

# Rising to the challenge of breast cancer

Susie Alexander shares her breast cancer story...

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## Walking with strength and purpose



Susie Alexander, second from right, with the women she planned to walk with in Melbourne before relocating the walk to Warrnambool: Alison Ridley (left), Lisa Petherick and Pip Norton.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A5CECD;"] I  
[/dropcap]n October, we [brought you the story](#) of **Susie Alexander**, from Warrnambool, who we nominated as one of our

first quiet heroes for her inspirational approach to her fight against breast cancer.

At that time, Susie hoped she would be well enough after her series of often debilitating treatments to participate in the annual **Sussan Women's Fun Run** held in Melbourne on December 8 to raise funds for the [Breast Cancer Network Australia](#).

Unfortunately Susie couldn't make it to Melbourne, because the health of her mother, who is also battling cancer, is deteriorating\*. But she was determined to still do the 5km walk to fulfil the promise that she made to herself and to her dozens of supporters who had donated funds to the cause.



Friends for life: Susie (centre) with Warrnambool High school friends Susan Bruce, Heather Dickie, Caroline Parker, Karen Svensen and Jane Parker. (They have married names now, but they didn't back then!)

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A5CECD;"] S  
[/dropcap]o Susie held her own version of the Sussan Women's Fun Run down at the Warrnambool waterfront and invited her friends, family and supporters to join her. They came on foot

and on bicycles, with children, and with dogs and, by 9am, about 100 people were ready to walk for Susie, for her Mum and for everyone else who is facing the challenge of cancer.

It was one of those uplifting moments when people gather for a common cause and, in this case, to celebrate all that makes life so precious.

Thankyou, Susie, for reminding us of how even taking a simple walk by the sea is such a gift.

*\* (Susie's mother, Jan, passed away peacefully on Dec 18, 2013).*



Ready to stride out: Susie Alexander with her sister, Lynne Wormald.

[box] As of this weekend, Susie had raised \$3500 toward the [Breast Cancer Network Australia](#) and donations were still coming in. She had set herself a target of \$1000. [/box]



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## Our quiet hero: Susie Alexander



[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] T  
[/dropcap]HIS week's quiet hero is somebody rarely caught without a smile on her lovely face, even when life throws the greatest challenges her way.

**Susie Alexander** and I (Carol) went to school together at East Warrnambool Primary and later, Warrnambool High School, and because she was an Alexander and I was an Altmann, we tended to be in the same alphabetical order line-ups for the selection of the fun stuff (sports teams) and the not so fun stuff (innoculations).

I would joke that I was glad Susie had to go first, then I would know if it was going to hurt or not.

Susie was always much braver than me.

When I met Susie again for the first time in a long time, she told me her mother was very ill with cancer and that she was making the most of the time they still had together. We were suddenly at that age, it seemed, when our parents became vulnerable and fragile.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] E  
[ /dropcap]arlier this year, I saw Susie again and she told me that she had been diagnosed with breast cancer. It is the sort of news that shrinks the world down to the small stuff, the important stuff and reminds us that, no matter how old we are, we – as humans – are all vulnerable and fragile.

Despite her diagnosis, Susie has not retreated. She is facing her illness head on and undergoing a series of treatments (including what she calls her 'cocktail days') that she hopes will see her well enough to join the **Sussan Women's Fun Run** on December 8 in Melbourne to raise money for the **Breast Cancer Network Australia**.

Yes, you read that right: *fun run*.

Susie always was so much braver than me. I know that to be truer now, than ever.

We normally donate a coffee and cake voucher to our quiet hero, but this time we have made a donation toward Susie's run

on December 8.

We hope you might do the same by clicking on this link:  
[Susie's run.](#)

Good luck Susie.



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