

They're the Calendar Girls of Guernsey - but there's no nudity in the Pink Ladies' 2006 fundraiser. Instead these models all have one thing in common: they've suffered breast cancer. Zoe Ash found out more.

REMEMBER, happiness doesn't depend upon Who you are or what you have; it depends solely upon what you think,' reads the quote under a photograph of Sarah Minty. In it, it's obvious that she can barely contain herself with excitement.

Sarah is sitting in a bright red sports car. A car that had, only hours before, been commandeered from a man outside a hotel. Sarah is one of the breast cancer sufferers featured in a fundraising calendar launched by the Pink Ladies support group. It was the idea of clinical nurse specialist for the Breast Screening Unit Karen Leach, who's been involved with Pink Ladies since its foundation in 2001 and came hard on the heels of the WI version featuring nude members of a



JUNE: Sally Wood riding her horse along Vazon beach at Sunset

Yorkshire group - though there were never plans to go quite as far as that. Once seeds had been sown, Karen wouldn't let go. She kept dropping it into conversation until she roped in her friend, Steve Richards.

New Zealander Steve, 50, has worked as a commercial photographer for 24 years, including a stint on National Geographic magazine, but it was through personal

connections with the Breast Screening Unit that he found himself donating his time, talent and enthusiasm to the calendar. He met the group in February and discovered that it wasn't difficult to get the calendar girls involved: in fact, they volunteered. A list of models was drawn up and thought given to locations and groupings. Some had ideas as to how they'd like to appear, while others wanted to be photographed with certain people but were unsure of the location. Pink Ladies founder Jo Alien was photographed with her dog and former badminton champion Sally Wood was keen to ride her horse on Vazon beach. Midwife Heather Phillips chose to be pictured at work and Jane Tee with net son out on the open seas, while Linda Falla was photographed with her

daughters on the beach. Nancy Gollard, Heather West and Esme Bishop were keen to be pictured together and the time coincided with the Seafood Festival in St Peter Port, so they headed down there. Their photograph, like all the



MAIN MAN: New Zealander Steve Richards, who has worked for National Geographic, took the photographs (0263351)

others, has a very relaxed feel, and that has a lot to do with the style of Steve's photography. 'You have to be confident with people, to keep them relaxed. I don't have to focus on the technicalities any more,' he explained. It was the same with the group for February: Vicky McRitchie, Dianne Scantlebury, Izzy Duckworth and Linda Falla. 'They started strolling across the clifftops and giggling, and then they went right to the edge,' said Steve. Just as in many of the shots, what had actually been planned often veered down another path when shooting started. Annie Woodington, an all-year-round swimmer, is pictured in the familiarity of the Bathing Pools, where what started out as an action shot ended up quite differently. In the final picture she's depicted in a more relaxed

The Pink Ladies was set up in February 2001 by five local women who were undergoing treatment for breast cancer. Numbers have since grown to 90 women, many of whom meet regularly and offer support and friendship. Any breast cancer patient at any age and at any stage of treatment is encouraged to contact them. They also offer a confidential helpline. Contact them on: www.pinkladies.org.gg
email: pinkladies@cwgsy.net
Helpline: 07781415131
Contact and information line: 01481 242840

own pasta so I showed them how to do it - and they ended up making me dinner,' said Steve. 'Everything just came together and the women were fantastic,' said Karen. 'I'm so proud of them. It shows that these are women living their lives.' Along with the photographs there are also a few words on each page: a thought for each month, "They came from a small book of quotes from

for a hair-raising jetski trip. 'These ladies hadn't even been on a jetski before and one of them fell in,' said Steve. But he added that they laughed all the way through. They wanted to show people that you can get through a diagnosis and live a full and active life afterwards,' explained Karen. And that, of course, is exactly what the calendar

pose at the poolside.

For December, Sally Rowe and Chris Bisson are pictured wreaking havoc in a kitchen,

'We were going to use a commercial one but ended up using mine, I make my

our friend Lisa Marquis,' explained Pink Ladies chairman Gillian Tidd. Lisa, who has since died, is featured with her dog, Baker, in May at the annual fund-raiser, Race for Life. Others chose more daring locations. Tomina Hobbs and Anne McMillan opted

is all about.

The Pink Ladles Calendar costs £5 and is available from all Checkers and Checkers Xpress stores. Co-op stores, Aladdin's Cave and Tozer's on the Bridge, plus smaller outlets throughout the island.

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