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Chair's Annual Report

31 July, 2009

Introduction

It is with great pleasure that I write this, the second annual report for Aoraki Dragon Boat Association (ADBA). I am writing this report at the end of this our second full season as the Chair's report to be presented at our second AGM on the 13th August 2009.

ADBA was formed on the 16th of August 2007. The association was formed as a not for profit organisation registered under the Incorporated Societies Act 1908 on the 19th of October 2007, and registered with charitable status through the IRD in early December 2007 to comply with the regulations of the Charities Act 2005.

The Association developed a Constitution as attached and is governed by a board of Management.

The 2008-09 board members are as follows:

Chair: Meri Gibson
Secretary: Noel Anderton
Treasurer: Janice Melville
Boats/Equipment Director: Rick Smith
Events Director: Peter Mitchell
Junior Development Director: Scott Johnson
Special Interests Groups Director: ... Lorraine Flintoft
Development/Promotions Director: .. Julian Yee
Communications Director..... Rebecca Polachek

Meri Gibson as Chair is predominant in the role of PR/Communications. Secretary, Noel Anderton maintains the website and manages the newsgroups of ADBA.

The initial board on inception of ADBA continued in their roles until August 2008. At the inaugural ADBA AGM held on the 9-September-08, two of the initial board members stepped down – they were the inaugural treasurer Terry Coyle and Board member Vai Papali'i. At that AGM two new board members were elected – Janice Melville to the role of treasurer and Rebecca Polachek as a board director.

ADBA felt it was critical to retain all or most of the initial board in their roles so as to continue forward with the institutional knowledge they had gained and to not commence the rolling termination clause until the 2009 AGM. Therefore at the 2009 AGM the following members are up for retirement:

- Noel Anderton
- Rick Smith
- Scott Johnson
- Peter Mitchell.

Under clause 22.3 (d) all are eligible for and are seeking re-election to the board at the 2009 AGM.

Operations and Events

ADBA, as it did in its first season, was able to retain the interest of all of the member teams. ADBA has again run a successful season whilst offering the member teams a hugely discounted membership fee (\$3150 compared with \$6250 in the past). ADBA has endeavoured to offer exceptional service and value for money to its member teams and has this season added another regatta to the mix at a small cost of only \$100 to teams, whilst still maintaining a viable organisation and ensuring there were enough funds to grow the asset base.



ADBA has enjoyed strong financial success and through the thorough and fiscally responsible approach of the board and its inaugural treasurer Terry Coyle, were able to start the 2008-2009 season with a \$16,500 surplus of funds in the bank. Added to this surplus was the generous sponsorship of Community Trust and Southern Trust, which enabled ADBA to order four new Champion dragon boats from China. Undoubtedly the highlight of the 2008-09 season was the arrival of the six new boats. Four of the boats were for ADBA, whilst two for our private member teams (Abreast of Life and Tu Meke Dragons) who had purchased the additional two boats. It has to be acknowledged that the vagaries of the US dollar exchange rate certainly went against us.

We were very excited when it finally came to unloading the container of boats in mid-November 2008 at the Toll warehouse yards. A vote of thanks to Mike Louch (ex ABOL) and an AG certified inspector for all his help on the storage, clearance and unloading of the container. Also huge thanks to all the willing hands that helped us out with the unloading. The boats with their dragonheads, tails and drums are quite magnificent both on and off the water.

We were successful with several more funding rounds from Community Trust and also Southern Trust and with the addition of 2008-09 surplus funds we have therefore been able to order a further three ADBA boats. CPC Canterbury Dragons also purchased a private boat in that shipment.

Aoraki also gained funding from Mainland Foundation in the previous financial year which allowed us to have a custom designed trailer built, thanks to our equipment and boats director Rick Smith for his management of this project. It is quite a stunning sight to see the trailer loaded up with its six new boats travelling down the highway.

Safe, secure storage of the boats was critical and in this endeavour we found ourselves at our new home at the Owles Terrace compound. ADBA secured the large implement bay for the under-cover storage of its boats and Director Rick Smith is in the process of negotiating a joint lease for the site with the Christchurch City Council. Our co lessees are the various waka teams represented by Otautahi Waka Hoe Association.



ADBA had enough surplus funds after paying for all its assets at the end of the season to attend a recent plant auction and was successful in purchasing an IRB, which will be well utilized as a safety boat during training sessions.

All the training and housing of all boats and equipment now takes place from Owles Terrace.

We on the board of ADBA are all incredibly proud of what we have been able to achieve in such a short space of time. In less than two years we have \$125,000 of fully paid up assets and now have a very strong asset base from which to grow the sport in the South Island.

Race Regatta – Ice Breaker and Early Bird

ADBA has run three very successful regattas for its member teams this season. The first an inaugural Icebreaker, the idea of Noel Anderton saw a huge turnout at Kerr's Reach in early Dec '08. The best part of the day seemed to be the "2k races" with a turn at the 1,000 m mark. Many teams were uncertain about the 2 km race, but all agreed it was a great deal of fun.

ADBA was contacted by the Otago Museum and they asked us to run a special regatta for them on the Saturday 7th February of Waitangi weekend to celebrate their new exhibition called "The Emperor's Dragons - Precious Collections from the Shanghai Museum", a fabulous exhibition of very special dragon themed pieces from China, it covered many centuries of dragon lore. ADBA towed four boats to Dunedin and the board (who included members from ABOL, Tu Meke, Airways, Sampan and Evacut) and some further members from ABOL and Sampan, plus Dale Hewinson made up an Aoraki team. Otago Museum had reignited several local teams and we had a fantastic day of

racing watched by over 1000 spectators. Whilst the sun shone, the tide brought a huge swell and after several boats sunk ADBA made the call to call off racing for safety reasons. A great day was had by all with Dunedin City Council the overall grand champion. It can only be said that it was a fantastic weekend and we would thoroughly recommend other teams to attend should this event be staged again.

Our Early Bird Regatta was held on the 21st February for the adult and school teams. The day began amidst rain for Abreast of Life who was commencing their ten-year celebrations with the launch and blessing of their new boat by the Bishop of Canterbury, Victoria Matthews, herself a breast cancer survivor. The ladies took three boats out for a very emotional flower ceremony to honour their fellow team members who had passed away over the last ten years. The ladies then had a morning tea before the start of the official celebrations for the blessing of all of the new dragon boats.

The day for the other paddlers began with a huge flurry of activity as the many colourful tents were erected on the banks of the Avon at Kerr's Reach, Avonside Drive. The regatta attracted 25 adult and school teams of up to 30 per team = 750 approx paddlers, coaches and sweeps.

The festivities got under way with the loud bang of drums as the Lion Dance Troupe took to the tarmac. The paddlers were all very excited by this stage and the very beautiful and moving blessing of the boats then followed.

ADBA had invited the Abbess from the South Island International Buddhist Association to undertake this blessing. Several members of the association accompanied the Abbess who wore quite magnificently embroidered traditional robes; the hauntingly beautiful sound of the chanting by the Buddhist group stunned all into silence as they watched enthralled at this marvellous sense of occasion. The Abbess then moved to the river's edge and dotted the eyes of each of the six dragons in turn, to bring them to life and to encourage good racing. This blessing evoked a great deal of emotion at the culmination of a huge amount of hard work to finally see our beautiful new boats ready for the challenge on the water.

The day was incredibly successful with many paddlers saying it was one of the best regattas they had attended in a long time. This was a colourful, energetic start to the competitive season and the official launch of our new boats.



South Island champs

ADBA ran its third regatta, the South Island Championships on the weekend of the 13th and 14th March. Day one was for the adults and day two for the schools team. What a fantastic venue we had for our racing at Lake Hood, just out of Ashburton. Over the whole weekend we had attendance from all crews plus Simply the Breast from Blenheim so approx 800 odd paddlers, coaches and managers over the two day events. The event was also well attended with local spectators – we counted up to 200 cars at various stages over the weekend, so allowing 2pax per vehicle, then there were possibly somewhere in the vicinity of 400 spectators.

The Saturday was a little overcast at times but this was no deterrent to teams. The prize giving was held within an hour of the completion of the day with the presentation of the fiercely competed for cups and medals. An After Party was held at the rowing club with quite a few teams staying on to party in style as for some it marked the end of their competitive season.



Sunday 14th saw a repeat for the schools with racing held in brilliant sunshine, with the banks of the lake lined bumper to bumper with spectators. Another very successful day was held with some fierce competition on the water and a wonderful haka performed by the Shirley Boys in honour of all the girls' teams who had competed. Supporters crowded around at the end of the day for the presentation of the schools cups and medals.

The plaudits from all the competing teams were all loud and long for a very successful season, it all ended far too soon.

Trustees/Directors

There have been two changes to the ADBA directors since its incorporation in October 2007 – that is the retirement of Terry Coyle and Vai Papali'i, and the voting on to the board of Janice Melville and Rebecca Polachek. The rotational retirement plan comes into effect at the 2009 AGM with all retiring directors eligible and willing to stand for re-election. All other directors are expected to stay in their positions until the next AGM 2010.

Staff/Volunteers

There have been no staff in ADBA since its incorporation in October 2007. The organisation has been run completely on a voluntary basis for the first two seasons with the board meeting once a month in the off-season and more regularly in the season.

ADBA contracted the services of Sheila Paisey to be the Event Manager on the race days held at Kerrs Reach and Lake Hood. Sheila's input was incredible and having Sheila on board for those days allowed the ADBA board to actively participate in competition and it relieved a great deal of the burden of overseeing the day for the board. We will certainly repeat this contract in the next season.

ADBA undertook a strategic planning day on 6th April 2009, and developed a 5 year plan from the outcomes of this day. ADBA have identified the need for a Development Officer to grow the sport in the South Island and will pursue this role further in the coming financial year. ADBA has sufficient funds from its 2008-2009 season to commence a person in this role and will apply for further funding to ensure the future viability of this role and the growth of the sport.

I would like to particularly give a massive vote of thanks to Dale (Scruff) Hewinson, whose dedication to dragon boating is legendary; he gives up every spare moment of his time to ensure teams get off to training on time, that the boats are all in good condition, and steps in as a substitute sweep and coach whenever he is asked. ADBA acknowledges the huge input from its many volunteers over the last year and agrees that without the dedication and support of those many volunteers the organisation would not exist today.



Fundraising



ADBA has endeavoured to acquire services either at no cost or very competitive rates and has budgeted to meet its obligations for the season from entry fees and therefore to eliminate the need to fundraise per se.



ADBA has moved various motions throughout the year to apply to the many and varied charitable trust for funding. ADBA has had very good success in its applications and in this financial year received:

- \$4,000 from **Mainland Foundation** (25-Sept-08) for a six-berth trailer
- \$15,000 from **Southern Trust** (8-Oct-08) toward Champion Dragon Boats
- \$11,000 from **Canterbury Community Trust** (24-March-09) toward Champion Dragon Boats,
- \$2,500 from **Ashburton District Tourism** for the purchase of "Aoraki" display flags



ADBA wishes to acknowledge the support from each and every one of these organisations and we are extremely grateful for the ongoing support as we are well aware that without this support we would not find ourselves in the very strong financial position we have attained.

Publicity

ADBA has had a fantastic response to its profile in the media. Several media releases were sent out and the uptake has again been excellent. Dragon boating tends to draw very good response from the media. We have featured in newspaper and television articles and will continue to promote the sport via media releases.

Sponsors/Partners

ADBA has chosen not to be affiliated with any particular sponsor or partner this season as the objective has been to manage and run the season as cost effectively as possible and to determine from there whether we chose to offer sponsorship or naming rights to another party. ADBA is however very grateful for the support of the numerous grants from Community Trust, Southern Trust, Mainland Foundation, Ashburton Tourism etc and will certainly continue to display the appropriate banners and marketing material at any further events to acknowledge these tremendously generous grants.

Financial/Budget

ADBA has continued to keep its fees at the same low level as the previous season while offering excellent service to its member teams. Careful fiscal management has enabled us to end the season with a surplus of approx \$8,500. This figure is after all assets have been fully paid for and there are no outstanding accounts. The asset base now totals \$125,000.

I am very pleased to report that we have more than achieved our financial objectives with not only having the very best season in a long time but also returning a profit. The accounts for the end of the financial year based on the actual figures is attached and will be commented further by our treasurer.

Conclusion

I am thrilled to have been involved with ADBA since its inauguration and to follow that up with another very successful season has been personally incredibly satisfying. ADBA has achieved all the goals it set for itself, it has placed dragon boating in Christchurch on a very firm footing and looks forward to expanding this success into the Nelson/Marlborough, Dunedin, Ashburton and Kaiapoi regions.

The highlight of the 2009-2010 season will be the establishment of the Director of Development role and to see the sport grow even stronger throughout the South Island.

I would like to sincerely thank each and every one of my fellow board members for their commitment and dedication, as without them none of this would have been possible.

Meri Gibson
Chair