

MEDIA RELEASE - PADDLE4PINK

On Saturday 5 April, Luke O’Garey will paddle 100kms from Bridport to Devonport (or the other way around depending on the weather) to raise much needed funds for Tasmanian breast cancer research.

The **PADDLE4PINK** event hopes to raise \$7K for research to support Tasmanian women with breast cancer and to improve treatment options available for all breast cancer patients in the future.

With the idea for this fundraiser coming from Luke himself, this adventurous kayaker is supported by friend and breast cancer survivor Julie Sladden, the pair having mutual interest in paddling and a desire to help others.

Julie Sladden, a breast cancer survivor, doctor and occasional paddler met Luke in 2013 when she started looking for a new kayak after surgery for breast cancer in 2013. Finding her kayak too heavy to lift following surgery, Luke assisted in getting a lighter, custom-designed number in from Canada, in pink of course!

“During my diagnosis and treatment, I was unable to raise my arms or lift anything heavy as I recovered from surgery. I found this very difficult, as being out on the water was one of the places where I was able to forget about breast cancer and all the treatments I was having. My paddling buddies were amazing though. One of them put me in a double kayak and just got me out there – even though I couldn’t really paddle.

“As I got stronger and was able to paddle my own boat, they helped with lifting my boat and keeping me company on the water – in case I fell in! Just being out on the water worked wonders in my rehabilitation and over time I was able to build up my strength. With my new boat I am now able to get out on the water whenever I like, and continue to get stronger every day. The paddling especially helps keep things moving in my right arm which is prone to lymphoedema, a side effect from the surgery.

“Luke’s assistance in getting me back on the water in my new boat helped in so many ways. Now that he’s had this idea to paddle from Bridport to Devonport, it’s just amazing that he can contribute further and raise funds for better treatments and recovery programs for others diagnosed with breast cancer.

“I urge everyone to help us raise these vital funds for local Tasmanian Breast Cancer Research – it means so much to know that other patients would have access to better treatment and recovery programs,” Julie said.

How funds will be used

With a project under development for funding through the RHH Research Foundation, vital equipment is needed to help support and extend this research. Breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in Tasmanian women – with many patients experiencing upper limb pain, fatigue, lymphoedema, weakness, restricted range of motion, joint arthralgia, neuropathy and even osteoporosis. Investigations will enable the development of medical management plans for people just like Julie, along with individualised exercise plans and rehabilitation for those Tasmanian women diagnosed with breast cancer.

Donations to **Paddle4Pink** can be made via: www.rhhresearchfoundation.org

Media event

Contact: Julie Sladden 0427 637 081

Media interview and photo opportunity with Julie Sladden and Luke O’Garey

Friday 21 March - 11am at Trevallyn Lake (parking at bottom car park near grassy area of aquatic point)