

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

FEBRUARY 2012

Volume 5: Number 1

Community rides set to benefit PCFA

Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia will receive proceeds from a large new community cycling event in Adelaide – and your help will be crucial for its success.

BOILEAU VeloAdelaide is the name of an exciting new one-day festival of cycling happening next month, designed to take community cycling events to an exciting new level – and PCFA is one of the beneficiaries!

As the first of Bike SA's mass-participation rides for 2012, Boileau VeloAdelaide on Sunday March 18 is expected to attract more than 7000 bike riders, who will also enjoy the festive Event Village atmosphere in Hindmarsh Square at the conclusion of the ride.

There will be two different ride formats for the day – a free Family Fun Ride, designed especially for families and less experienced riders, with a choice of 5km, 10km or 20km routes through

the Adelaide Parklands and along the Torrens River. The Family Fun Ride is the event which will support PCFA. Participants are being urged to register for the ride and pledge financial support for PCFA.

The Mt Lofty Challenge will be a separate closed-road event on the same day, designed for more experienced riders. This will allow cyclists for the first time to ride along 35km of closed Adelaide Hills roads, including the South Eastern Freeway (which will be open exclusively to bicycles for the event) from the toll gate, through the Heysen Tunnel to the Crafers turnoff. This part of the event will support the Smith Family charity.

Christian Haag, CEO of Bicycle SA, says "VeloAdelaide will offer

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



Boileau VeloAdelaide's Free Family Fun Ride on Sunday March 18 aims to attract family cycling groups.

experienced riders the unique experience of riding on closed roads in the Adelaide Hills, while in the CBD people can ride with friends and families in a safe and encouraging environment for the Family Fun Ride. No matter what your age or cycling ability, there will be rides and activities for you to engage in and enjoy."

Karyn Foster will require a great deal of help from PCFA supporters on the day between 8am and noon, to

distribute PCFA materials to ride participants. Volunteers are asked to phone her office on 8231 6339 to declare their availability (leave a message if she is not in), or email karynfoster@adam.com.au

Karyn also urges the fellas and ladies from PCFA support groups to get behind this big event, and register their own riding teams or as individuals at the website www.bikesa.asn.au/BoileauVeloAdelaide or phone 8168 9999.

• **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

Spread the message - from showgrounds to beer clubs

Information about prostate cancer and PCFA is successfully being presented to very diverse new groups, as David Merry from the Action Group reports.

THE Prostate Cancer Action Group is currently planning for at least two Community Awareness Nights, to be held during 2012. We are hoping to arrange an evening in Adelaide's western suburbs, centred around the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and an evening meeting in Port Lincoln during June, to be held in conjunction with PCFA Central Australia Chapter and the service clubs of Port Lincoln.

Meanwhile, the Action Group will be attending the Lucindale Field Days on March 16 and 17, with assistance from the Limestone Coast PC Support Group members.

Action Group members will also be presenting awareness and information stalls at the Mundalla Agricultural & Horticultural Show (also known as the Moot Yang Gunyah Festival) on March 3, and at the Mount Pleasant Show on March 17, with assistance from the Murray Bridge Prostate Cancer Support Group.

Any readers who are likely



to be attending either of these events, please come along to the information stalls and make yourselves known to those Action Group members in attendance.

BEER & BEEF CLUB

KARYN Foster and the Action Group's David Merry kicked off the New Year as guests of The Adelaide Beer and Beef Club at a marvellous lunch. Karyn was introduced to the club by PCFA South Australia board member Steven Trigg (also CEO of the Adelaide Football Club) and the club has made a commitment to donate all funds from its monthly lunch raffle to PCFA.

David delivered an Ambassador presentation

to an interested crowd, and Karyn thanked the audience on behalf of PCFA SA Board, and committed to help with fundraising by donating prizes of silk ties from Henry Bucks for every club lunch.



The Adelaide Beer and Beef Club is a unique all-male dining club. It has been in existence for 20 years, has around 200 members, is sponsored by Carlton United Brewers and supports venues all over Adelaide.

The club motto is Good beer; Good food; Good fellowship, and its members have enjoyed addresses from the likes of Alexander Downer, Martin Hamilton-Smith, Pat Conlon, Derryn Hinch, Nick Xenophon, John Kosmina, Clare Lindop, John Letts, Leon Macdonald and Wolf Blass.

It certainly is a pleasure that PCFA and the Action Group has been welcomed and supported by such a strong and understanding organisation.

COMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY MEETING: The next meeting of the Prostate Cancer Action Group SA will be held in the upstairs meeting room at the Cancer Council SA, 202 Greenhill Rd, Eastwood, commencing at 5.30pm on Tuesday, February 14. Entry is via the rear stairway. New members to Action Group meetings are always welcome.

• For more information, visit the Action Group's dedicated website, with detailed archives containing newsletters, at the website: www.pcagsa.org.au

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

• A little girl was watching her parents dress for a party. When she saw that her father was putting on his tuxedo, she said, "Daddy, you shouldn't wear that suit." He was

puzzled by her comment. "Why not?" he asked. "Because it always gives you a headache the next morning."

• Next week, the little girl went with

her mother to help deliver meals to the elderly, and at the first house was soon staring at a set of false teeth in a jar. She declared: "The tooth fairy will never believe this."

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

McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group

How to put your mind at ease through Mindfulness

Smart new training courses through the Cancer Council can help provide great peace of mind, as McLaren Districts support group president Bryan Hearn reports.

IT is worth reflecting on the very valuable presentation of our guest speaker who attended the final McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group meeting for 2011 – Tina Gibson, Education and Support Project Officer for the Cancer Council SA, who has also worked as a paramedic and in complimentary therapies including kinesiology and massage.

Tina explained her various responsibilities at the Cancer Council, where she supervises a large number of volunteers to provide peer support via the phone, or in face-to-face meetings.

Most of these volunteers are survivors from various cancers, who assist in counselling others recently diagnosed with cancer. She also has a team of 15 oncology nurses and four counsellors within the Cancer Council's telephone helpline team.

Tina also addresses support groups and provides whatever assistance might be required of these groups.

She noted that interstate a number of carer support groups have been established, and she hopes to form similar groups in SA. A presentation delivered by Coralie Hunt on the role of carers at the recent Central Australia Chapter annual conference had already



Tina Gibson from Cancer Council SA explained the concept of Mindfulness to men gathered at the final McLaren Districts support group meeting for 2011.

been raised at this meeting, and Tina emphasised how important it is that carers are looked after and their needs met by support groups.

Our group was introduced by Tina to the concept of Mindfulness – a modern description of “being in the moment”, or perhaps best explained as “smelling the roses”. Tina explained how she organises support groups that run eight-week training courses on this topic. These sessions provide an emotional release for participants, help to reduce stress and provide an introduction to various types of meditation.

Our group indulged in a three-minute session on “breathing mindfulness” under Tina’s direction. This required us to close our eyes and concentrate on various matters as Tina spoke to us.

COMING EVENT

FEBRUARY 23

• The McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group will conduct its first meeting for 2012 on **Thursday February 23**. 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.

The point was made that the diagnosis of cancer can induce all sorts of stress and depression in a person, quite often triggering a downward spiral of negative thoughts.

The concept of Mindfulness is designed to help relieve this situation. It is both simple and versatile: it can be induced when walking along a beach,

done with simple movement similar to yoga, or just through concentrating on breathing.

The concept of Mindfulness basically provides people with an opportunity to take their mind off whatever is causing their stress, and to concentrate on other things.

Tina provided each person in our group with a copy of the brochure “Mindfulness based on cognitive therapy (MBCT) for men with advanced prostate cancer”, downloaded from the Beyond Blue website.

Many Mindfulness groups that deal with all types of cancer are currently held in the metropolitan area, but a lot of effort is being made to establish similar groups in the more rural areas of SA.

Anybody requiring further details should phone Tina at the Cancer Council on 8291 4268.

Meet the people within the family of Support Groups

The reason why Terry is a staunch PSA test supporter

A lifetime of tough tasks in the police force still didn't prepare Terry Harbour for the shock of having prostate cancer – although his journey has encouraged him to become a dedicated participant in PCFA support group activities.

TERRY Harbour was born in England but has spent most of his life in Australia, migrating at the age of 11 with his parents and sister as “10 pound poms” in 1958. After arriving in Melbourne, they moved to Adelaide within a year and Terry grew up in the southern suburbs, attending Brighton and Seacombe High Schools.

During the Christmas school holidays of 1963, he received a phone call from the South Australian Police advising that his application to join was successful, and he had to report at the front gate of the Police Academy at Fort Largs promptly at 8.30am on January 2, 1964.

Terry was one of the new breed of police cadets, undertaking a three-year course (increased from a 17-week course) to graduate at the age of 20. He spent 42 and a half years in the South Australia Police.

“Looking back over my working life, I tend to remember the good and amusing things that happened – and there were plenty – and it always amused me that as a probationary constable at 20 years old, I could enter pubs and give directions and arrest people, even though I was too young to have a drink in the pub!”



Terry Harbour is loving life and is very active in his retirement – thanks to taking a PSA test that identified prostate cancer in its early stages.

The majority of Terry's service was in the metropolitan area, although as a young constable he was transferred to Renmark in 1968 for five memorable years, where he married his wife Pat – and they are now approaching their 43rd anniversary.

Back in Adelaide and over quite a few years, Terry received promotions – to senior constable, sergeant and then inspector in 1994. In April, 1999 he was promoted to Chief Inspector and transferred to Whyalla in charge of the Mid West Local Service Area (LSA), responsible for about 60,000 sq kms of Eyre Peninsula.

In Whyalla, Terry faced his greatest professional challenge as the officer in charge of the search for survivors of the

Whyalla Airlines crash in the Spencer Gulf at about 7.30pm on May 31, 2000.

“At tragic times like this you see the community as a whole come together, with people working beyond exhaustion – in particular the emergency services personnel and many volunteers – in an effort to find survivors. Unfortunately it wasn't until six days later we found the plane in 20 metres of water with all but one passenger still strapped in their seats.”

The efforts and dedication of Mid West LSA personnel in the operation saw the Local Service Area receive a Citation from the Commissioner of Police – the only one issued.

Terry was promoted to Superintendent in 2001 and transferred to the South

East Local Service Area, based at Mount Gambier and responsible for the south-east of the State, and had a great time until 2004, when troubles arose and, as they say, “things come in threes”. In July 2004, Pat suffered a heart attack while teaching at school, Terry's father died unexpectedly and Terry was diagnosed with prostate cancer.

“I can now happily report that Pat has fully recovered from her heart problems, and I can thank my local doctor at Mount Gambier for making me have a PSA test which led to the swift diagnosis of my prostate disease. Having had no symptoms at all I would have gone on until it was really too late, had I not listened to my doctor and had a PSA test.

“Therefore, I have a real issue with some medicos and researchers crying down PSA testing and saying it may only save a very small percentage of men from dying of prostate cancer. Well, it saved me!”

After medical problems, and realising that there is life after work to enjoy, the Harbours have enjoyed a slightly early retirement, returned to their home in Adelaide and Terry remains actively involved in the Mitcham Prostate Cancer Support Group, and the Central Australia Chapter Council.

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

Prostate Cancer Support and Awareness: ADELAIDE GROUP

Shining light on the need for some sun on our skin

Too much sun causes grave problems for our skin – but too little sunlight is also harmful, as the Adelaide support group learned from an expert guest. Ian Fisk reports.

THE Adelaide support group's final meeting for 2011, on November 21, featured a fascinating presentation from Dr Bruce Wauchope, who explained that sun exposure is a double-edged sword. If we get too little sunlight, we get vitamin D deficiency; too much exposure increases our risk of skin cancer.

The facts are that we do need some midday sun to generate Vitamin D, received in short time durations across large areas of our body. Melanomas are caused by intermittent sun burning of our skin, so getting tanned is not a healthy option. Continual sun exposure also promotes basal cell and squamous cell cancers.

Melanomas do not always appear as they are depicted on public health posters. Any new mole, or any change to an existing skin mole, needs to be assessed by medical experts to determine their status.

To maximize the longevity of your healthy skin – and to minimize skin loss and



Dr Bruce Wauchope

damage – it is important to have regular skin checks. It is best for such checks to be carried out with the use of dermoscopy (this technology looks through the skin) and image capture and image comparison equipment, as their diagnosis rates are the highest and ensure necessary interventions earlier. There are a number of centres that do this, including Molechecks clinic.

Dr Wauchope's talk was greatly appreciated by group members. There is a lot of information about this topic available on the Internet. By

googling “midday sun to generate Vitamin D”, I found that the ABC site has a good article titled “How much sun do you need?”

At this stage no speakers have been organized for Adelaide support group meetings during 2012. All suggestions are welcomed.

Our February 20 meeting will be our Annual General Meeting – and could all members please consider nominating for one or more official positions in the support group. This meeting will also feature a general discussion and possibly the screening of a few health-related DVDs.

Please note that we have changed our meeting room in the Fullarton Park Centre. This year we will be in the Community Room (on entering the centre, it is the first room on the right-hand side). It is smaller than the room we had used previously, but with the smaller numbers attending this space should be large enough – and the rent is considerably less!

COMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 20 MEETING:

The Adelaide Prostate Cancer Support Group meets on the third Monday of each month in the Community Room of the Fullarton Park Centre, 411 Fullarton Rd, Fullarton, starting at 7pm.

• **The first meeting for 2012 will be our Annual General Meeting on February 20.**

• *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

• **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 FEBRUARY 15.**

THE Murray Bridge support group will be conducting its Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, February 15, and hopefully there will be a good rollup of interested participants.

We are asking for three or four members of the support group to assist David Merry and the Action Group at the Mt Pleasant Show on March 17, to work on the PCFA

information stand. Also, the Karoonda Farm Fair is on March 30 and 31, and we intend having an information stand present, so will need workers for each day.

Support group secretary Max Klenke has recently been on the sick list, so we wish him a speedy recovery. We need you back, fit and well!

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

Port Pirie Prostate Cancer Support Group

Experts fill the information gaps with generous detail

The Port Pirie support group has benefitted from hosting informative guest speakers, as Richard Kruger reports.

DOCTOR Richard Wells, a noted and popular urologist and competent operator of the famous Da Vinci robot, recently gave a talk in Port Pirie to a strong and interested group on erectile dysfunction and incontinence following prostate surgery.

He was accompanied by Trudi Bizilis, a former theatre nurse who is now an AMS product specialist, providing support and education on both these topics.

Dr Wells pointed out that prostate surgery is only one of many possible causes of erectile dysfunction. Others can include cardiovascular disease, diabetes, medication, smoking, alcohol, recreational drugs, stress, spinal injury and hormone imbalance. Treatments are therefore as wide ranging as the causes.

They include (but are not limited to) oral medications such as Viagra, Levitra and Cialis, vacuum erection devices, injection therapy, urethral suppositories, penile implants, sex counselling for both partners and psychologist consultation.

He emphasised that there is no “magic bullet” solution, and that all methods have pluses and minuses associated with them. For

example, oral medications are expensive and require some sexual stimulation to be effective. You may even need seven or eight tablets before you get a satisfactory result – although the results can be very good.

Many men in the audience winced at the thought of penile injections. Dr Wells pointed out that a survey revealed 93 per cent of men who tried penile implants were satisfied with the result.

There are different versions of penile implants available at a range of costs – but before you dash out to order an implant, you need to know that the procedure removes the part of your penis that allows you to have a natural erection. If that doesn't worry you, and you have the money, it may be exactly the solution you are searching for.

The other half of the presentation focused on incontinence, caused as a consequence of prostate surgery. Dr Wells stated that when he is performing a prostate procedure he has to balance the objectives of getting all of the cancer out

with causing minimal damage to surrounding tissue, which can include the bladder.

Men have two sphincters to hold back the release of urine – a sphincter where the urethra leaves the bladder, and at the prostate, which has a two-way valve that will allow semen or urine to pass, but not both. This doubles the ability to “hang on” when the bladder approaches fullness in a way that some females envy. After a prostate has been removed, the second barrier is gone and there may also be damage to the bladder sphincter. Sometimes surgical repair can help.

There are very different levels of incontinence, from a

few drops a day (which can be easily handled with a discreet pad) to more serious leakage levels. Apart from external pads, of which there are many to choose from, there are a range of implants – some that can be remotely operated by a button in the scrotum, so you can hold it all back, and when you're ready, just let it all go.

Other help options available are from physiotherapists, and pelvic floor exercises. Dr Wells discovered – to his great surprise – that one of his patients controlled his problem with a set of jumper leads from his tractor, while another found relief by going for a swim at Solomontown Beach every morning.



Above left: Dr Richard Wells talking with support group member Kevin Staker. Right: Guest speaker Trudi Bizilis.

- 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.

Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support Group

Advice gives guidance to obtain a healthy prostate

Dr Mark Lloyd gave good advice about prostate health to Alice Springs support group members at the November meeting, as group convenor Ian Wagner reports.

WORKING as a consulting urologist Dr Mark Lloyd has been visiting the Alice Springs Hospital for the past four years. Quite a few of his patients are among the members of the Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support Group – and they took particular note of his advice when Dr Lloyd came to address the support group in November 2011.

While cardiovascular disease has a higher mortality rate than prostate cancer in Australia, the cost of prostate cancer will still cost the Australian community almost four billion dollars this year. It's a statistic which must be changed – and that starts with a widespread promotion on how to have a healthier prostate, helped by following a healthier lifestyle.

In many cases, this may not prevent prostate cancer occurring, but it may help men to avoid serious treatment.

Careful monitoring of prostate health can result in the early detection of any problems and enable early treatment, so that an affected man could well go on to enjoy prolonged life with few long-term prostate health problems.

Dr Lloyd's advice towards a healthy prostate focused on adopting a regular exercise routine, together with reviewing and adopting a healthy diet.

Regardless of age or health

condition, we must remain active. A man should aim to exercise for a minimum of 30 minutes each day – in fact, as he gets older, he should become more conscious of and committed to exercise.

There are two types of exercises to consider: aerobic exercise, which is a cardiovascular workout that includes such activities as walking, cycling or swimming, and anaerobic exercise, which involves strengthening the body's muscles through weightlifting and similar types of exercises.

Any library is a good source to find books promoting a suitable exercise program. Keep a diary of your daily exercises. Join a gym if you think it will help establish your exercise routine, but never overdo it.

Be sure that you enjoy what you do within your exercise regime, and it helps if you can find a friend to join you.

In reviewing your future diet, you should first consider which foods to include on your preferred list, which foods you should consume only occasionally, which foods you should severely restrict and others to avoid.

In the first category are those important foods which will be included in your daily diet and have been scientifically researched and recommended. These include cereals and

wholegrain breads, fruit and vegetables, dairy products and other similar calcium-rich products, plus lean meat and fish.

Also to this list you can add nuts (a handful a day, especially Brazil nuts) and mono-unsaturated oils such as extra virgin olive oil and canola oil, which has a HDL level that helps remove cholesterol from the arteries to the liver for excretion.

Fish should be eaten three times a week, especially those fish species containing higher omega 3 fatty acids, such as salmon. Consider also restricting the intake of red meats. Legumes should be included in meals more often.

The glycaemic level in carbohydrates should be studied to select only those with a low GI count, to help avoid obesity and at the same time lower the risk of colon cancer.

Many processed foods contain excessive amounts of sodium, as well as harmful amounts of additives and preservatives, so be careful. Read the labels and choose an alternative brand if you find alarming ingredients.

Beware also to limit your consumption of alcohol. Excessive consumption is a cancer risk.

Red fruits such as tomatoes (cooked), red grapefruit,

COMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY MEETING:
The Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support Group will meet on Thursday February 9 from 6.30pm to 8pm in the conference room of General Practice Network NT, Skinner St, Alice Springs. The meeting will take the form of a general group discussion.

guava and watermelon are high in lycopene – an antioxidant which lowers the risk of prostate cancer.

Vitamins and mineral additives should be taken with caution and medical advice, as overdosing is dangerous. However, a daily low dose multivitamin is recommended, although more is not better!

A low daily dose of aspirin is good as it lowers the risk of bowel cancer. Saw palmetto is a tablet which is recommended for shrinking an oversized prostate.

Dr Lloyd recommends reading Dr Marc Moyad's book *Promoting Wellness*, for more information on good prostate health.

Limestone Coast Prostate Cancer Support Group

Activities aplenty!

THE Limestone Coast Prostate Cancer Support Group held its Annual General Meeting on November 1, with 27 people present. Graham Hinze was elected chairman and Sharron Wootton is the new secretary. Doug Redman, Garth Wootton, David Stacpoole and Bruce McGregor were elected to the committee along with Richard Harry after his election to Central Chapter.

Richard and Heather Harry, David and Shirley Stacpoole and Graham Hinze attended the Central Chapter Annual General Meeting and Conference in Adelaide – and the group is especially pleased that Richard is now on Central Chapter Council, giving us a good voice at chapter level.

Although it was very cold and windy, the support group still enjoyed a very successful Christmas barbecue, held in Millicent as our December group meeting. We especially enjoyed some special



entertainment by two members playing the bagpipes. Our raffle was very successful, with Ivan Mahoney winning first prize, Bev Lewis winning second prize (both are from Mt Gambier) and Sharon Gallagher from Darwin taking third prize. We especially thank Sharon for donating her prize back to the support group.

Over the summer, the men in the group have continued to have coffee and chat on the third Tuesday of each month, while the ladies have a more formal afternoon tea arranged for February 13.

At the group's February

meeting, Bernadette Nash advised us how we can assist at the Relay For Life event on March 3 and 4, and also take part in the survivor and carers walk around the oval. We will have prostate cancer display material at the Masters Hockey Carnival also to be held at the Blue Lake Sports Park that same weekend.

Two weeks later, a group of about eight members and partners will be heading to the Lucindale Field Days, to help the Action Group present a PCFA information stand.

Two donations for the group have been received from regional supporters – one from

COMING EVENTS

The Limestone Coast Prostate Cancer Support Group will hold its next meeting at 7.30pm on March 6 at Grant District Council Office, Commercial St West, Mount Gambier.

• Please note that the April meeting has been brought forward a few days to March 29, so that Adelaide urologist Dr John Miller can address the group whilst he is in Mount Gambier. This meeting will also be in the Grant District Council Office, starting at 7.30pm.

the Port McDonnell Probus club for \$180 and the other from the Penola Lions Club village market committee (pictured above) for \$500. Both these generous donations are gratefully received.



Pictured with fundraising cyclists Craig Farrell and Graeme Smith are Richard Harry and Graham Hinze, with Adrian Benne at right.

• The Limestone Coast Prostate Cancer Support Group had the good fortune to meet two inspiring Movember participants – determined cyclists who passed through Mt Gambier on the road to completing their ambitious Ride to the Rock.

Craig Farrell and Graeme Smith are two recently retired senior constables from Victoria Police who rode from Geelong to Alice Springs in November, and spoke with the Limestone Coast group's Richard Harry and Graham Hinze at the Mt Gambier Hotel, where the duo climbed out of the saddle to enjoy an overnight stay and to speak about

men's health issues with locals. Taking off from Geelong at 8am on Thursday November 10, the intrepid pair passed through Mt Gambier on Saturday November 12.

The duo stayed on the road for 17 days through the heat and the heat of Australia, travelling 2600km.

During the journey, Craig and Graeme conducted various fundraising activities, with great help from their support crew member and fellow retired Victorian policeman Adrian Benne – as well as talking with local communities to help raise awareness for the cause.

Prosper Darwin Prostate Cancer Support Group

Making ourselves available to requests from far away

The national network of prostate cancer support groups can provide some unexpected benefits for helping patients, as Prosper Darwin group convenor Keith Williams reports.

In an historic first, we had to abandon the normal wharf-side location of the Prosper Darwin Support Group's Christmas Dinner in December, thanks to temporarily limited parking facilities, plus limited under cover dining space and a severe thunderstorm – so we went “formal” instead at The Raging Bull, in Jesse's Tavern. Numbers were down, but we were delighted to have the company of Gerry Wood MLA, with Jill Naylor and Sharon Gallagher from the Cancer Council. Urologist Trent Farebrother was a last minute apology, caught up in work.



Forced inside by torrential storms, the Prosper Darwin Support Group's Christmas Dinner was attended by (from left) Jill Naylor and Sharon Gallagher (both Cancer Council staff), Allan McEwan, Pat Williams, Gerry Wood (Independent MLA), Keith Williams, Ray and Annette Weir, John and Nali Smith.

During January, Richard Harry (from the Limestone Coast Support Group) had a query from one of his locals about whether a support group existed in Darwin, as they had a friend there in need of a friendly ear. Someone did ring, but declined to give their details, although I was able to satisfy their immediate needs. This again proves the value of regional and national support group networks – and that people shouldn't hesitate to use them.

Sharon Gallagher (now working as a chemotherapy nurse at the Northern Territory Radiation

Oncology Centre) tried hard through January to connect our support group with a couple involved in treatment for advanced prostate cancer. Sadly, the husband was having huge problems coping with the diagnosis and was in virtual denial. His wife was desperate to make contact with us but wouldn't go against her husband's resistance. Hopefully they will feel comfortable enough to make contact with us one day!

Happily, the balance was redressed by positive contact from another prostate cancer sufferer and his wife, who plan to join our group in February.

January meetings are always down in numbers, so we didn't worry when temporary lighting problems forced us into a much smaller room – although Murphy's Law decreed that two visitors arrived, so we finished up rather crowded.

One member was in the final days of waiting to activate his artificial sphincter; he was delighted with the whole procedure to that point. We just may be treated to a visual demonstration of the working model at the February meeting.

Sharon brought Kate Battersby from the Northern Territory Radiation Oncology Centre to this meeting. Kate is a nurse who focuses on prostate cancer and became our unscheduled guest speaker, informing us that the centre is desperately short of volunteer drivers to operate a pick-up and drop-off service for disadvantaged patients.

It was a timely plea: Several people volunteered for two hours during week-days, and further efforts yielded at least two more people. The Centre has its own vehicle, and with these new drivers it should be able to plan an adequate service.

It's great that our support group has become involved in a very valuable activity. Kate also asked for supplies of our support group brochure and Prostate Cancer Pack – and thus another new avenue for prostate cancer support group awareness has been created.

Mitcham Prostate Cancer Support Group

All quiet on the Mitcham front - until February 23

The Mitcham support group prepares for its seventh year of service in the fight against prostate cancer, as joint-chairman Roland Harris reports.

IT'S almost hard to believe that the Mitcham Prostate Cancer Support Group's previous meeting was a pre-Christmas annual dinner, attended by a total of 30 members and partners. Racquets Bistro was again the venue for this very enjoyable event on November 24, 2011.

Therefore our group has been in recess for three months, which seems to have passed quickly – although it will be a pleasure to reacquaint ourselves with other group participants once again.

The Mitcham support group will celebrate its seventh year of operation in May 2012, and the Colonel Light Gardens RSL is pleased to have us back in its venue for another year of activities and peer support.

The average attendance during 2011 was 26 people. Even the Annual General Meeting attracted 24

COMING EVENT FEBRUARY MEETING

The Mitcham support group's first meeting for 2012 will be on February 23, comprising the Annual General Meeting, general discussion and the screening of a selected DVD. The group meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Colonel Light Gardens RSL Club, 4 Prince George Parade, Colonel Light Gardens, from 7pm to 8.45pm.

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

members, so we hope to exceed that for our first 2012 meeting, being held on February 23.

We endeavour to limit the business side of our meetings to the first 15 minutes, which will then maximise time for guest speakers, and provide more of an opportunity for members to discuss their own situation, including the ever-popular chats over supper

before the evening runs too late.

I am aware that the attractions and distractions of retirement, family care and other social duties make it difficult for voluntary leaders to visit members and personally promote support groups.

Some members will therefore slip under our radar unless they advise leaders

of related health issues as they arise. I hear the lament that "someone should do something" to follow up members in a pastoral sense, and realise that as a voluntary group we have limitations.

However, any call for support is willingly met, and peer support within our group's monthly meeting is a priority.

It is therefore crucial that all members of the support group remain active by keeping in communication with group leaders, who do care and want to know about everyone's situation.

We will continue to run our meetings efficiently, with room for compassion, and provide a range of interesting topics.

To set this off in the right direction, we will certainly look forward to seeing you at the Annual General Meeting on Thursday February 23.

New support group to commence in the Riverland

• THE INAUGURAL MEETING of a new prostate cancer support group is being held in the Riverland this month. This public meeting will be held at 7 pm on TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, in the Berri Hotel. Malcolm and Beverley Ellis (City of Onkaparinga Support Group), Bryan and Kay Hearn (McLaren Districts Support Group) and Ron Lehmann (Murray Bridge Support Group) will be attending to offer the assistance of the Central Australia Chapter to the new group members.

The convenor of this new and as yet un-named support group will be Alan Dand.

This new support group in the Riverland will become the 16th support group within the Central Australia Chapter, which covers South Australia and the Northern Territory – and helps fulfill the new PCFA goal of building a wider national network of prostate cancer support groups, from 110 to 200 groups Australia-wide within the next three years.

City of Onkaparinga Prostate Cancer Support Group

Participating in conversations with more local cancer groups

After an enjoyable close to 2011, the new year begins with an encouraging new southern region cancer support initiative, as Onkaparinga support group chairman John Shields reports.

TO mark the conclusion of 2011 for the City of Onkaparinga Prostate Cancer Support Group, the assembled members enjoyed our traditional end-of-year barbecue, which was held at the home of Peter and Christine Kiley and was a great success.

A special thank you is extended to Peter and Christine for allowing us to use their excellent facility. It certainly helped to make our get-together very enjoyable.

As is usual for this event, we had a raffle to help pay our expenses, and we offer thanks

to all who donated prizes for the raffle.

It was also good to have Juli, Artie and Victoria Ferguson with us again. Juli and Artie outlined the work that the Fleurieu Cancer Network is doing in the southern suburbs and notified us of the formation of a new Cancer Friendship Support Group in Christie Downs.

JOINING IN CANCER CONVERSATIONS

IAN Fisk and John Shields attended a Cancer Conversation Project held at Christie Downs Community

House on December 8, 2011. It certainly was a very good opportunity for everyone to talk openly and freely about their Cancer journey.

The next meeting for this project is on Thursday February 16 from 1pm to 3pm, and John certainly encourages everyone who is on the Cancer Journey to attend.

Please check out the excellent Fleurieu Cancer Network Website at www.fcn.org.au and click on the EVENTS button for more details about the Cancer Conversation Project and other southern region cancer initiatives.

COMING EVENT

MARCH MEETING:

The City of Onkaparinga Prostate Cancer Support Group will hold its next meeting at 6.30pm on Wednesday, March 7 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.pcsog.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.**

Barossa Prostate Cancer Support Group

THE Barossa Prostate Cancer Support Group will conduct its first meeting for 2012 on Tuesday February 21, at the home of group co-ordinator Don Piro, 28 Kindler Ave, Nuriootpa, from 2pm to 4pm. It will be great to catch up again with everybody and start our 2012 year in positive fashion.

This year promises to be very interesting for the support group, with our regular meetings scheduled to include more guest speakers. Don also hopes to reach out with

weekly advertising to the local community, letting others know that we are available and can offer assistance to men travelling with cancer.

For the Kapunda Fair in April, we will need to begin planning how we should participate in this event as a group. We should also discuss other ventures such as Movember that we wish to be involved in as a group. For further information, phone Barossa Valley Prostate Cancer Support Group co-ordinator Don Piro on 8562 3359.

WHYALLA PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

The Whyalla 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. Everybody is welcome to attend these meetings – indeed, the wives and partners of group members are an integral part of this group, because any cancer affects the whole family.

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

Clarity at the conference

The annual Central Australia Chapter conference in November provided an inspiring closure to 2011, with the PCFA's new direction and pledge of resources for the network of prostate cancer support groups clearly mapped out, as Bryan Hearn reports.

THE Central Australia Chapter celebrated another successful year by hosting its third annual conference on November 18 and 19 at the Arkaba Hotel in Adelaide, attended by 60 participants and presenters.

Arranged by the Chapter Council, the conference program was opened by State opposition health spokesman Dr Duncan McFetridge, who detailed his party's views of prostate cancer and health in general.

The first speakers were PCFA CEO Anthony Lowe and John Friedsam (manager, support groups) who explained new organisational structures within PCFA and how \$3.9 million in Federal funding will be spent over the next three years. They also detailed how support group members can maintain better contact and involvement with PCFA activities, especially via an improved and more informative website.

Associate Professor Michael Penniment, a radiation oncologist from the Royal Adelaide Hospital, gave a presentation on work being undertaken at the Darwin Cancer Centre and included information on treatments available at the centre. He also detailed some research work he had undertaken in Siberia, Los Angeles and Australia.

After lunch, Dr Roger Hunt addressed members on palliative care. The underlying concept of the talk was: "All life is a sexually



LEFT: PCFA CEO Dr Anthony Lowe presents the first address at the 2011 Central Australia Chapter Conference, which attracted about 60 interested delegates.

transmitted terminal disease".

His presentation included the results of bone cancer following prostate cancer, illustrating effects and various treatments available. Discussion also covered extremely high PSA test results and how they may have evolved; use of different pain relief drugs, and other treatments that carry various side effects.

Keith Williams provided information on the Personally Controlled Electronic Health records scheme that will be introduced nationally on July 1, 2012. This is an "opt in" scheme, in which participants maintain full control over the availability of their personal health records. The scheme has been devised to overcome delays in medical records being accessed, especially for those who travel.

The Chapter AGM acknowledged retiring councilors Jeff Roberts, John Baulderstone and Bryan

Hearn, applauding their input over the past three years. The three vacancies on council were filled by nominees Don Lockley (Katherine group), Ian Wagner (Alice Springs group) and Richard Harry (Limestone Coast group).

All groups had submitted an annual report, which were contained in the conference booklet. Chapter guidelines requires Council officers to be elected at the first council meeting following the AGM, and such a meeting was convened later that evening, during which Terry Harbour was elected Chapter chairman, Ian Wagner vice chairman, John Shields continues as treasurer and David Merry as secretary.

As part of the AGM, members discussed a review of the Bunnings barbecue program and it was agreed that much improvement is required – although each store manager has the final say in how these events are conducted.

The second day of conference opened with feedback and comment on the first day's events before Dr Hsiang Tan, a medical oncologist from the RAH, explained in further detail the journey of a patient developing bone cancer following prostate cancer.

Coralie Hunt, widow of the late prostate cancer stalwart Trevor Hunt, spoke of her role as a carer for Trevor during his lengthy illness. Many of those present empathised with her views and joined in an open discussion.

Incontinence nurse Sandra, attending as a delegate from Alice Springs, also spoke to members and took questions from the floor about her professional role.

After lunch, the new Chapter chairman Terry Harbour summed up the conference as being very informative and beneficial – which was supported by a generous vote of thanks to the organisers from the audience.