



Conference Report

BCSC goes Dutch for Europa Donna

A 14-STRONG DELEGATION from BCSC travelled to the Netherlands last autumn when it was the turn of Amsterdam to host the 8th annual conference of Europa Donna, the coalition of European groups which campaigns for the provision of improved breast cancer treatment and care services.

This year focusing on the theme of working together to implement the highest standards of breast cancer screening and diagnosis, the three-day event was addressed by a wide range of expert speakers who updated delegates on the latest developments in their fields. These included advances in breast cancer surgery, current treatments, results of clinical trials, case studies, the needs of different age groups affected by breast cancer and lifestyle factors that impact on breast cancer.

Delegates also had the opportunity to exchange ideas and information at workshops, while a variety of social gatherings were a welcome opportunity to meet old friends, make new ones and network with breast cancer advocates and care professionals from across Europe. BCSC representative Maeve Rogers, reported key points from a number of conference speakers as follows:

- Increased education and awareness is resulting in more people having an early diagnosis leading to earlier, successful treatment.

- Mammography has improved as a result of better, more accurate machinery.

- Better and more effective drugs are now being used in chemotherapy.

- Widespread Image-guided Breast Surgery is reducing unnecessary surgery.

- A new state-of-the-art treatment known as Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT) can be used to sculpt the edges of a tumour, so sparing adjacent healthy tissue, ensuring fewer side effects and resulting more successful surgery.

- Key challenges facing the medical profession are to identify the type of therapy that best suits individual patients and to develop drugs that target specific tumour cells.



Out and About

Awareness Lunch

As part of National Breast Cancer Awareness month last October, BCSC hosted a very successful lunch at Bray's Esplanade Hotel attended by 56 people. Organised by Friends UpFront, BCSC's dedicated group for women who have or have had breast cancer, this was an informal event attended by breast cancer volunteers who offered advice on all aspects of breast cancer treatment and care. ♥

Flower Craft

Over 35 clients had the chance to create their own festive flower arrangements at a very successful Christmas Flower Craft Workshop at Villa Pacis. ♥



Candlelight Service

Over 350 people attended the annual Christmas Candlelight service and party, which provided clients and friends of BCSC an opportunity to celebrate the festive season and reflect on the year gone by. The ecumenical service in Bray's Holy Redeemer Church on Friday December 7th last, featured tenor Ross Scanlon and music by the Holy Redeemer Folk Group and was followed by a party in the Little Flower Hall with music by Ray Cranley. The large attendance included representatives of Bray's main parishes and churches, as well as the Irish Cancer Society, the HSE, and clients from Dublin, Arklow, Wicklow, Dun Laoghaire, Shankill, Kilmacanogue, Enniskerry, Roundwood and Kilcoole. ♥

Looking Good!

The latest in the series of Look Good and Feel Good workshops organised by BCSC at the Villa Pacis Queen of Peace Parish Centre once again proved to be a very popular event, with 22 clients and six volunteer staff attending. BCSC would like to thank Barbara Donnelly for presenting the workshop. Villa Pacis was also the venue for a very popular hand massage session attended by 28 clients and four volunteer staff, who also heard a talk on home security by a representative of Bray Gardaí. ♥



Diary

Lymphoedema DVD

Lymphoedema Awareness: Reducing your Risk is a new, patient-focused DVD designed help people to understand their risk of developing breast cancer-related lymphoedema. It includes advice about looking after the arm and skin, healthy living and some simple upper body exercises to help minimise the risk of developing lymphoedema. Based on a two-hour lymphoedema awareness class she developed for Breast Cancer Haven in the UK, the DVD is available (recommended donation €5) from: www.breastcancerhaven.org.uk. ♥

National Conferences

The Irish Cancer Society hosts the National Conference of Cancer Support Groups in Dublin Castle on Friday 29th February and Saturday 1st March 2008. BCSC has an information table and is organising transport for the event. The National Conference for Younger Women with Breast Cancer takes place on 16th February 2008 in the Croke Park Conference Centre. For more information contact Action Breast Cancer (Tel: 01 - 231 0582) ♥

- For more information or to book any activities at BCSC, ring 01 - 286 6966 or email bcsc@iol.ie



A Feast of Sports

A large group of clients from BCSC had the chance to take part in some sporting activity when they travelled to UCD for the Sportsfest event. ♥

Evening Outings

A large group of clients and friends from BCSC travelled to the Gaiety Theatre for a production *Beauty and the Beast*. Equally memorable was an autumn trip to the National Concert Hall, where 32 clients enjoyed a production of *The Magic of Vienna*. ♥

Trip to Knock

Seventeen clients of BCSC took part in a very enjoyable day trip to Knock on Sunday August 26th last, organised in association with the Order of Malta. ♥