

The race to cure cancer.

More than 2,000 women took part in Sunday's Race for Life. Rosie Allsopp spoke to some of those involved and found out why it was so important to them to take part in the annual event

PROVING that life can go on after cancer, the Pink Ladies were a strong presence at this year's Race for Life.

Fifteen women, some survivors of the disease, took part together with their families and friends.



Pretty in...

The Pink ladies were keen to take part (0203833)

'Some are running, some are walking at a very leisurely pace like me,' said their captain Sheila Leach. 'Some have been doing proper training but I have been doing the walk to Lan des du Marche to get into training.' Mrs Leach said that all the Pink Ladies felt the Race for Life, which raises money for cancer research, was something they had to do.

'We all enjoy the camaraderie of it as well. Not everyone who is running is a member of the Pink Ladies. They are supporting us.'

They even had a mascot in the shape of Baker, the dog, owned by Lisa Marquis, which was resplendent in a pink lead and rosette.

Heather Phillips, 41, was running with the Pink Ladies. She was diagnosed at Christmas with breast cancer and under went a total mastectomy on 13 January, She has two children, Alexandra, 11, and Christopher, nine. This is an emotional day. It's my first race and it's got special meaning for me Without the support of the Pink Ladies, I don't know how I would have managed, she said.

'I've worked in Guernsey for 17 years as a midwife and I've had wonderful support from all my colleagues, I went back to work a few weeks ago. Thinking of all Of them has given me the energy to go back.

'I'd like to thank them, the Pink Ladies and thank my family and

friends.' Mrs. Phillips had extra special thanks for her friend obstetrician Heather Reed.

'She has been an absolute angel,' she said.

Mrs Phillips said that until she was diagnosed with breast cancer, she had not given much thought to the disease.

I would encourage women to be breast aware and I've got a lot of praise for the breast cancer unit here and all the staff there.

Pam Brown is a new Pink Ladies member. She was diagnosed with breast cancer 13 years ago.

I'm clear now but I wanted to support them. I felt I wanted to give something back,' she said.

'I'm one of the fortunate ones. I had radiotherapy in Southampton. My mother had it as well which is another reason for doing the race.'

Sally Rowe, another patient, was diagnosed in June.

'I was 50 in May and had screening so that's how I found out,' she said.

'The service here is brilliant, it's absolutely fantastic. From being told I had cancer, I was in hospital in six days.'

Dozens of women formed teams to take part in the Race for Life. One of the largest was the 130 strong team from HSBC, captained by Sue Duport. "We won the cup last year with 69 and I said that if we got to a hundred this year, I would do it, so I'm doing it. HSBC nationally matches pound for pound all the money raised. Last year we raised just under £4,000 and we are hoping to get £10,000 this year.'

She said it was important to support the race because everyone knows someone affected by cancer.

Her daughter, Katie Wallen, agreed.

'It is such a good cause. I'm running in memory of my two grans, Barbara and Pat, who both had cancer.

'Seeing all the names it makes me want to cry at how many people it has touched.'

Artemis Trust gathered a team of 25 women to take part.

'It's wonderful to raise money and it's a good day out,' said Artemis director Maeve Guilbert.

'We have a laugh, we've got some very fit girls and those like me who will do a leisurely stroll. Team captain Carol Tapp said there were plenty of volunteers eager to be in the company's team.

'I started off by saying I was doing it. This is the fourth year I have done it because my husband died of cancer and my mum is a survivor. She had breast cancer 32 years ago.

'We hope to raise more than we did last year, which was £3,000.'

Members of the Le Huray family ran in memory of Michael Le Huray who died of cancer in June.

His daughters, Brenda Le Huray, Kim Ceillam and Anji Page, daughter-in-law Soozy Le Huray, granddaughters Linaka King, Steffi Ceillam and Taome Le Huary and niece Lyn Duport all took part. They were supported by Michael's widow, Flo, son Michael junior and grandson, three-year-old Tyler.

They wore specially printed T-shirts bearing his picture and the message "running in memory of our dad Michael Le Huray, 28/7/42 – 1/6/04, who went to sleep too young and too early".

(Reproduced courtesy Guernsey Press and Star)

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