

# P.S.A. NEWSLETTER

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*PROSTATE(CANCER) SUPPORT  
AWARENESS  
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A Member of the Association of Prostate Cancer  
Support Groups (SA) Inc.

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## Report on the **June 2004 Meeting**

**Held at the Burnside Hospital on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> June**

**Thank you to our sponsors: Abbott Australasia Ltd., City of West Torrens  
Council and to the Burnside Hospital for the use of their Lecture Room.**

**Chair: Barry Oakley**

**43 Members Present.**

**Apologies:** Gerry & Cynthia, Ken, Terry, John, Gary, Eric, Leon, Jeff & Theban, and Keith & Joy. Gerry is having some radiotherapy done on his neck and Eric has gone home from hospital after having hip replacement surgery. Bill & Barbara (Bill is in the Daw Park Repat Hospital on our sick list undergoing numerous tests etc) **Get well fellas!**

**New Members:** A big welcome to two new members, Edmund and Roger.

### **Correspondence:**

Newsletters have been received from the Gold Coast P/C Support Group, North East, Onkaparinga, Bundaberg, Cobram, Barossa Valley, the S.A. P/C Action Group, Andrology Australia, the Daw Park Repatriation Hospital, and the "Prostate News" from the P.C.F.A., Sydney.

### **Fund Raising Dinner Dance and Floor Show:**

A number of pamphlets were received from Ms. Simone Caruana re her forthcoming **Fund Raising Dinner Dance & Floor Show**. This fun night will be held from **6.30pm on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> July**, at the San Giorgio Community Centre, Henry St, Payneham, the cost being \$45.00 per head. **All funds raised will go to the Australian Cancer Research Foundation for cancer research. There will be live music, a DJ, an Auction, the Pink Dog Corp Cabaret, a 4-course dinner & much more.** Tickets can be ordered from Ms. Maria Caruana by phoning her on **419 868 594**. It sounds like it's going to be a really great night. If you can't make it yourself, **buy a couple of tickets for your kids. They'd really love to go. Roll up! Roll up!** Congrats to Simone for her initiative in organizing this evening. Simone's grandfather passed away through prostate cancer about twelve months ago and this is her way of doing something towards cancer research.

### **The Prostate News:**

We have enclosed the latest copy of "The Prostate News." It contains a number of interesting items including Melissa's report on Professor Villis Marshall's lecture he gave last year. Max Gardner, the Chairman of the PCFA, has given a brief review of Barry Oakley's books, "There's Some Good Years Left" and "Life's in the Pink". If you want a copy of either of Barry's books, give him a ring on **8265 3446** for particulars.

### **Grants for Seniors Program 2004:**

We have just been advised, by the Grants Program Manager, S.A. Dept. of Human Services, that our application for a Senior's Grant for \$600 has been unsuccessful. Money for the production & posting of Newsletters by various organizations received a very low priority this year. Keeping members and others informed of community group activities, in our opinion, should have received a higher priority than it did.

In part, the letter said, "The number of proposals for the 2003-2004 Grants for Seniors Funding round far exceeded the funds available. Unfortunately, it was not possible to fund all the applications received."

Well, we will just have to tighten our belts a bit tighter! If I tighten my belt any tighter I'll cut myself in half

### **The Newsletter Team:**

We thought you might like to meet the members of "**The Newsletter Team**", face to face. Our first Newsletter Editor was Graham Lyons, followed by our President, Gerry McCreanor. Earlier this year the job was taken over by our Secretary/Treasurer, Reg Mayes. Our Newsletter Secretary is Melissa Dougherty. The chaps that fold & place the newsletters into envelopes are Reg, Ian Fisk, Jeff Roberts and lately, Paul Ferrett. Earlier on, this job was done by Gerry and Cynthia and some of their children and grandchildren. When they were away, the job was done by Amy Mayes, and Emily Mayes & Rachel Everett (the grandkids). Ian Fisk has recently taken some photos for us and also manipulates some of the Newspaper & other Support Group items into a better format on his computer and prints out a master copy. This year, Anne Milne at the Cancer Council South Australia's head-office, has been photocopying about 260 copies of

our Newsletter each month. These are posted out free to members. Since 1999 we have printed 55 different Newsletters, some of which contained 8 pages of news, and accurate facts and figures (we hope). **From all of this, you can see that the production of "The Newsletter" is a joint effort by a number of our members. Keep up the good work guys and gals!**



Gerry



Reg, Jeff and Paul



Melissa



Anne



Ian



Reg

### Library News:

We have just received a number of copies of the book, "Coping with a Diagnosis of Prostate Cancer" from the Queensland Cancer Trust. This is an excellent 44 page book and they are free. Any Prostate Support Group in Australia requiring copies should write to The Queensland Cancer Trust, 553 Gregory Terrace, Fortitude Valley, QLD.4006 or e-mail them at [qldcf@qldcancer.com.au](mailto:qldcf@qldcancer.com.au) and ask for some copies to be posted. See John if you would like to borrow a copy from our library.

John also has a number of the latest Andrology Australia Newsletters which deals with the subject, "The Psychosocial Issues concerning Men's Health".

### Peeballs:

Trevor Hunt purchased a box of 21 "peeballs" from the P.C.F.A. and managed to sell the lot. \$1 dollar from the sale of each peeball goes to the PCFA for cancer research. Well done Trevor!

### Association of Prostate Cancer Support Groups Inc:

Gary Bowes, the Chairman of the Association dropped in 900 copies of our new brochure for distribution around Adelaide. Gary managed to get 3,000 copies printed free of charge. Great work Gary!

### The Cancer Council South Australia, Special Development Days:

Due to the absence of Gerry, Barry, Reg & John, Ian Fisk was good enough to go along and represent our Group at the above **Special Development Days** on 27<sup>th</sup> May and 3<sup>rd</sup> June. Ian reported that both days proved to be very helpful and interesting with talks being given by a number of lecturers about RAH Brachytherapy starting in Sept this year, Nutrition & Cancer, Clinical Trials, The Cancer Connect Program, Relaxation, Support Leaders Kits, The Progress Against Cancer and Communication & Grief. Barry also went along for a day's workshop dealing with the "**Cancer Connect Program**" which was conducted on a different date. **Thanks Barry and Ian for giving up some of your spare time.**

### The latest Prostate Cancer Research:

According to an article in "The Australian" published on 2.6.04, **a gene discovered by an Australian researcher could, within five years, lead to a test for prostate cancer that might catch the killer disease at a pre-cancerous stage.** Sydney researcher Jennifer Byrne, based at the Children's Hospital in Westmead, said her gene could be used to detect prostate cancer early enough to allow non-surgical treatment, leading to huge savings on health budgets. It would be detectable from a blood or semen test rather than the current invasive testing procedures used for prostate checks. PS: There is another article about more gene technology later in this Newsletter.

### Penile Implants:

As mentioned in an earlier Newsletter, one of our members would still like to know more about **penile implants, the associated costs and whether they work or not.** Last year a chap at one of our meetings said that he had one. Could he,

or anyone else with some first hand knowledge about this, or similar gadgets, give Reg a ring on **8298 8040** so that he can, in confidence, pass the info onto the member making enquiries. Thanks!

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**“A Cowboy’s Guide to Life’.**

Some very wise sayings lifted from the Cobram & District P/C Group’s Oct. ‘01 Newsletter. Thanks chaps!

Don’t squat with your spurs on. **Ouch!**

If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is to **stop digging.**

If it don’t seem like it’s worth the effort, **it probably ain’t.**

The **biggest troublemaker** you’ll probably ever have to deal with, **watches you shave your face in the mirror each morning.**

**Never ever** ask a barber if you want a haircut.

If you get to **thinking you’re a person of some influence**, then just try and order someone else’s dog around.

Good judgment comes with experience, and a lotta that **comes from bad judgement.**

**The quickest & safest way to double your money is to fold it over, and put it back in your pocket.**

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**Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia:**

The Chairman of the P.C.F.A. Mr. Max Gardner, is appealing for donations to go towards prostate cancer research. If you want to make a donation, all donations of \$2.00 or more are tax deductible. At our last meeting, it was unanimously agreed that we make a donation of \$30.00 The P.C.F.A. address is:- The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, P.O., Box 1332, Lane Cove, N.S.W. 1595

At the conclusion of business, Reg & Ian screened four short videos dealing with the latest gene technology being carried out at the Queensland Institute of Medical Research, some experiments with snake poison as a cancer cure being done at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, Bob McKenzie’s sea water research and obesity in men.

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**Dr.Linda Swaney from the Adelaide Radiotherapy Centre** then gave members a very interesting lecture, with the aid of a power point presentation, dealing with various radiotherapy treatments at present available in Adelaide. The following brief notes were made by Reg:-



**Both external beam and conformal beam radiotherapy are available in Adelaide.**

**Brachytherapy treatment is** available in a private medical centre and this type of treatment will be available at the Royal Adelaide Hospital in September. A linear accelerator is also available. This machine used to take up two rooms, but with the latest technology, the machine can fit on an ordinary table. It is a very reliable instrument and can bend radioactive waves to suit and make them really “home in” on tumours. They are very expensive, with some machines costing up to \$2,000,000.

With the use of **external beam radiotherapy**, the risk of impotence is lower than in surgery. Also there is a lower incontinence rate. The usual length of time for radiotherapy treatment is 6 to 8 weeks, Mon to Fri. This can be a bit awkward if you live in the country. The side effects are:- (1) It can make you tired and listless. (2) One could develop diarrhoea lasting a few weeks to a few months.(3) Could cause prostatitis for a short period, and (4) Occasionally causes urinary problems. You may have to use a catheter for a while.

**Conformal Radiotherapy Treatment** is the latest type of treatment. The beams can be shaped more accurately and an increased dose can be given with the use of a multi-leaf collimator called an I.M.R.T. There are two machines at the Royal Adelaide Hospital and are used for all types of cancer, not just prostate cancer. It is not generally known, but the prostate gland does move around slightly and this causes a problem when trying to accurately focus the radiation beam onto the prostate. To reduce the adverse effect of organ (prostate gland) motion error and reduce the risk of radiation injury to the bladder base and the anterior rectal wall, a new technique has been introduced involving gold seeds being implanted into the prostate. Don’t confuse this with the radioactive seeds used in Brachytherapy. The gold seeds are used as accurate markers for the beams and remain in the prostate.

**Brachytherapy Treatment** has been around for some years and has been carried out in other Australian capital cities. It involves the implantation of 80 to 110 radioactive seeds into the prostate. In some cases the seeds are removed a few days, but in other cases they are left there. To be able to get this treatment in Australia there are strict rules that are applied to the patient. The PSA Level must be under 10. The Gleason score no higher than 6, and the volume of the prostate gland less than 45 mls. The main side effects are frequent and urgent urination-A reduced flow of urine-Some urine retention. A Catheter is required for about 5% of patients for a few days to a few weeks. In 1% of patients, a catheter is required for 3 to 6 months. Due to the radioactive seeds, patients are told not to be near pregnant women for at least 2 months. All radiation dissipates after 12 months.

### **Late Radiotherapy Treatment:**

In cases where cancer spreads to the bones and other organs, 80% to 90% of patients will benefit from further radiotherapy treatment. This can also help where there is a swelling in the legs due to damaged lymph glands.

**Metastrone**, a "bone seeking" isotope, is now being used to seek out cancerous spots in the bones.

Dr. Swaney then went on to answer quite a few questions from members. At the conclusion of the evening, our Vice President, Barry Oakley, thanked her for the very enlightening and interesting lecture and presented her with a bottle of the very best Eaglehawk Riesling.

For further information on this subject, members should check out "The Prostate News" Issue 14, May 2003, "Public Hospital Brachytherapy", "The Prostate News" Issue 6, May 2000, "External Radiation Therapy after Radical Prostatectomy", "The Prostate News" Issue 18, May 2004 "Prostate Cancer 2004 – What's New? Part 2 by Phillip Stricker", the Adelaide PSA group's web site, [www.psaadelaide.org](http://www.psaadelaide.org) I. Fisk Brachytherapy Slide Show, and the ABC web site <http://abc.net.au/health/regions/yourstories/hotprostate.htm> by Ian Fisk & Health Matters. In addition there are pamphlets on the subject contained in the Mr. Phip project (Prostate Health Improvement Project). See John Mayes our Librarian should you require a copy.

### **NEXT MEETINGS**

**Don't forget our next meeting will be held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July, commencing at 7.00pm.** Ms. Prue Rymill, Pharmacy Educator, will give us a talk on "How to Save Money on Your Prescription Medicine". So if you want to save some money, roll up! Roll up! The August meeting is on **Aug 2nd** "Open Discussion How are you progressing?" There will be no Newsletter in July.

### **Support for cancer patients**

A NEW information and support program for people with advanced cancer will start at Daw Park Hospice on Thursday, June 3.

An oncologist will provide Information and answer questions.

The program will cover managing symptoms, looking ahead, community services and support and- communications with health professionals and family.

Register on the Cancer Helpline on 13 1120.

### **From "The Advertiser" 10.6.04**

#### **Prostate cancer vaccine trials 'a success'** By JOHN SHEED in Brisbane

MEDICAL researchers have developed a "vaccine" that uses a patient's own cancer cells to attack prostate cancer, the most common cancer in men.

Dr Chris Schmidt, head of the cancer immunotherapy laboratory at the Queensland Institute of Medical Research, said yesterday the vaccine worked by boosting the immune system and telling it which cells to attack.

This worked by taking cells from the patient and then adding tumour cells which were irradiated after being taken from the cancer.

"In a culture they seem to fuse and the combination of those two seems to be the agent in what we inject into the patients," Dr Schmidt said.

Rockhampton man Reg Buckley, who was diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer nine years ago, said he probably owed his life to the program.

Dr Schmidt said Mr Buckley began the trial treatment six months ago, at a time when his prostate cancer had spread to pelvic lymph nodes and throughout his pelvis.

Most of the tumours had now disappeared and the indicator of prostate problems, his prostate specific antigen reading, had dropped from 150 to eight, which is just above the normal reading for his age.

"I would probably be dead (without the treatment)," Mr Buckley, 68, said in Brisbane yesterday. "It's a second chance at life, I'm not likely to get another."

Dr Schmidt said up to 20 people would be involved in the trials, which could take five years, and he was "ecstatic" with results.

### **The Free Trade Agreement and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme:**

**PBS: lobby groups gather to dispute the FTA** *Australian Financial Review, 14/4, p6 and p61* Doctors, drug lobbyists and consumer groups are warring over the shape of the free-trade agreement with the US as the first round of public hearings into the controversial deal begins next Monday. The drug lobby says the FTA will bring millions of dollars of investment into Australia through drug research and provide earlier access to medicines for patients.

However, the powerful peak doctor group, the Australian Medical Association is worried that the independence of the pharmaceutical benefits scheme, which decides what drugs will be subsidised by the taxpayer, could be under threat. There are fears that the new FTA procedures will give drug companies, patients, politicians and the media greater power to pressure the independent Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee, which recommends to the Health Minister if drugs should be subsidised.

The Australian Consumer Association is also concerned the independence of the \$6 billion PBS is under threat.

**PBS: FTA dispute mechanism looms over PBS** *Canberra Times, 15/4, p17* In any trade negotiation there will be intractable issues arising from conflicts between the respective domestic interest groups. To resolve these, negotiators customarily agree to items of text that are 'constructively ambiguous'. Eventually these constructive textual ambiguities have to be sorted out. In the case of the US-Australia FTA, this may involve resort to the dispute settlement chapter, which has received little attention to date. Under chapter 21, the fate of Australia's PBS could be decided by a three-person trade panel (one nominated by the US, one by Australia and the third jointly agreed), composed of experts with a background in international trade and intellectual property law.

The large US pharmaceutical industry argues that the agreement will make innovative medicines more readily available in Australia. Yet, does mere incremental improvement of drugs in existing lucrative developed-nation disease markets truly constitute innovation? Responding to innovation has never been a basic principle of our PBS. Instead, of utmost importance has been the capacity of drugs to offer significant therapeutic gain to the whole community at a reasonable price. The PBS represents (*It's thought by supporters*) world's best practice on access to medicines. If our PBS remains part of this FTA the PBAC will have to work in the shadow of US trade-enforcement tools and its fundamental principles may be irrevocably altered.

*From the Gold Coast P/C Support Group's May '04 Newsletter.*

### **Your Annual Check-up?** *from About.com*

Most of us know we should have an annual check up, but do we actually do it? If we have one every year do we actually know if it is complete? Do we understand the tests and examinations we are having done? Most of us will answer no to at least one of those questions.

#### **Tests For Men:- Prostate Exam**

**Starting at age 50 a man should have a digital exam of his prostate. The physician uses a gloved finger in the rectum to determine if there is any enlargement of the prostate. Enlargement could indicate benign enlargement or even cancer.**

- **PSA** - Prostate Specific Antigen is a blood test that can indicate prostate cancer. If the level is high a biopsy of the prostate may be indicated.

#### **Tests For Women:-**

##### **• Mammogram**

It is recommended this test be done yearly for females over the age of 40. The doctor, during the check up should perform a clinical breast exam. Monthly self breast exam should also be done, you can be taught this technique during your yearly check up.

##### **• PAP Smear and Pelvic Exam**

This test should be done every three years, or yearly if at higher risk for cervical or vaginal cancer.

##### **• Measurement of Bone Mass**

There is no standard for frequency of this exam. Women with a family or personal history that puts them at higher risk of osteoporosis should have this test.

The other **Routine** tests include: Blood Pressure, Height, Weight, Chest X-ray, EKG, Focal Occult Blood Test, Blood Work - Yearly blood work should include a blood count to rule out any bleeding, glucose to detect the onset of diabetes, thyroid function tests to rule out any thyroid disorder and blood electrolytes which can detect kidney problems and early heart problems. Your doctor may also check some additional labs depending on your personal and family history.

Why didn't I think of this?" (Reg)

### **RED, RED PILLS**

Various studies have shown that drinking a little red wine can be good for you - but not everyone wants to drink alcohol. So the Pavese Pharma Biochemical Institute in Pavia Italy, is developing tablets that contain all the non-alcoholic goodness in a glass of wine (WO 03/099040).

They start with *vinasse*, the liquid waste of mainly antioxidant polyphenols left in wine after the ethyl alcohol for use in hard liquors has been distilled off. Sugars, amino acids and a preservative are added and the mix is filtered and poured into vials. Freeze-drying and compacting the mix leaves a tablet with all the benefits of a glass of wine, say the inventors.

*From "The New Scientist" 17.1.04*

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A brochure for a cruise liner informed its customers that, "A typical day at sea might start with a genital stretch-and-tone session on the sun deck." New Scientist

Hmmm!. Yeah! This sounds like a pretty interesting sort of trip. I think it's the one that was booked out in 2 hours (4,000 passengers) instead of taking the usual 6 weeks. I'm still trying to figure out why? Reg

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Cigarette snatch</b></p> <p>HONG KONG: A Chinese anti-smoking activist has brought his unorthodox methods to Hong Kong, snatching cigarettes from unsuspecting locals. Zhang Yue, 44, inspired to activism by the death of his 26-year-old sister, has visited 69 mainland cities in three years, snatching cigarettes from smokers.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Three Cheers for Zhang Yue! Hip! Hip! Hooray! We ought to invite him to Adelaide &amp; let him loose in Adelaide pubs and the Casino. It would then be a relief to be able to breathe some fresh air and not someone else's smoke.</b></p>
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After stopping for drinks at an illegal bar, a Zimbabwean bus driver found that the 20 mental patients he was supposed to be transporting from Harare to Bulawayo had escaped. Not wanting to admit his incompetence, the driver went to a nearby bus-stop and offered everyone waiting there a free ride.

He then delivered the passengers to the mental hospital, telling the staff that the patients were very excitable and prone to bizarre fantasies.

The deception wasn't discovered for 3 days.

### Retirement Plan

Had you purchased \$1000.00 of Nortel stock three years ago, it would now be worth \$49.00. With Enron, you would have \$16.50 left of the original \$1000.00. with World Com, you would have less than \$5.00 left.

But, if you had purchased \$1000.00 worth of beer three years ago, drank all the beer, then turned in the cans for the aluminium recycling price, you would have \$214.00.

Based on the above, current investment advice is to drink & recycle.

### Great Truths About Aging

- 1) Growing old is mandatory; growing up is optional.
- 2) Forget the health food. I need all the preservatives I can get.
- 3) When you fall down, you wonder what else you can do whilst you're down there.
- 4) You're getting old when you get the same sensation from a rocking chair that you once got from a roller coaster.
- 5) It's frustrating when you know all the answers but nobody bothers to ask you the questions.
- 6) Time may be a great healer, but it's a lousy beautician.
- 7) Wisdom comes with age, but sometimes age comes alone.

A pessimist's blood type is always b-negative.

Without geometry, life is pointless.

*This Newsletter was compiled & typed by Reg Mayes. Ian Fisk, Jeff Roberts, Paul Ferrett & Reg folded & posted the Newsletter. Anne Milne at the Cancer Council South Australia photocopied it. After re-arranging news items into a better format on his computer & supplying photographs, Ian Fisk printed it. 260 copies were distributed.*