

# Breast Cancer Dragon Boat Paddling

## How it Began

In the fall of 1995, a research project was being conducted by Dr. Don McKenzie, a sports medicine physician and an exercise physiologist at the Allan McGavin Sports Medicine Centre at the University of British Columbia.

Dr. McKenzie wanted to test the popular belief that strenuous upper-body exercise in women treated for breast cancer would encourage lymphedema.

Lymphedema is a permanent, irreversible swelling of the arm and chest area that can develop any time after lymph node surgery and radiation treatment.

In February 1996, in Vancouver, B.C., the first team was formed, calling themselves "*Abreast in A Boat*".

Starting as a medical study involving one crew of 25 women, Breast Cancer Survivor Dragon Boat racing has grown into a sport involving more than 80 teams from coast to coast and all around the world.



## Who We Are

The WonderBroads of Windsor and Essex County formed in the early spring of 2003.


The original goal was to support and participate in the first International Dragon Boats for the Cure, sponsored by French Dressing and held in Windsor in July 2003.


As with the first team in Vancouver, we soon discovered that not only were we becoming physically fit but that we were having fun and developing new friendships in the process! The more we paddled, the stronger we became both as individuals and as a team!


The WonderBroads range in age from 30 to 75 years. Although we are a unique group of women with varying interests and skills, we all firmly believe that it is important to raise public awareness about the quality of life after treatment for breast cancer.


Competing in dragon boat racing allows us to become a message of hope to people living with this disease and to those who support them.


## Did You Know?


 Breast Cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in women.


 One in nine Canadian women will develop breast cancer in her lifetime.

 In Essex County, ten to twelve women are diagnosed with breast cancer every week.

 Breast Cancer is the leading cause of death for women between the ages of 35 and 55.

 More than 90% of women who develop breast cancer have no family history of the disease.

 Early detection saves lives! Death rates from breast cancer are falling because of earlier and improved treatments.

 About 1% of all breast cancer is diagnosed in men.

