breast care nurses provide these to patients in hospital. In addition to the Blue Buddy, we now provide an Oncology Pack for women who have chemotherapy prior to having surgery. This provides them with useful information and supports available, including the offer of support from Bosom Buddies.

**Spreading the Word** involves Breast Awareness presentations to organisations large and small, as well as the thousands of flyers and shower tags that we fund and that are distributed each year by our volunteers, BreastScreen ACT and the ACT Women’s Health Service.

**Giving Back** is a service through which we donate funds for specific items requested by the hospitals, from medical equipment to artwork, from offering financial assistance for health professionals’ professional development, to finding creative ways to support women in need.

**Community Representation** includes specific advocacy programs, building awareness among our political representatives, and consumer representation on specific ACT Health projects and committees.

**Facebook and Twitter**

We are continuing to use Facebook and Twitter as part of our communication strategy to reach members and supporters who use both as part of their everyday life.

**Written publications**

In 2017 our major project was revising the shower tag. The shower tag was revamped by a graphic designer and the new updated text was approved by BreastScreen ACT.

**Television**

We were given a fantastic opportunity via the Canberra Business Chamber to produce a television advertisement through WIN TV. The advertisement will be aired over a period of three months and has already helped us to reach people that we may not have been able to connect with before.

**Tonic Health - GP brochure boards**

From the 1st April 2017 Bosom Buddies shower tags were present in 65 medical centres waiting rooms across Canberra via the Tonic Health GP boards. This is another way of reaching a new audience about the importance of early detection.
The Support Team

The Hospital Visiting and Support Team has simplified its name to become the Support Team, reflecting changed practice. Whilst we continue to receive a steady stream of requests for one-to-one support from women recently diagnosed or undergoing treatment, and from nurses and other professionals, we rarely visit patients in hospital any more. However, Support Team volunteers have recently commenced attending the Wednesday Breast Care walk-in-clinic located at the Specialist Outpatient Clinic at Calvary Bruce. This Clinic is run by the Breast Care Nurses for patients diagnosed with breast cancer. Patients attend prior to surgery and post-surgery to discuss their concerns they may have. Bosom Buddies Volunteers are available to offer support.

This year we established the need for a dedicated Queanbeyan Hospital Liaison person to work with the McGrath Breast Care Nurse. The McGrath Nurse cares for patients at Goulburn Hospital also. This ensures that all patients who have surgery in Queanbeyan Hospital and Goulburn Hospital receive the offer of Bosom Buddy support and the Blue Buddy bag of goodies.

All patients admitted to hospital for surgery receive a Blue Buddy, a bag of aids and useful information. A new initiative in 2017 was the development of the Oncology Package, practical information from Bosom Buddies prepared for those who have chemotherapy before surgery. This group were missing out on the Bosom Buddies information offering support at the time of treatment. The pack was prepared by two experienced Support Team members, Marilyn Brookes and Theresa Kerby, in consultation with the Oncology Unit at Canberra Hospital and launched at our Spring Fling on Australian Breast Cancer Day on 23rd October.

In March 2017 Bosom Buddies signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with Calvary Health Care which will be reviewed in Feb 2018.

We are exploring a way to help younger women diagnosed with breast cancer as we unfortunately have increasing contact with younger women. We are meeting with a small group to discuss what sort of support would be beneficial to them and see what we could do to help them.

The Support Team has a core of dedicated volunteers but time takes its toll and some members look to cutting back their involvement. At least one new volunteer has joined the team this year, but enquiries from women two years out from their treatment are always welcomed.
During 2017 Bosom Buddies continued to distribute the shower tags at every possible opportunity.

- 2,000 at the Canberra Show
- 5,000 at the Love Your Sister Big Heart Project
- 500 via BreastScreen ACT
- 200 at the Annual Mustang Car show
- 350 distributed outside Canberra - Cootamundra, Young, Tumut, Bowral, Cowra and Cooma
- 200 at Convoy for Cancer
- 2000 in the goodie bags handed out at the Ultimate Women’s Weekend
- 200 via the Sexual Health & Family Planning Clinic
- 50 during October Awareness month via Cuts on Gibraltar, Bungendore
- 300 at the Calvary Hospital Health Expo
- 250 at the Copland College Health Expo
- 400 at TNA Turns Pink
- At every Breast Awareness presentation

In the coming year we hope to find funding to translate the shower tags into other languages and to ensure that the shower tags are appropriate for Indigenous women.
Giving back

Bosom Buddies volunteers and Committee members began to think of different ways to offer support to women experiencing breast cancer.

We are very aware that breast cancer has a big financial impact on many people who have to stop work and who may be facing additional medical and other costs as a result of their cancer. It particularly hits people still in the workforce with rent or mortgage bills and the expenses of children, and women on reduced retirement incomes.

We decided that something we could afford to do was offer support to women who needed to buy headwear or a wig and women who were faced with buying specialist underwear and a prosthesis. We have set in place arrangements with HeadsUp and Colleens to do this.

We do not see this as ‘charity’, but as offering a sisterly, buddy-like helping hand at a difficult time. Colleens and HeadsUp both in turn help us in various ways, including by handing out our information and referring people to us. This support is really a gift from the local community as it is community fundraising and donations that allow us to offer subsidies to women.

Community representation

Many thanks to Bosom Buddies volunteers, Di Summerhayes, Kaye Johnson, Marisa Gerussi and Theresa Kerby who continue to represent us on a number of ACT Health committees: Breast Cancer Treatment Group, BreastScreen ACT Advisory Committee and BreastScreen ACT Consumer Focus Group.

Our lived experience of breast cancer is useful to health professionals, and in turn we learn more about what is happening in the field of breast cancer treatment.
Member events

Social
We continue to meet for Monday morning coffee each month at Deeks in Pearce, with between 10 and 15 women turning up most months. Some people turn up regularly or from time to time, but most months at least one new person turns up.

Women hear about these events from our website or by phoning the office, but often from the information provided in their Blue Buddy.

It’s a chance to get support from someone who’s been there and done that, but it’s also just coffee and chat about life in general – holidays, children, food, politics, movies. All welcome – the more the merrier!

We also continue to turn up at Tilley’s in Lyneham at 5.30 once a month. Fewer people come along, but while we still have a volunteer or two able to go along to welcome people we’ll keep going. Tilley’s reserves a table for us, and women turning up can ask at the counter if they can’t spot us.

We have held a number of other social events during the year. One of our members, Sally Saunders, a volunteer guide at the National Gallery of Australia (NGA), gave us a private tour at the Versailles Exhibition earlier in the year. A large number of people turned up and enjoyed the tour and coffee afterwards. Many thanks to Sally and the NGA.

In Spring we attended a garden talk and morning tea provided by Rodney’s Nursery in Pialligo. This was immensely popular and we thank Rodney’s and hope to be able to do it again in 2018.

Our biggest social event of the year was our Spring Fling to celebrate Australian Breast Cancer Day, held this year in the marquee at the Southern Cross Yacht Club.

We had good attendance, mainly from members, wonderful entertainment from Phil Major and Danzon Dance Group, and generous supporters. We thank the Canberra Southern Cross Club for their ongoing assistance, and this year we had amazing donations of cakes from two generous young women, Sonja and Carissa.

We used the occasion to launch our new shower tags and our new oncology packs and to thank Yvonne Epping, the Director of BreastScreen ACT, and Karen McKinnon, specialist breast care nurse at Calvary Bruce, for their kind words about the work we do.
Informative
During the year we responded to member interest and provided a number of informative sessions.

Nutrition Australia gave a practical demonstration of healthy food for people in treatment and following treatment (for anyone wanting to eat healthily really) and provided recipes and advice.

The Maven Dental Group provided goodies bags and a lot of useful information and answered questions about caring for teeth during and following treatment.

For the second year in a row St John Ambulance presented a short First Aid course. This was very popular and the kind presenter stayed back for a long time answering questions.

Many thanks to all our presenters. We are starting to plan for some interesting sessions for 2018.

Some special people
Life Member

Most years, Bosom Buddies offers Life Membership to an individual who has stood out for Bosom Buddies. This year it was awarded to Theresa Kerby. Kaye Johnson, Coordinator of the Support Team, read the citation which stated, in part,

‘Theresa is involved in every possible aspect of Bosom Buddies – she is a long standing member of our Support Team; she has been active as an Awareness presenter and became its Coordinator in 2015; since the beginning of 2016 Theresa has been on the Management Committee; Theresa represents Bosom Buddies on the BreastScreen ACT Consumer Focus Group; and because she clearly had time on her hands, she has recently taken responsibility for packing our Blue Buddies and our new Oncology packs.’

Theresa is more than generous with her time and our acknowledgement of her work is well-deserved. We thank her, and are delighted that she plans to keep on giving her energy to Bosom Buddies and the local community.

Friends of Bosom Buddies

Bosom Buddies would not exist were it not for the support of many individuals and organisations. We thank our supporters and often issue a Certificate of Appreciation.

However, the Management Committee decided that we needed to take our gratitude a step further. Our Constitution allows for a category of membership called Friend of Bosom Buddies. Friends can be members, but usually or often aren’t. They are people (or businesses or organisations) who have made an outstanding contribution to Bosom Buddies. Their contribution may be one-off or regular; it may be financial or in-kind.

Whatever the contribution, we want to acknowledge their service and our gratitude. Friends are invited to Bosom Buddies events, but they don’t have voting rights unless they happen to be members. Ongoing support to Bosom Buddies is not expected – these people have already done something significant for us. We will acknowledge them on our website, in our Annual Report and display their names in our office.

The Committee will make nominations for the Friends and take their recommendations to the Annual General Meeting for ratification. This way it is clear that being a Friend of Bosom Buddies is recognition from the membership of Bosom Buddies. Offering the acknowledgement won’t necessarily be an annual event, but this year we have decided to go back a few years to catch up recognition the following recipients:

- Capital Edge Community Church
- Gallaghers Wines
- Holy Family Primary School
- Independent Property Group
- Jen Leheny
- Joyce Nordsvan
- Marcel Kievit
- Mustang Owners Club of Australia
- Peter Funnell
- Steve Doszpot
- The Canberra Southern Cross Club
- The Committee of Noir et Blanc
- Tuggeranong Netball Association
- Women in Racing

L to R - Kaye Johnston, Shelley Atkins; Theresa Kerby
Fundraising events

TNA Turns Pink
The Tuggeranong Netball Association (TNA) put in an amazing effort for Bosom Buddies this year.

The Association encouraged all its associated netball clubs to become involved and then reached out to other districts and businesses to form teams to play in a special one day event.

Teams nominated to be Pink for Bosom Buddies or Red for Red Nose and the result was that more than 1,000 players took to the courts, many dressed up, and had a great deal of fun.

Many people played for the first time ever; mums and dads and siblings joined in; politicians played, and the Darters re-formed to play a spectacular match against TNA’s first grade team the TNA Emeralds.

A huge raffle and lots of stalls helped to create a carnival atmosphere. When it grew dark lanterns were lit and launched in memory of loved ones. It was a beautiful and emotional end to a wonderful day. We are grateful to all the supporters, including the Vikings Club, the players and especially to the TNA Turns Pink Committee.
Mothers Day Breakfast at Holy Family School
Holy Family School is family oriented. Each Mothers Day the school hold a family breakfast to celebrate mothers. The atmosphere is wonderful, the food is great and the generosity of spirit really stands out. Bosom Buddies has been invited along for a number of years to sell cards and other merchandise and to be the beneficiaries of the raffle the school organises. Not only does the school raise money for us in this way, but they give us an opportunity to reach a younger group of women with our shower tags.

Noir et Blanc
We were one of a number of charities that benefitted from an elegant fundraising dinner organised by Servcorp and the Doma Group. People attending the dinner responded generously to the magnificent items up for auction, and a stunning sum was raised in one evening. We thank the organisers for their hard work and for including us as one of the charities for the evening, and the individuals and businesses who donated and bid for items on auction. We are fortunate to be part of such a philanthropic community.

Mustang Car Club
The Mustang Car Club chooses a charity to fundraise for each year and we were the chosen charity this year. Two lucky volunteers spent a morning admiring beautifully presented cars. We didn’t have a connection to the club, so we are particularly grateful to the club for thinking of us.

The Canoe Raffle
Marcel Kievit made a kayak for us that we raffled in 2015. In 2017 he made a canoe and donated it to us to raffle – there is just no stopping Marcel.

Whenever the canoe was on public display it was admired and we are pleased that the canoe ended up with someone who really appreciates it.

We are grateful to the many people who helped us sell tickets, including Members, Rise Above (formerly Eden Monaro Cancer Support Group) and staff of Independent Property Group who donated their time.

Marcel and Cheryl @ Canberra Southern Cross Yatch Club, Yarralumla.
Organisational governance

Management
The Constitution, updated in November 2016, defines our purpose and work, establishes a Management Committee of four officers and up to six general members, and acknowledges the authority of the Management Committee to create subcommittees within which volunteers implement the policies, objectives and budgets established by the Management Committee.

The Management Committee oversees a number of permanent and ad hoc committees, including:
1. The Support Team
2. Events
3. The Awareness Team
4. Communications and Advocacy
5. Fundraising

Bosom Buddies is a member of SHOUT (Self Help Organisations United Together), and we maintain our office through SHOUT in the Pearce Community Centre. The office is staffed part-time Monday to Thursday from 9.30am to 2.30pm by an Office Manager.

People interested in Bosom Buddies ACT inc can visit the office, borrow books and publications from our library, and participate in various volunteer activities or can call us on 0406 376 500 or visit our website www.bosombuddies.org.au.

Through SHOUT we have access to a room for committee meetings, member and volunteer events.

Compliance
Bosom Buddies complies with the requirements of the Office of Regulatory Services and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission - ACNC.

Finance
Bosom Buddies ACT inc uses an external bookkeeper, up to June 2017 this was Australian Management Control Pty Ltd. From July 2017 Hudson Gray took over as bookkeeper and supporting advisor to ensure all finances are properly handled.

Bosom Buddies ACT inc was audited for the fiscal year 2016-2017 by Joyce Dickson. Potential sponsors or paid members can request copies of the financial statements.

Auditor’s Report 2016 - 2017
In our opinion:
(a) The financial report of Bosom Buddies ACT Incorporated is in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, including:
   (i) giving a true and fair view of the company’s financial position as at 30 June 2017 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
   (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards and the Corporations Regulations 2001; and
(b) The financial report also complies with International Financial Reporting Standards as disclosed in Note 1.

Name of Firm: JOYCE|DICKSON Chartered Accountants
Name of Partner: Chris Fusca