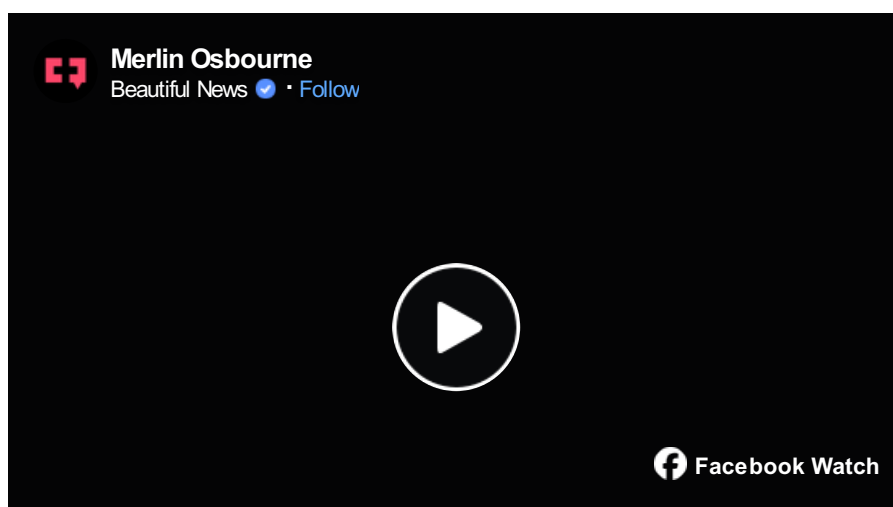


#BeautifulNews: The dragon boaters uniting against breast cancer

A squad of 20 women move with speed across the water. With individual paddles, they propel the narrow canoe forward. Merlin Osborne leads the dragon boating team, displaying power and precision. She is strong. She is fast. She is a cancer survivor. Dressed in shocking pink, Osborne and the team have all been affected in some way or another by breast cancer. "We're all in the same boat and we're fighting together," she says.

In 2007, Osborne found a lump in her underarm. Despite her family's history with cancer, she waited more than a month to get it checked. When her fears were confirmed, Osborne spent four days in her room trying to figure out what to do. "The first thought that I had in mind was death," she says. Then, Osborne realised that she was more than the diagnosis. "I decided cancer wasn't going to define who I am," she says.



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