Annual Report 2017 - 2018

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 2017 - November 2018.

It covers the financial year 1 July 2017 - 30 June 2018.
Dear members and supporters

I am pleased to provide my first report as President of Bosom Buddies in a year that has seen growth in the organisation in terms of our membership, funding sources and range of activities to promote what we do and help those affected by a diagnosis of breast cancer. 2017/18 was very busy - we provided our standard excellent services and assistance that have come to be relied upon by the community, and we have also taken opportunities to expand our offerings into emerging areas of need.

Our new members seem to have come from a mix of initiatives. We established a third regular monthly meeting group in Queanbeyan that has been well attended. There has also been a resurgence in our Northside Tilley’s group and our Southside coffee club numbers have remained high despite a change in venue to Little Garran Cafe. It was lovely to see so many new faces at our members Christmas morning tea.

Bosom Buddies also put together an extensive program of monthly information sessions for members for the first time. Based on member input, expert guest speakers were invited to speak on a range of topics from wills and end of life planning to sexuality and exercise. A number of social events were also held, including a private tour of the much acclaimed Cartier exhibition thanks to the generosity of the National Gallery of Australia.

The organisation has taken advantage of opportunities to advertise the work of Bosom Buddies, partnering with other breast cancer organisations to attend community events and forums and ensure that we remain fully informed of current developments. Our presence at the Calvary drop-in clinic is highly valued across the health profession as we continuously look for ways to increase the practical support we provide to patients and their families.

The past year has also seen some change in the Management Committee. Shelley Atkins stepped aside as President having fulfilled the maximum number of years possible in the role but stayed on the Committee where she offers her invaluable insight. Stephanie Norris and I commenced 2018 as Co-Presidents but unfortunately Stephanie could not continue in that role owing to other commitments. She assumed the role of Vice President and continues working particularly with the Canberra Business Chamber to investigate corporate partnership opportunities for Bosom Buddies. Briana Lee has replaced Jess Pateman as Treasurer, following Jess’s move overseas. I thank Shelley, Stephanie, Briana, Jess and all the Committee members for their support over the past year.

The office has tried a new approach to keeping our members and supporters informed of our activities and successes. Bosom Buddies Bits is a quarterly snapshot of the financial and in kind assistance that we provide across the community, and is compiled by our Executive Officer, Kareen Tait with advice from our volunteers.

Kareen has also had much success applying for grants from various organisations in the last 12 months to support a range of new initiatives to be launched by Bosom Buddies in the next reporting period. We received funding from the John James Foundation to subsidise lymphoedema sleeves for those in need, we were one of 8 charities supported by the Mid-Winter Ball, and we have been chosen as local law firm Meyer Vandenberg’s charity of choice for 2018/2019.

I thank Kareen for her efforts on the reports, her persistence through the grant application process, and also for the many hours she has spent with me as I took up the President’s role.

While the organisation enjoyed many successes in 2017/18, there remain a number of challenges that we are preparing to tackle in the year ahead. We would like to identify a stable and recurring funding source for our ‘business as usual’ activities, particularly in light of reduced funding from our major sponsor, the Canberra Southern Cross Club. We tried to hold a major fundraising event but decided not to proceed as it was too great a financial risk. Bosom Buddies is fortunate to have enough reserves to cover operating costs for the next 3+ years but we will be investigating other options to better secure our funding into the medium and long term.

Another major focus will be to expand our membership in the younger demographic. We have received feedback that Bosom Buddies is perceived as an organisation that supports older women yet we have the information and resources that can benefit people of any age that receive a breast cancer diagnosis. We will be examining how we market our services and what type of activities we offer to hopefully enhance our attractiveness to this sector.

I look forward to working with our members, volunteers, supporters and the Committee in the next year to meet those challenges and continue our good work.

Liesl Centenera
President 2018
Our Purpose

The mission of Bosom Buddies ACT inc is to provide friendship and support for men and 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.
  - 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:
  - 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 Support Team. It also includes morning teas, after work get-togethers, and social events and information events for members both during and after treatments. We support men and women with secondary breast cancer when we can and on request.

**Blue Buddy** is the blue information bag we provide to the breast care nurses who distribute them to patients in hospital. Our support team put handmade drainage bags, under-arm cushions and seat-belt 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. In addition to the Blue Buddy, we now provide an Oncology Pack for patients 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, shower tags and “lemons” 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** continues to be one part of our communication strategy to reach members and supporters who use it as part of their everyday life. In 2019 we would like to add Bosom Buddies as a presence on Instagram.

**Written publications** saw big improvements in 2017-2018, the revamped shower tag continued to be very popular. There was a significant increase in take up from the GP Tonic Health Boards. The new design is much brighter and has greater universal appeal.

In 2018 we were able to complete a total rewrite of our membership brochure. The new design helps to bring consistency to our written publications.

**Tonic Health - GP brochure boards** contract was renewed for 2018/2019. The boards provide another way of reaching a new audience about the importance of early detection. The Bosom Buddies shower tags are present in 65 medical centres waiting rooms across Canberra.
The Support Team

The Support Team continues 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 due to the reduced time spent in hospitals after surgery.

In 2017 the Support Team commenced attending the Wednesday Breast Care drop-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. Two Bosom Buddies Volunteers are available to offer support every fortnight.

In March 2018 the partnership between Bosom Buddies and Calvary Health Care was reviewed and a new Memorandum of Understanding was signed, this will be reviewed annually.

Following on from our successful partnership with the Queanbeyan/Goulburn McGrath Nurse in 2017, providing Blue Buddy bags to patients in the surrounding regions, it was decided that more support from Bosom Buddies was needed. In 2018 we started the Bosom Buddies Queanbeyan coffee catch up. On the last Tuesday of every month you can find the group at the Country Heir Cafe, Queanbeyan.

We are exploring a way to help younger women diagnosed with breast cancer as we unfortunately have increasing contact with women aged 35 and under. 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. Watch this space!

The Support Team has a core of dedicated volunteers but time takes its toll and some members are looking to cut back their involvement. This year we have been lucky enough to have six new volunteers join the team, but enquiries from women two years out from their treatment are always welcomed.

Are you undergoing treatment, or have you had breast cancer? 2019
Come along for tea, coffee or a drink and friendship. No need to book, just turn up.

Monday morning
Little Garran Cafe
2/29 Garran Place, Garran
9.30am - 11am

14th January
11th February
12th March
8th April
15th May
11th June
8th July
12th August
9th September
14th October
11th November
9th December
* Held on Tuesday due to public holiday

Tuesday morning
Country Heir Cafe
54 Monaco Street, Queanbeyan
9.30am - 11am

29th January
26th February
26th March
30th April
28th May
25th June
30th July
27th August
24th September
29th October
26th November

Please Note:
These are social gatherings, not formal support. If you would like support please contact the Bosom Buddies office to arrange for a member of the Support Team to make contact.

Office Details:
0406 376 500 or 02 6290 1994
Monday - Thursday 9.30am - 2.30pm
admin@bosombuddies.org.au
bosombuddiesact@gmail.com
ABN 59 262 617 782

Bosom Buddies offers support to those who have Breast Cancer

Would you like to speak with a Bosom Buddies volunteer?

Call Bosom Buddies on 0406 376 500
bosombuddies@shout.org.au
(Mon - Thurs 9.30am - 2.30pm)

Visit our website for further details www.bosombuddies.com.au

Bosom Buddies volunteers have all experienced breast cancer and are trained to support you.

A volunteer can speak to you on the phone or meet you before or after surgery and treatment.
The Awareness Team

The Awareness Team had a very busy time “spreading the word” during Breast Cancer Awareness month (October) this year. The Canberra Times would quite often place a “filler” advertisement about the Breast Awareness presentations in the weekend paper, this meant a whole new audience were made aware of the free presentations.

Thanks to a donation from Norma Bradley, one of our original members, we were able to purchase a set of educational prostheses to use as a teaching aid at our Breast Awareness presentations (pictured below).

The team also had a presence handing out information and answering questions at health expos and public events. Since 2015 we have handed out nearly 30,000 shower tags that show women and men how to check their breasts to detect differences. Bosom Buddies provides shower tags to BreastScreen ACT and ACT Health centres, and sends them to nurses and Health Centres in the local region.

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 and men.
Giving back

We are very aware that breast cancer has a big financial impact on many people especially those 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 paying rent or mortgages with child expenses and women on reduced retirement incomes.

In 2018 we continued our MOU’s with HeadsUp and Colleens, to offer support to women who needed to buy headwear or a wig and for those women who were faced with buying specialist underwear and a prosthesis.

In 2018 we created a new MOU with Liz Chalton at Positive Motion Physiotherapy to help breast cancer patients who require lymphoedema garments but are unable to afford the cost.

Thank you to a grant from the John James Foundation in 2019 we will be able to increase the number of breast cancer patients we can assist with lymphoedema garments, MOUs will be created between Bosom Buddies and the Physiotherapy department at Canberra Hospital, Capital Chemist Charnwood and again with Positive Motion Physiotherapy.

We do not see this as ‘charity’, but as offering a sisterly, buddy-like helping hand at a difficult time. Colleen’s, HeadsUp and Positive Motion Physiotherapy 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

We continue to meet for Monday morning coffee each month however this year we changed venues to the Little Garran Cafe at the Garran Shops. Thank you to the wonderful support received from owner Brett Davis and his staff. The group has grown with between 14 and 18 women turning up most months. Some people attend regularly or from time to time, but most months at least one new person turns up.

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

Our new Queanbeyan group started in 2018 after discussions with Sue Perryman, McGrath Nurse that a support group for patients in the area would be of huge benefit. And Sue wasn’t wrong - we have had at least 10 women and men to every catch up this year. The group meets on the last Tuesday of every month at the Country Heir Cafe, Queanbeyan.

It’s a chance to get support from someone who’s been there and done that and also just to have 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 have been coming along however 2018 has been much more successful than previous years. 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. Our most popular event is always a tour of the National Gallery of Australia (NGA). The Gallery provided us with complimentary tickets to the incredibly popular Cartier Exhibition. We split into three groups for our private tours. Many thanks to our tour guides and the NGA.

In Spring we always attend the garden talks and morning teas provided by Rodney’s Nursery in Pialligo. They are immensely popular and we thank Rodney’s and hope to be able to do it again in 2019.

Information Sessions

Our Information sessions in 2017 were very popular so we attempted a much bigger calendar in 2018. Some topics were very well attended. The calendar of sessions was advertised to outside organisations and members of the community.

Still Feminine covered topics like lingerie and clothing, headware and scarves, skin care and hair care during and after treatment. Thank you to our presenters, HeadsUp, Intimo, Colleen’s and Rodan & Fields.

Sexuality & Relationships a fantastic session and our guest speaker Andreea Ardeleanu was very well received. The session covered a very broad range of subjects, definitely one to do again.

Financial only a couple of members attended this session, however it gave them the opportunity to speak one on one with the very supportive staff from Beyond Bank and it helped these particular members get through a very difficult time.

Wills & End of Life Care Plans over 20 people attended this session. Our guest speakers Glenda Stevens, CEO of Palliative Care ACT and Alex Tandy (Family Law expert) were full of knowledge and information about Wills, Power of Attorneys and Health Direction documents. It is a difficult subject for a lot of people however our speakers were able to put everyone at ease and help make a plan for the future.

Exercise; During and after treatment our last session for the year was attended by 18 members. We had three guest speakers - Kellie from UC Canberra, Pam from Vital Yoga, Elly and Kat from Dragon’s Abreast. Lisa from Colleen’s brought along some examples of suitable exercise garments and some lovely new swimwear lines. We ended the session with a lovely relaxation technique that is so easy you can do it in your chair.

Many thanks to all our presenters who volunteered their time. We look forward to some new topics for 2019.
A new initiative this year was our Bosom Buddies Bits. It’s important to us that our supporters know what we are doing and how we are providing support in the community.

Bosom Buddies Bits is a one page snapshot, a quick overview of our impact and providing examples of how we are fulfilling our mission.

One of our long term volunteers is sadly stepping down this year from Bosom Buddies, Kaye Johnston has decided its time to retire and move interstate.

Kaye was awarded Lifetime membership of Bosom Buddies in 2011 for her past participation on the Management Committee, her fundraising work and most importantly her creation of and ongoing work in organising and coordinating the Support Team. Kaye organised a group of women who worked well together to become the successful team of volunteers we know today.

Through Kaye’s efforts, we have had continued MOU’s with Calvary Hospital Bruce for the Support Team. Additionally her focus on strengthening our advocacy efforts helped Bosom Buddies meet with local and regional political representatives to make them aware of patients’ needs and our community work.

A few quotes from a couple of Kaye’s colleagues:

“Kaye is a quiet achiever – everything runs smoothly because of her tireless work behind the scenes.”

“She is a wonderful networker – has set up relationships with hospitals, breast care nurses and other community groups to extend the awareness of breast cancer and the support available. Wonderful communication in all aspects both within BB and outside.”

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Bosom Buddies ACT inc

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Fundraising

Meyer Vandenberg
Meyer Vandenberg (MV) Lawyers announced their new charity partner for 2018-2019: Bosom Buddies!

MV Lawyers chooses a charity partner each year based on a company-wide vote. The charity with the highest number of votes wins support for the entire year, with all fundraising activities culminating in a cheque presented in July at the annual Charity Night. Staff who have done the most pro bono work and community work during the year are also recognised with an award.

Bosom Buddies Theatre Show
Todd McKenney and Nancye Hayes were the stars of a theatre production held at the Canberra Theatre in May. We were very fortunate to be invited to the media launch of Bosom Buddies and to receive a generous donation from the promoters. Todd and Nancye entertained us and shared stories of their thirty year friendship.

Music at Midday
Bosom Buddies were the chosen charity for Music at Midday on 24th April 2018. The Royal Military College Band put on two amazing shows. Thank you to the Canberra Theatre Centre and the Canberra Labor Club for their continued support.

These types of events are always a great way for us to get out into the community and talk to people about the work we do and how we can support them or someone they know.

Blue Illusion
Every year Erika at Blue Illusion Manuka welcomes Bosom Buddies members and friends into their shop for a lovely fashion evening.

We are treated to glasses of bubbles, lovely finger food and a preview of the latest fashions to arrive instore. Always a lovely relaxed evening, a big thank you to Erika and her team of volunteers for making us feel so welcome.

Grill’d
A different fundraiser for us this year was the Local Matters program at Grill’d Belconnen. We were the crowd favourite filling the container six times. Grill’d also allowed us to place shower tags at the restaurant, another opportunity to share the breast awareness message.

Clothes Swap
On a cold Sunday morning in the middle of Winter, Funkshinal Fitness in Belconnen held a clothes swap to raise money for Bosom Buddies. It was a lovely morning meeting members of the gym, promoting breast awareness and a chance to clean out our wardrobes along the way.

Gift Wrapping
A last minute invitation to wrap Christmas presents was received from the Old Bus Depot markets held in Kingston. We attended the markets over three weekends in December, wrapping some very unusually shaped gifts. Every stall holder at the markets received shower tags and they in turn would send their customers our way for gift wrapping.
Mid-Winter Ball
Our application to the Mid-Winter Ball this year was successful. We were very lucky to be selected among seven other very worthy charities.

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.

We were also invited to attend the Mothers Day morning at Sts Peter and Paul Primary School this year, with the school raising money for Bosom Buddies.

Bonython Primary School
We received a phone call this year from four year 4 students from Bonython Primary School who wanted to raise money for Bosom Buddies in honour of one of their Grandmothers who had experienced breast cancer. The school held a mufti day and the colour pink was a popular choice by the students to wear. Bosom Buddies then attended a morning assembly to accept their very generous donation and let the students know a little bit about the work we do.

Mini TNA Turns Pink Day
This year the Tuggeranong Netball Association (TNA) Committee said to us “we will just do a Mini day this year”. Well nothing TNA put their mind to is Mini! Once again the club received fantastic support from its associated netball clubs, players, parents, families and friends and put in an another amazing effort for Bosom Buddies.

Teams nominated to be Pink for Bosom Buddies or Red for the Mini Day Sponsors, many dressed up, and had a great deal of fun.

A huge raffle and lots of stalls helped to create a carnival atmosphere. We are grateful to all the supporters, including Icon Water, Telstra, Fernwood, the Vikings Club, the players and especially to the TNA Turns Pink Committee.
Out and About

Bosom Buddies seemed to be everywhere this year Cancer Council Trivia Night Pink Stumps Multi Cultural Festival Volunteering Expo Mental Health & Well Being Expo Canberra Southern Cross Club Community Rewards evening TNA Presentation Night Beyond Bank Community Rewards evening Relay for Life Hands Across Canberra Lunch BCNA Station of the Nation Launch BCNA Forum to name just a few.

2018 Supporters - Thank you to all the individuals, businesses and organisations who have made donations of money, goods, services and time, fundraised, supported and promoted Bosom Buddies in various ways over the last year. Without you Bosom Buddies could not support women experiencing breast cancer and spread the word about the importance of early detection.

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 Executive Officer.

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, Hudson Gray and supporting advisor to ensure all finances are properly handled.

Bosom Buddies ACT inc was audited for the fiscal year 2017-2018 by Joyce Dickson. Potential sponsors or paid members can request copies of the financial statements.

Auditors' Independence Declaration under Section 307C of the Corporations ACT 2001 to the Director of Bosom Buddies ACT Incorporated
We declare that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2018 there have been:
(i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Corporations Act 2001 in relation to the audit; and
(ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Dated this day of 18 October 2018

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