

Central Australia Chapter



Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

PROSTATE SUPPORTER

Newsletter of the Prostate Cancer Support Groups of South Australia and Northern Territory

www.prostate.org.au

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New ventures magnify the awareness of PCFA work

Newsletters can also be read online at www.pcagsa.org.au/pages/supporter.html

SPRING was a winning season for prostate cancer support, with a broad range of fundraising and awareness activities in South Australia that have reached far beyond the traditional prostate cancer barbecuing activities.

The Barrel Series Wine Auction takes place during Coonawarra's Cabernet Celebration weekend each October, and PCFA was the proud beneficiary of charitable proceeds from this auction for the second consecutive year. For more details, read the Limestone Coast support group report on Page 8 of this newsletter.

In the north of the State, another unique fundraiser was launched – The Champagne Steam and Saddle Ride, a 10-day horse riding trek undertaken by 30 riders through the lower Flinders Ranges.

Horses and riders were all decked out in blue and created quite a sight as they ambled through the spectacular countryside.

One of the special features of this ride was the loading of horses onto the Pichi Richi heritage steam train – which was then “held up” and robbed (all for PCFA fundraising) by masked bandits!

In something uniquely South Australian, local confectioner Robern Menz has joined with Channel 9 and radio station Triple M to raise money by selling FruChocs, the iconic and much loved fruit-filled chocolate ball, in PCFA blue packaging.

FruChocs are usually packed in a distinctive burnt orange package, but the special Prostate Cancer blue package carries a message encouraging men to have their prostate checked. This initiative was supported by more than one



A South Australian icon gets a makeover with FruChocs adapting a Prostate Blue bag covering.

month of free airtime on Channel 9 and Triple M for advertisements to explain FruChocs' blue packaging and prostate cancer message, featuring celebrities from the stations.

This amounts to more than \$100,000 in airtime devoted to promoting the prostate cancer awareness message –

not to mention the heightened profile for the cause by the appearance of blue packages.

Shoppers will find these special blue packages in the confectionary departments of Coles, Woolworths, Foodlands and IGA supermarkets, local cinema candy bars, petrol stations and local shops.

• CONTRIBUTIONS from all Support Group members to the monthly Prostate Supporter newsletters are most welcome; please email items and images to Karyn Foster: karynfoster@adam.com.au

Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia freecall hotline is 1800 22 00 99 or visit the website www.prostate.org.au

City of Onkaparinga Prostate Cancer Support Group

Addressing the cancer query of what is best to do next?

An informative locally-produced DVD presents a great amount of cancer information from a fresh perspective, as Onkaparinga support group chairman John Shields reports.

FOR the October meeting of the City of Onkaparinga support group, the assembled members watched the DVD, *Cancer: What Now?* This DVD is the result of a collaboration between popular television newsreader Graeme Goodings (who has visited and given presentations for our support group) and Cancer Council SA. It contains information and experiences from health professionals and survivors to assist people in making informed choices about their cancer experience. There are 10 chapters to the DVD, each of which can be selected and viewed individually.

Some dot points from this very informative DVD are:

- When you are first told that you have cancer, you may feel helpless and very alone. Being told that you have cancer is a life-changing event but is really just the start of the journey. After the initial shock, there are things that you can do and things that you must do.
- Your doctor will give you information that you need to know about treatment options, surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy, however the final decision about what course of action to take is up to you.

- Regarding treatment, a lot of people see surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy as separate choices, however all three may be needed to successfully treat some cancers.

- Some people think of cancer as one word, but it is a whole range of different illnesses and people's reactions to each of them are varied. They may experience shock, sadness, disbelief, frustration, anger, worry, and anxiety.

- They may also have some positive thoughts and relief, because they knew that something was not quite right and now they know the reason why. Hearing the stories of other sufferers is also very helpful.

- The role of exercise has been known for a long time to help prevent cancer. Studies of people who have cancer show that exercise makes a difference to their lives and general health.

- Who can help me? The Cancer Council provides support, advocacy and advice on practical issues such as prevention, education and information. When told they have cancer, some people feel guilty and ask themselves, what have I done? It is the role of the counsellor to dispel myths and help the person

decipher some of the medical jargon.

- The good news is that as every year goes by, cancer is more treatable and more curable.

- At the end of treatment, what now? What will I do with my life? People around you will be celebrating because the treatment has finished and they think that everything will be back to the way it was, but that will not happen. Because of the huge experience you have had, there is going to be a new you, and a new life to appreciate.

Cancer: What Now? is well worth viewing. The purchase price for a copy from Graeme Goodings is \$29.95, with proceeds of sales going to Cancer Council SA. A copy of this DVD is now stored in our support group library. All of the information featured in this story is also explained in more detail at the website www.cancerwhatnow.com.au and DVD purchase details are also featured on the website.

LOCALISED PACKS

CARRIG Chemist at Colonnades is ordering the Localised Prostate Cancer Pack for men who have only just been diagnosed. Carrig Chemist is located downstairs near the escalators and opposite the newsagent.

COMING EVENT

FEBRUARY MEETING:

The City of Onkaparinga Prostate Cancer Support Group will hold its first meeting for 2012 at 6.30pm on Wednesday, February 1 in the boardroom at Noarlunga Community Hospital, Alexander Kelly Drive, Noarlunga.

• For more information about meetings and coming events, visit the City of Onkaparinga Support Group's website at www.pcs.org

• Special thanks go to our support group's generous sponsors: **Southern Primary Health Morphett Vale, Port Noarlunga-Christies Beach RSL Sub Branch, Cartridges Now Christies Beach, The Original Open Market and The City of Onkaparinga Council.**

BARBECUE SUCCESS

THE Noarlunga area's Commonwealth Bank branch has staged a very popular and successful barbecue to raise \$1500 for PCFA. Many thanks to CBA staff who did all the hard work.

McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group

Unlocking the story behind neuroskeletal realignment

A different type of physical therapy was explained and demonstrated to curious group members, as McLaren Districts support group president Bryan Hearn reports.

A FULL HOUSE of nearly 20 McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group members enthusiastically greeted the October meeting's guest speaker Colin Swanton, a Neuroskeletal Realignment therapist. Colin is familiar as a local Probus club and bowling club member, although his treatment process is unknown by most of our group members.

Colin explained that many years ago, while employed as a bus driver, he was involved in a vehicle accident that gave him sideways whiplash, for which he needed to consult a number of specialists.

Colin was told he needed an operation and only had a 40 per cent chance of walking again – but, unhappy with this prognosis, he searched for alternative treatments.

His investigations led him to the Neuroskeletal Realignment therapy that he now practices. It is based on very light pressure, almost just a touch, being applied to preceptors at many and various locations around the body.

This contact sends a message to the brain, signaling that something is not right at that location. The brain reacts by returning a message to the site, instructing it to repair the damage or misalignment.



This generates some heat, which is felt by the patient and the practitioner. As a result of this, Colin can only treat six patients in a row before needing to take a reasonable break, as it is quite draining for him.

Colin undertook four years of hands-on study to learn this therapy, followed by another year of specialist training before starting his own practice.

During his presentation, Colin applied his treatment to a volunteer group member, who was having some hip problems. The treatment continued for about 30 minutes as he talked to members.

Following the treatment, the group member reported feeling much better in the

hip, although a little giddy and with a tingling feeling in his head. His only instruction from Colin was to ensure that he took a 10-minute hot shower before going to bed that night, to greatly reduce any residual discomfort the next day.

During the presentation, many questions were asked of Colin and his procedures – especially about a frozen shoulder. This ailment happens due to a buildup of uric acid under the shoulder blade that freezes the joint, making it almost impossible to lift the arm or shoulder to any great height.

Colin's treatment for this problem consists touch therapy to flush out this uric acid into the body's normal waste disposal system. It's then most important to drink

at least two litres of water afterwards, to fully flush the acid out of the system.

Support group members were most impressed with Colin's presentation and our group volunteer was also besieged by members wanting to know how he felt both during the treatment and afterwards.

• **PCFA recognises that many prostate cancer patients and carers explore the use of complimentary therapies as part of their treatment and find them to be beneficial.**

Support groups are a safe environment to learn about options and alternatives. However, PCFA does not endorse any specific non-conventional practices or the underlying science.

COMING EVENT

THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 24

- The McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group will next meet for the final time in 2011 on **Thursday November 27**. The meeting will be at 7pm in the administration building at the rear of the McLaren Vale & Districts War Memorial Hospital, Aldersey St, McLaren Vale.

Prostate Cancer Action Group

Show-and-tell proves to be a winning regional formula

Visiting regional shows with information stalls is a tactic that is drawing considerable attention to prostate cancer, as David Merry from the Action Group reports.

THE Prostate Cancer Action Group's succession of information stands presented at South Australian regional shows has been a very successful way of broadcasting the prostate cancer awareness message. This was continued when David Merry and Graham Hinze (a member of the Limestone Coast Prostate Cancer Support Group) manned an information stand at the Bordertown Spring Festival in October.

While the show faced inclement weather and was not as well attended as organisers may have hoped, interest at the stall was still very high – and it was even featured in a report published by the Border Chronicle newspaper.



David Merry and Graham Hinze pictured at the information stall during the Bordertown Spring Show.

The most recent Action Group activity was to attend the Man Alive festival on the Semaphore foreshore on Sunday November 6. For several years, this event has provided an excellent opportunity to speak with men of all ages, encouraging

awareness of the need for regular health checks. The Action Group had six members and some wives participating at the information booth.

We are also pleased to report that the Adelaide Male Voice Choir fundraising concert

held on October 9 was greatly enjoyed, although unfortunately it did not achieve the numbers we were hoping for. There was significant competition from AFL Grand Final Day and other issues, although a donation of \$530 was still made by the choir to PCFA.

The final meeting of the Action Group for 2011 will be held at 5.30pm on Tuesday November 8 in the first floor meeting room at the Cancer Council SA building, 202 Greenhill Rd Eastwood. Entry is via the rear stairway.

• **For more information, visit the Action Group's dedicated website, with detailed archives containing newsletters, at <http://www.pcgsa.org.au>**

Prostate Cancer History a poem by Darrell Mulberry, based on his true story.

It was April '99, feeling quite benign, I gave a sample of my blood to my GP
He sent it all away for technical assay and later this is what he said to me
You've got a bit of arthritis and your blood pressure's not as right as it ought to be
And your diabetes count could soon be the fount of many years to come of misery
But the words that I have next, and the feature of my text
Is the most serious message I have yet to say
Is that PSA account could easily amount to a sorely valid reason for dismay!!!
So I took his words to heart and undertook to start a course of Radio Therapy
Thanks to that intervention I heartily dare to mention
That's the reason I am here Alive today.

• On Tuesday January 20, 2009, Darrell (pictured right) was discharged after 10 years of checking his progress after radiotherapy treatment for prostate cancer.



Prostate Cancer Support and Awareness: ADELAIDE GROUP

Digesting the media view of prostate developments

Using a support group meeting to have a close examination of recent media reports helped everyone obtain a clearer understanding, as Ian Fisk reports.

WHILE the Adelaide support group did not have a speaker for its October meeting, it did conduct a very interesting general discussion and showed and listened to some recent interesting media stories concerning prostate cancer.

Unfortunately, there were not a lot of members present; perhaps this was due to the fact that no-one had yet been sent their Prostate Supporter newsletter before the meeting!

The media stories that we examined during the meeting included the ABC Health Report of October 17 on PSA test benefits. A recent long-term trial (conducted over 14 years) showed that there was 44 per cent reduction in mortality for men tested. To see the full transcript or listen to the audio file of this story, visit the ABC website.

A second story told of a new form of "thin seed" brachytherapy treatment, but explained the details of brachytherapy rather than details of the thin seed development.

Other sources on the Internet have reported this story, saying that "The use of thinner 125I seeds in 20G needles for prostate brachytherapy had comparable urinary retention rates and improved post-PB dosimetry when compared to standard 125I seeds in 18G needles. Patients treated with the thinner 125I seeds in

20G needles had less severe post-PB perineal pain and bruising." This came from a 2009 report by Jason Wong, John E. Sylvester, Peter D. Grimm, et al, sourced from the Prostate Cancer Treatment Center website.

The group viewed an SBS program about prostate cancer awareness barbecues conducted during September. Those speaking included PCFA CEO Dr Anthony Lowe, David Gregory (PCFA National Support & Advocacy Chairman) and Dame Edna Everage, who served as an

ambassador for the campaign.

We also viewed a local Channel 7 todaytonight report on prostate cancer, featuring Dr Peter Sutherland.

As has been the tradition at our group meetings, several amusing stories were also related. If you think this is a good idea, there are many sources of jokes, such as the Prostate Pointers HAH (a humour list for the online prostate cancer community). I subscribe to this list and its SeedPods list. There are many other USToo lists to join, including for the

newly diagnosed and radical prostatectomy.

In other matters, Jeff Roberts reported on the recent fundraising concert held on October 9, and provided details on the upcoming Central Australia Chapter conference in Adelaide.

Thanks to the efforts of a number of our support group members, more than \$800 dollars was raised at the Bunnings Mile End barbecue held on September 2. In addition, we also collected an extra \$42.70 in the donation tin!

COMING EVENTS NOVEMBER 21 MEETING:

The Adelaide Prostate Cancer Support Group meets on the third Monday of each month in the Park View Room of the Fullarton Park Centre, 411 Fullarton Rd, Fullarton, starting at 7pm. The November 21 meeting will feature a presentation by Dr Bruce Wauchope of Bedford Medical Centre (Molechecks Australia). The topic will be "Digital Skin Examination – much better than DRE". Check out their website at <http://www.molechecks.com.au> for more information. Ian Fisk reports that he has been going to this clinic for a number of years and believes it offers the best way of detecting skin cancers.

- **Don't forget: If you wish to join the Mitcham Support Group in a social dinner gathering on November 24 at Racquets Bistro, St Marys, please notify Terry Harbour on 8271 0513. See the October Prostate Supporter Page 10 for more details.**

- **The Adelaide support group's first meeting for 2012 will be our Annual General Meeting on February 20. We extend to everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.**

- *For more information about coming events and a detailed archive of support group activities, visit the Adelaide Support Group's dedicated website at www.psaadelaide.org or contact organiser Ian Fisk by phoning 8296 3350, or send email to info@psaadelaide.org*

Murray Bridge Prostate Cancer Support Group

Local projects form the basis of meeting discussion

Even when guest speakers failed them, the Murray Bridge support group found plenty to talk about, as Max Klenke reports.

THE October meeting of the Murray Bridge Prostate Cancer Support Group was opened by chairman Trevor Muirhead, who welcomed 16 members to the gathering.

This attendance was especially heartening as before the meeting three speakers that had been engaged were all unable to attend the meeting – the last one, having become ill on the afternoon of our meeting.

Ron Lehmann spoke briefly to the group about a new Men's Shed project taking shape in the district, which will offer a lot of assistance and be of great interest to elderly retired men – and will

also make provision to cater for women, too. A 24m x 12m shed is proposed and it hoped to be operating next year.

The remainder of the meeting was a general discussion involving most members present and was a very interesting exchange of prostate cancer and health issues.

As a special treat, the Murray Bridge support group's next meeting at Our Wellbeing Place on November 16 will begin with a catered meal at 7pm to celebrate end of year.

This celebration will be followed by a talk from Wendy Hall about dementia affecting the elderly.

- The Port Pirie Prostate Cancer Support Group conducts its monthly meetings (from February to November) at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday of the month at the BHAS Bowling Club, Halley St, Port Pirie. For further details, phone support group coordinator Allan Manfield on 08 8632 1324.

COMING EVENT

- The Murray Bridge support group conducts its monthly meetings at 7.30pm on the third Wednesday of each month, at Our Wellbeing Place, 108 Swanport Rd, Murray Bridge. The next meeting is on **WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 16**, and will feature a talk by guest speaker Wendy Hall about dementia affecting the elderly.



Qantas spreads a blue prostate cancer message around Australia

Qantas' new deluxe Boeing 737/800 – complete with its striking blue PCFA logo emblazoned on the side – flew to Alice Springs on October 27. Pictured above are the crew, local Qantas airport staff and four Alice Springs prostate cancer support group members on the tarmac to celebrate the plane's arrival. The Alice Springs support group will give an awareness talk to Qantas and airport staff in early November.

And now for something completely different ... a touch of humour

• **CHILDREN** seem to have a knack for always identifying what's really important. One warm summer evening, a mother was driving near the beach with her three young children. A woman in the racy convertible in front of them suddenly stood up and started waving frantically, with an almost empty vodka

bottle in hand. She was **STARK NAKED**. As the mother was reeling from shock, the five-year-old in the seat beside her said, "Mom, that lady is being very naughty, isn't she." The mother promptly agreed, and the child confidently continued. "I know that because ... she isn't wearing a seat belt!"

Figuring how to solve our quest for new members

When members have to leave a support group, the question of how to replace them can take unusual paths, as Prosper Darwin group convenor Keith Williams reports.

FOR the Darwin Prosper support group, October was a very busy and positive month – as it was for many groups around the country. In our case, though, it was tinged with regret as we lost three stalwart participants from the group.

These men have stopped attending primarily for personal health challenges, but notably prostate cancer is not among them. Hopefully, we might see them back in the ranks again one day.

While the support group still has a fair way to go from this unfortunate setback, the signs are that we will come out a stronger and more involved group.

Sometimes, efforts to build up group membership are far from easy, and can take an unexpected route. Two of the Darwin group's members never get to our meetings because they clash with their weekly Hash House Harriers runs.

They explained to me that their running group was very open and supportive, and that among many other topics, prostate cancer was a frequent part of their conversations.

The several affected members of this running group were willing to share their journey and received

COMING EVENT

The Prosper Darwin support group meets on the second Monday of each month, at the Harbour Room, Christ Church Cathedral, corner of Smith St and the Esplanade, Darwin, at 7.30pm.

more than adequate support from the rest of the group, to the extent that our members felt that it wasn't necessary to attend our meetings (although they are still on our mailing list).

I recently visited my dentist, who happens to be one of the Harriers, and he explained that yet another Harrier had just been diagnosed, and that the running group is again being very supportive.

I suggested that perhaps the other prostate cancer people in his group might enjoy being on our mailing list, and that if the group wanted another Ambassadorial or similar presentation, we would be very happy to be involved. He said that he would take it up with the group.

This demonstrates that we have to be flexible and be able to work with our prostate cancer support groups as opportunity arises, even though another group's philosophy and focus is different to ours.

The guest speaker at the Darwin group's October meeting was a senior member of the Public Trustee's Office. He gave us a very clear and informative presentation on such relevant matters as Enduring Power of Attorney, Making Wills and Dying Intestate.

For November, we will be viewing some new DVDs, and for December (while the matter is still to be put to the vote) it's a fair bet that we will be down at the Wharf Eatery, which was recently graced by our august councillors.

I recently received a phone call from PCFA's Queensland office (which looks after NT Ambassadors, so I learned) to inform me that the NT Power And Water Authority (with a staff of 800) was starting its annual Health and Safety Week in two days.

I was asked whether the Darwin support group could man a promotional stall for two hours on each of the five days during the

lunch break. I said yes and then started frantically contacting members of our fairly small group.

Within a few hours I had enough volunteers to make a go of it. I went out for the first session and was made very welcome by the PAWA organising staff.

Even though this first day was low-key, I had at least six very good contacts with staff. I was relating this to a member, who is on the staff of the public hospital, and said, "We have over 2000 staff, and get nothing".

The initial contact from Queensland also led me to the local manager of a company called Work Solutions, a national firm specialising in arranging and facilitating functions for organisations.

Its focus is the health field, and as a result of this contact the Darwin support group will be in the mix for any appropriate future activities.

While this event did not provide a chance for an Ambassadorial presentation, they may well come along in the future.

This may be something that support groups in SA can also pick up on. For more information, the Work Solutions' web site is at www.worksolutions.com.au

Limestone Coast Prostate Cancer Support Group

Prostate progress by the barrel

Interstate guests and very generous winemakers pulled a spotlight onto prostate awareness activity within the Limestone Coast, as Richard Harry reports.

THE Limestone Coast Prostate Cancer Support Group had the privilege of welcoming two special guests over the weekend of October 15 and 16 – PCFA National Deputy Chairman David Sandoe and his wife Pam.

After getting up at 3.30 am in Sydney, they arrived by plane in Mount Gambier and after a very brief look around the city, spoke privately to some of the local support group members on prostate cancer matters. After lunch, they travelled to Penola, to attend the Coonawarra Barrel Series 14 auction and dinner, held at Katnook Estate Coonawarra winery. PCFA's Adelaide PR representative Karyn Foster was also a special guest at the dinner.

There was a special buzz around this year's Barrel Series wines that represented the cream of cabernet sauvignon from the lauded 2010 vintage, attracting the largest ever turnout at the



Pam and David Sandoe address the Limestone Coast support group.

Barrel Series tasting prior to the auction and dinner.

Bidding was fast and furious with the highly sought after Wynns Coonawarra Estate barrel, made by winemaker Sarah Pidgeon, attracting the highest price at \$24,118 (equal to about \$100 per bottle) from phone bidder Terry Leigh. The average barrel price was \$17,000. Net proceeds of the Wynns Coonawarra Estate barrel will be donated to PCFA.



Coonawarra winemakers participating in the 2011 Barrel Series auction were: Michael Marcus (Majella), Peter Gambetta (Yalumba), Peter Weinberg (Brand's Laira), Brett Sharpe (Lindemans), Peter Bissell (Parker Coonawarra Estate), Greg Clayfield (Zema Estate), Wayne Stehbens (Katnook Estate) and Sarah Pidgeon (Wynns Coonawarra Estate).

The following morning David and Pam returned to Mount Gambier, thanks to a Penola member of our support group, where they proceeded to give our committee some pointers on how best to sustain the longevity of a support group.

Our support group members and invited guests arrived for a light luncheon, after which David and Pam gave a presentation and also answered questions, from prostate-related issues to explaining information from the PCFA.

For this presentation, Pam had requested that various companies send information to Mount Gambier. As a result, we have since made up 16 packs, which have been delivered to the Limestone Coast Division of General Practice for distribution to local GPs.

After a presentation of some Limestone Coast goodies as a vote of thanks for their

valuable contributions, the Sandoes were taken to the airport for their flights home, marking the close of a very successful and full-on weekend for them.

The local media showed keen interest in these events and there was an interview with David broadcast on the local ABC radio, an article published in the local paper about the Limestone Coast support group, and footage featuring the Coonawarra fundraising auction and the Sandoe's presentation to our support group was featured in a report screened on local TV.

During the Sandoe's presentations, many group members picked up fresh information and others gained information to help them make informed decisions for the future. Attendees felt it was a very informative meeting, which prompted good numbers for our group's November 1 meeting at the Grant District Council offices, which included our Annual

Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support Group

Lymphoedema: It can be treated – but not cured

Lymphoedema can be acquired after major prostate cancer surgery or after radiation treatment, as Alice Springs support group vice chairman Fred Miegel reports.

THE Alice Springs support group had Fiona Gordon as its guest speaker for October – an Alice Springs sports and remedial deep tissue massage therapist, specialising in lymphoedema treatment.

Fiona spoke about the risks and consequences of lymphoedema for men with prostate cancer.

She explained that the lymph system normally moves lymphatic fluid around the body through fine vessels just under the skin. Lymphatic flow works by the pumping action of muscles stimulating and compressing the network, not through blood circulation.

This network moves dead cells, bacteria, excess fluid and even early cancer cells through to lymph nodes around the body – in the armpits, neck, groin, abdomen and chest. Nodes are responsible for filtering and destroying harmful cells and passing lymph fluid back into the bloodstream.

These vessels can be damaged through the treatment of cancers, through surgery, radiotherapy or the removal of the lymph nodes to see how far cancer has spread.

Once the network is damaged, fluid can be blocked in an arm, leg or genitals, and these areas swell. This condition, called lymphoedema, can cause



Alice Springs support group's Fred Miegel thanks Fiona Gordon for her talk on lymphoedema treatment.

Farewell to Derek Hollingsworth

The Alice Springs support group's youngest member, Derek Hollingsworth (aged 42), has returned to Queensland to be close to family as he continues his recovery. Unfortunately, Derek has not been in the best of health since his radical prostate operation 12 months ago, although he has been an inspiration to the older members of our group with his tenacity and determination to fight his health problems. In his address to members at the October meeting, he thanked everyone for the support, encouragement and love that has been given to him during his battle with cancer.

areas to be prone to infections. Lymphoedema can be treated but cannot be cured as lymph nodes cannot regenerate.

Treatment can greatly reduce swelling, and maintenance treatment can keep the problem in check.

Treatment involves gentle massage that moves the fluid around, from the damaged area into an area where the lymph network is functioning normally and can be carried

away through to normal channels.

In severe cases, the affected limb will be bandaged firmly to maintain pressure, to stop the fluid re-accumulating in a problematic area.

A specially measured pressure garment can also be fitted, just like a sleeve or legging. Care needs to be taken of the skin on a compromised limb, as skin infections can occur in

COMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER MEETING: The Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support Group will meet on Thursday November 8 from 6.30pm to 8pm in the conference room of General Practice Network NT, Skinner St, Alice Springs. The guest speaker will be visiting urologist Dr Mark Lloyd.

- The December meeting will be a Christmas social gathering, with particulars to be advised shortly.

such pressurised locations and can cause major problems.

Other things you can do to help combat lymphoedema problems are to elevate the affected limb, wear loose-fitting clothes, do mild exercise, swimming, yoga and Tai Chi, reduce stress levels, and have a healthy diet and lifestyle. If you are flying, it is worth wearing a light compression garment to prevent swelling of the affected limb/s and do the suggested exercises that airlines advocate to prevent thrombosis.

Identifying the X-factor in prostate treatments

The possibility of choosing high-dose or low-dose brachytherapy as an alternative to surgery is worth exploring, as Mitcham support group joint-chairman Roland Harris reports.

THE October meeting of the Mitcham Prostate Cancer Support Group featured senior radiation oncologist Dr Raghu Gowda, who has practiced at the Royal Adelaide Hospital since 2004.

His talk began with a recount of the history of X-rays. Wilhelm Roentgen discovered X-rays while experimenting with cathode rays in the late 19th Century, and found that X-rays penetrate substances opaque to light, to a varying degree, depending on density of the substance.

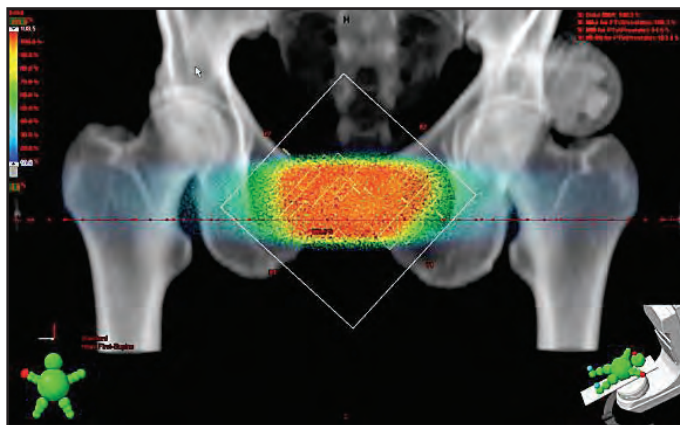
They have since been widely used in medicine to photograph internal organs, bones and to destroy diseased tissue.

As early as 1909, X-rays have been used to detect prostate cancer.

Dr Gowda described by PowerPoint presentation how medical science has progressed since these initial experiments, and explained its uses in modern prostate cancer treatment.

Radiotherapy aims to kill all prostate cancer cells using X-rays, which is a good option if you expect to live longer than 10 years and have localised prostate cancer.

Dr Gowda explained to the group members how external



X-rays are not only valuable medical tools for taking internal photographs of patients, but have become a crucial aspect of some prostate cancer treatments.

COMING EVENT

NOVEMBER MEETING

The Mitcham support group's final meeting for 2011 will be on November 24 – and following recent tradition, it will be a social dinner, held at Racquets Bistro, South Rd, St Marys, commencing at 7pm. If you haven't already advised of your attendance, please contact Terry Harbour by phoning 8271 0513 or email harbour@adam.com.au

• For more information on events and group activities, visit the Mitcham Group's dedicated website at www.psamitcham.org

beam treatment is sourced from outside the patient's body, while Brachytherapy plants the radioactive source directly into the prostate.

To quote the excellent October 2010 edition of a Cancer Council book called *Localised Prostate Cancer*, brachytherapy offers the

choice between low-dose and high-dose rate radiation. Low-dose requires only one short visit to hospital for seed implantation, instead of many visits to a radiotherapy clinic.

Dr Gowda informed us that "brachy" is a version of the Greek word for

short. Many men cannot be treated with brachytherapy due to enlarged prostate, before TURP surgery or hip replacement.

It should also be noted that babies and small children should not be held in the lap for two months after low-dose treatment, due to risk of radiation exposure to such young people.

The seeds are retained in the prostate. Low-dose treatment appears to have the least effect on erectile function of any treatment, which may influence a man's final decision.

Dr Gowda then described high-dose brachytherapy, which is used in conjunction with external beam radiotherapy, and involves the temporary insertion of gold seeds into the prostate.

The waiting period for low-dose treatment at the Royal Adelaide Hospital is seven months; for high-dose treatment, the wait is four months.

For more information on these treatment choices, please refer to Chapter 3 of the book *Localised Prostate Cancer*, which is available from the Mitcham support group's library.

We thanked Dr Gowda for his visit and presented him with a seed-free bottle of wine as a gift.

Barossa Prostate Cancer Support Group

Reflecting on a busy year

It has been a year of hardship and struggle for many Barossa support group members – which has underlined the value of group support, as convenor Don Piro reports.

WE have come to the end of another busy year and the Barossa support group has decided to have a friendly barbecue at my home – at 28 Kindler Ave, Nuriootpa – as our last meeting for the year. It would be great to see all of you there with your partners on Friday November 25, between 4pm and 8pm.

The group will provide the barbecue meat, but please let me know in advance what side plate of shared food you would like to bring. There are quite a few members on our mailing list that we haven't seen for quite a while and we would love to see them all at this social event. If you are coming, please RSVP to Don by phoning 8562 3359 before 8pm on Sunday November 20.

This year has been predominantly a support-based year for the group, as we have had regular monthly meetings for members to come along and support each other. We have reduced the business side of meetings to include only

COMING EVENT: CHRISTMAS BREAK-UP BARBECUE

- The Barossa Prostate Cancer Support Group Christmas Function is at 28 Kindler Ave, Nuriootpa, from 4pm to 8pm on Friday November 25. Barbecued meat provided but bring your own drinks and a plate of food to share. All Welcome. (Please RSVP if attending on 8562 3359 by 8pm Sunday November 20.)
- The first meeting of the Barossa Prostate Cancer Support Group for 2012 will be held from 2pm to 4pm on Tuesday February 21, at Don Piro's house, 28 Kindler Ave, Nuriootpa. Please contact group coordinator Don Piro for further information on 8562 3359 or 0419 863 124.

brief PCFA feedback and I have emailed more detailed PCFA information on to members.

A few members have had challenging medical results during the year, and it has been great that the rest of the group has been there to support them. During the year, I have had many calls from men who are travelling with cancer, seeking information about our group. Some did come along; others just wanted to talk at that time, but now know we are here if they need us.

Sadly, two of our members passed away this year as a result of their cancer, and I would like to pass on once more the group's

condolences to their families.

The Barossa group has been instrumental in assisting Gawler establish its own support group, which started with Professor Villis Marshall attending as guest speaker for the first group evening. Many of our members have travelled to Gawler for several meetings since then, and I would like to thank all of those who went along and offered their support and encouragement to the new group.

A couple of members in our group went to the Karoonda Farm Fair early in the year, to support the Murray Bridge support group at its PCFA display stand.

I have been privileged

to be an invited guest speaker during the year at several Lions, Rotary and the Barossa Village Aged Care groups, discussing my cancer journey, men's health issues and how the Barossa Prostate Cancer Support Group operates.

Next year, the group has plans to have speakers for some of our meetings and open attendances at these meetings to the public. We did try to obtain a well-known celebrity to come along this year, but unfortunately that did not work out. Next year holds greater prospects.

The Barossa support group will continue to meet on the third Tuesday of each month, unless otherwise advised.

WHYALLA PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

The Whyalla support group, which recently celebrated its first anniversary, meets on the first Tuesday of each month. Everybody is welcome to attend the support group meetings – indeed, the wives and partners of group members are an integral part of this group, because any cancer within a family member affects the whole family. The support group meets at 7pm on the first Tuesday of each month, in Room 69 of the University of SA campus, Nicolson Ave, Whyalla Norrie. Contact Terry O'Brien (08 8645 1310) or Stan Oates (08 8644 0591) for more details.

Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia freecall hotline is 1800 22 00 99
or visit the website www.prostate.org.au

Riders on the Quorn

The inaugural Blue Ride for Prostate Cancer Awareness, held by the Southern Flinders Trail Horse Riding Club from September 24 for an epic 10-day trek, proved to be very successful and provided many memorable highlights – as ride organiser Shan Daw reports.

WHAT were the best memories of the Blue Ride from Gladstone to Quorn? The Street Parade immediately springs to mind, with 50 horses and riders dressed in blue. It was a perfect overcast day with a gentle breeze just strong enough to flutter the flags we carried. Gladstone's main street was ablaze with blue and a crowd of some 200 people cheered us through to the Blessing of the Horses ceremony performed by the Reverend David Amery to start our journey.

The most repeated comment throughout the ride was that every day held different treats – beautiful scenery, dinner venues, weather, and friendships formed on every day's ride.

We experienced perfect days and nights until we reached the Wirrabara Forest, then had an unforgettable two-hour lightning and thunder show. The whole sky lit up as if it were daylight, with all the colours of the great pines and eucalypts captured in gigantic flashlight bulb moments. There was also 20 small lights flashing around the trees as the riders checked their horses were not likely to bolt off in panic, although hardly a horse flicked an ear at nature's amazing performance.

We enjoyed a beautiful boundary ride, discovering a dam in a valley too serene and peaceful to pass by. Riders wended their way through light scrub to the water's edge, where the horses took long draughts of cool water



Bushrangers! A great highlight of the Blue Ride was the Pichi Richi train being held up by Blue Bandtis raising money for prostate cancer research.

and just stood and watched their reflections in the water. Soon after, the horses cantered up a steep slope and spread out below us were the Southern Flinders hills and ranges stretching to the east and north. It was the perfect camera moment!

Camaraderie was fast developing among the riders who had come to participate in the Blue Ride from all over eastern and southern Australia, along with horse friendships as they also formed friends among the herd.

Just before riding into camp we looked up at the sky and hurriedly set up substantial yards for the horses and battened ourselves down. Within the hour the storm hit! First came the wind and then the rain which was parallel to the ground. Once again, our wonderful horses

were unperturbed and just turned their backs to the gale, dropped their heads and withstood the onslaught. By comparison, their riders winced and dined at the pub for tea, as the storm raged all night.

A most vivid memory came on a day that we rode right into the face of driving sleet and wind for four hours before reaching Wilmington, with horses covered in mud and the riders soaked to the skin. All dried off as best we could, rugged and fed, then sheltered wherever possible by shed walls, in floats and vehicles. Then a barbecue meal was prepared by the local committee that warmed us and cheered us, despite the fact that the rain on the tin roof of the shed made conversation impossible.

On the Monday of the long weekend, we loaded all the

horses on to the Pichi Richi steam train's restored cattle trucks and chugged our way through rough-hewn stone cuttings, across high span bridges and up gentle grades with steam billowing from the engine accompanied by occasional whistles that echoed through the hills.

Suddenly, two bushrangers came galloping out of the hills and raced towards the train, brandishing guns and calling to the engine driver to halt the train. A screech of metal wheels on rails added to the excitement as the train came noisily to a halt. The bushrangers rode beside the train, demanding money from all the passengers in the name of Prostate Cancer Research.

The bushrangers were suddenly among the passengers inside the carriages, making sure no-one got away without paying up. More than \$200 was raised before the train built up a head of steam, and, pulling mightily, delivered the horses and riders to Woolshed Flat 15 minutes later. This was an unsurpassed memory!

The horses were unloaded, saddled and ridden back to Quorn along a deep gully beside a beautiful creek bed to finish the ride. Ancient gums, wild flowers and carolling birds beneath a big blue sky accompanied a cherished finale of the Champagne, Steam & Saddle Trail Ride from Gladstone to Quorn in the Southern Flinders Ranges. What more could a horse and rider dream of in the name of adventure?