



# Below the Belt!

Vol. 16 No. 1

December 2016 – February 2017

Newsletter of The Nepean / Blue Mountains Prostate Cancer Support Group Inc.  
(ABN No. 35 871 442 176)

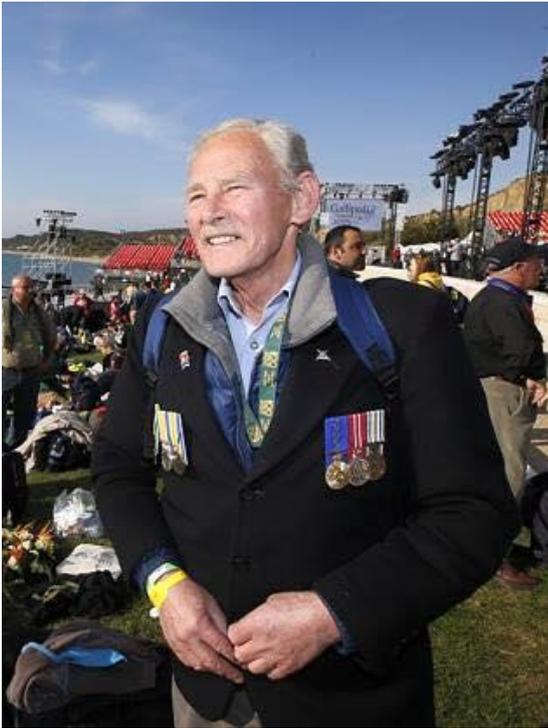
## Vale Tony Sonneveld Q.A.M.

3 May, 1946 – 13 November, 2016



At age 70, Member and Patron of our Group, Tony Sonneveld OAM, sadly passed away on 13 November 2016. Tony was also former PCFA National Director, Chairman of the NSW/ACT board and Honorary Life Member of PCFA.

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Diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2003, Tony used his own experience to actively promote prostate cancer awareness, education and fund raising.

On May 3, 2006, on his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, Tony found he had metastatic cancer of his bone structure and spent the last ten years advocating for further research into the disease, and lobbying for the government to provide better and more affordable treatment options for those with advanced disease.

Despite his diagnosis, Tony lived life to the full, including tackling the Kokoda track, countless ski trips, climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, hang gliding, participating in arduous cycling events and attending countless events to represent PCFA.

Tony was a tireless campaigner for prostate cancer and will be sadly missed by all members of our group and everyone associated with the Prostate Cancer community. He will be remembered for his dedication to helping those with prostate cancer,

his amazing energy, positivity and passion.

Tony's memorial service was attended by several of our Group members.

Many people spoke of Tony's exploits in what was a full and adventurous life. We only know Tony through our involvement with prostate cancer.

But there was so much more to Tony.

A metallurgist by profession, Tony was awarded an OAM in 2010 for his services to "non-destructive testing" of pipelines, power stations, oil refineries and aircraft, he was also responsible for the publication of a book on this subject.

He was also conscripted into the Australian Army; He underwent a 6 month Officer Training course at OTU Scheyville located near Windsor, NSW. After this training he was posted as Tank Shop Manager Puckapunyal Area RAEME Workshops. He left the army after 2 years as a full Lieutenant.

Tony was one of the founding fathers of the OTU Association. He has been National Chairman, New South Wales State Chairman and a driving force that saw the Association become such a strong part of the lives of those who had shared "The Scheyville Experience".

Tony was also a very successful business man, running a number of companies.

Our thoughts are with his wife, Viv, sons Michael and Mark, and daughter Rebecca and their children.



at



**The December Group  
Meeting  
Monday, December 19th  
is  
Christmas Party  
Time!**

Venue:

The Auditorium, Level 3,  
West Block.

Nepean Hospital  
Parker St, Penrith.

(Car Park opposite West Block)

(This is our New meeting place)

Commencing 6.30 - 7.00

Food, Drinks and Music Provided



## **Group Annual General Meeting – 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2016**

The Group held its Annual General Meeting on Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup>. All positions on the Board were declared vacant and elections held to fill these positions for the coming year.

There was only one change to the Board, Linda Brandt taking over the Publicity Officer role from Gabrielle Moran. In standing down Gabrielle assured us that she is not 'retiring' merely 'stepping back' and will continue to be involved in the Group's activities, particularly continuing in her role as convenor of the Carers group.

The full list of Office bearers is located on the last page of this Newsletter.

## **Visit by Evan Kallipolitis** (Community Engagement Officer with PCFA)



At our AGM (See item Page 3) we were once again pleased to welcome to our meeting Evan Kallipolitis, Community Engagement Officer with the PCFA

In addition to acting as 'Returning Officer' for our AGM, Evan gave a talk on the availability of information from PCFA on all topics associated with Prostate Cancer. This information is divided into 4 categories,

### **1 – General information Leaflets**

These include leaflets that provide general information to help raise awareness of prostate cancer. These leaflets are available in a number of languages as well as English. Each leaflet covers a following topic:

- What you need to know about prostate cancer
- Caring for someone with prostate cancer
- Support groups for people affected by prostate cancer

Hard copies are available and they can also be read online. (The Group's hard working Promotions Officer, John Kemp, also has copies of these leaflets.



### **2 – Information Packs for recently Diagnosed men.**

These packs are also available on USB cards and can be read online. Each Information Pack is designed for the following groups:

- Localised Prostate Cancer
- Advanced Prostate Cancer
- Gay and Bisexual Men
- Younger Men
- Partners and Carers

Each Information Pack contains four booklets covering a major topic during the cancer journey:

- Diagnosis: information on how prostate cancer is diagnosed
- Treatment: treatment options available
- Side Effects: side effects of treatment, with tips on how to cope
- Wellbeing: dealing with the practicalities of living with prostate cancer

### **3 – Information Guides with more detail on specific treatments and side effects**

PCFA has developed evidence based Information Guides for men following a diagnosis of prostate cancer who are in the process of deciding on treatment options. They can be printed as A4 documents, or read online.

- Maintaining wellbeing with prostate cancer
- Understanding surgery for prostate cancer
- Understanding brachytherapy for prostate cancer
- Understanding hormone therapy for prostate cancer
- Understanding urinary problems following prostate cancer treatment
- Understanding sexual issues following prostate cancer treatment
- Understanding bowel disturbance following prostate cancer treatment
- Drugs List: commonly used drugs in the treatment of prostate cancer

### **4 – Resources for Health Professionals (Including advice for the indigenous community)**

## Another great source of information is the PCFA 'On Line Community'

The PCFA Online Community is open to everyone who has been impacted by prostate cancer to share their experiences and connect with others.

Through the Research Blog, PCFA Online Community members can also learn more about the latest prostate cancer research developments and findings.

**It is free and easy to become a member of the PCFA Online Community.**

**[CLICK HERE TO JOIN NOW](#)**

The Research Blog, referred to above, is presented by Scientific Writer, Wendy Winnall, Wendy presents the latest research in the prostate cancer field and discusses its significance for the community. Wendy encourages questions and discussion on the research blog site and can answer your queries about prostate cancer research. [wendy.winnall@pcfa.org.au](mailto:wendy.winnall@pcfa.org.au)

To give you an idea of what the Research Blog covers here is a recently published article.

### **Exercising your best option** *(by Wendy Winnall – Scientific Writer PCFA)*

It may come as no surprise that regular exercise after a cancer diagnosis can help improve symptoms and quality of life. However about 10 years ago a remarkable idea was proposed; that exercise could also improve survival rates after a cancer diagnosis. The evidence is building that exercise after a diagnosis of breast or colorectal cancer can improve survival rates. Could exercise also increase the survival of prostate cancer patients?

A recent [publication by Canadian](#) researchers adds to a number of studies that suggest exercise can improve prostate cancer survival rates. In this study 830 prostate cancer patients were monitored for up to 17 years. Men who were more physically active after their prostate cancer diagnosis survived longer. Physically active men had a lower chance of dying of prostate cancer, as well as a lower chance of dying from any cause, within the study time period. Only recreational exercise, such as walking or bike-riding, as opposed to housework, was associated with decreased risk of dying from prostate cancer.

A number of similar studies also support exercise as a treatment for prostate cancer, however these are observational studies. As such, they are subject to bias and confounding factors. For instance, men who were in better health to start with were probably more likely to exercise than those in poor health. So it could be that other health problems were causing some men to exercise less, and these patients were more likely to succumb to their cancer due to their poorer overall health, rather than their level of exercise. The Canadian study, however, was commended for its rigorous methodology by Australian exercise medicine researchers Prof Daniel Galvão and Prof Robert Newton, published as a companion piece by the same journal. The Canadian scientists were able to use statistical techniques to minimise confounding factors in their study.

These solid observational studies provide evidence that it is now time that proper randomised controlled trials were performed. A large [multicentre phase III trial](#) called INTERVAL-MCRPC has been initiated, to test whether exercise can increase prostate cancer survival rates.

Australian scientist Prof Robert Newton is one of the senior researchers running this trial, which is funded by the Movember Foundation. The INTERVAL-MCRPC trial is only testing exercise for those with metastatic castrate-resistant prostate cancer. Specifically the trial is designed to determine whether high intensity aerobic and resistance training plus psychosocial support increases survival, compared to psychosocial support alone. Patients will be recruited world-wide, including Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia

What is so remarkable about this concept is that it proposes that exercise is specifically affecting prostate tumour biology. Exercise may be decreasing tumour size, reducing the cancer cell division or reducing cancer cell survival.

A [recent review](#) written by Australian Professors Galvão and Newton have proposed a number of potential mechanisms by which this could be occurring. They propose that the effects of

exercise in reducing body fat as well as increasing muscle mass will impact on the tumour. Building muscle mass may allow these muscles to act as a 'sink' for testosterone in the body, reducing the undesired effect of testosterone on tumours. Exercise can also lead to changes in the blood vessel supply to tumours, improve immune function and reduce inflammation and oxidative stress. Exercise can reduce circulating insulin, a hormone believed to help tumours grow. It could also change gene expression (production of proteins using information from genes) and epigenetics (modifications of DNA to change gene expression) to oppose tumour growth.

The success of the INTERVAL-MCRPC trial will hopefully drive the promotion of exercise as a mainstream treatment to improve survival rates from prostate cancer, rather than just an adjunct therapy to improve quality of life. Exercise may therefore provide a new treatment option, one that does not need a long approval process by pharmaceutical regulatory bodies.



## **Isometric Exercises – What are They?**

*(Sorry about all the 'exercise' articles in this Newsletter but it's a subject that I believe in. I believe if you improve your physical fitness, you are better able to handle the various treatments you are going through)*

I was speaking with a friend the other day and he was extolling the benefits of Isometric Exercises

So what are 'Isometric Exercises'?

Isometrics is a type of strength training in which your muscle length doesn't change when you contract your muscle. Unlike standard strength training, isometrics is done in a static position instead of moving through a range of motion--which means you can practice isometrics anywhere without needing weights or special equipment. Fitness experts say that it only takes about 10 seconds to effectively perform one isometric exercise and, in some cases, no one will even know you're doing it.

To give you an idea of what an isometric exercise looks like, think about pushing against an immovable object, such as a wall or signpost, or trying to open a window that won't budge. This allows your muscles to receive isometric exercise even though you're not moving the wall, post, or window. In other words, your muscles can get exercise just by trying to move something that offers this level of resistance.

So how exactly can you do isometrics? There are almost limitless options for working your muscles in this way. Here are couple of isometric exercises to try that take just 10 seconds a few times a day:

### **Palm Press**

Press your palms together as hard as you comfortably can. Hold for at least 10 seconds, and repeat if desired.

### **Core Engagement**

While sitting in a chair, deliberately tighten your stomach muscles, and hold your feet an inch or two above the floor. To increase the resistance, push your knees down toward the floor with your hands while trying to keep your feet from touching the floor.

### **Neck Strengthenener**

From a seated or standing position; clasp your hands behind your head, pulling your elbows out wide. Then try to push your head back using your neck muscles, while simultaneously trying to push your head forward with your clasped hands. This exercise works your upper back as well as your neck muscles.

*(These are just a few samples of 'Isometrics', Isometric or Resistance Exercise are also part of "The Man Plan", a system of exercises for men on Hormone Replacement Therapy. I'll follow up with some more information in further issues of the Newsletter.)*

## Prostate Dragons 'Bronze Medalists' at Dragons Abreast Festival



The 'Prostate Dragons' had a successful day at this year's Dragons Abreast Festival claiming Third place in the 'Social' Division. The day started overcast with the threat of showers but these proved to be only a minor inconvenience. We had a full team of 30 paddlers plus one reserve. (We also had a couple of 'extras' on standby if needed!) The races were run over three heats plus a final and with only five teams in the Social Division we were guaranteed of at least making the Final! But we still had to 'produce the goods'

### Why Dragon Boating for Breast Cancer Survivors

Breast cancer survivor dragon boat paddling began at the University of British Columbia, in Vancouver, Canada. In 1996. Dr. Don McKenzie, a Professor in the Department of Sports Medicine and exercise physiologist, challenged the prevailing medical thinking that women treated for breast cancer should avoid rigorous upper body exercise for fear of developing lymphedema, a debilitating and chronic side effect of treatment.

He developed a program to determine the impact of exercise on breast cancer survivors, choosing dragon boat paddling as the epitome of strenuous, repetitive upper body exercise. He trained twenty-four breast cancer volunteers in a gym for three months, introduced them to dragon boats and taught them paddling techniques. At the end of the three-month season on the water none of the volunteers had lymphedema.

While Dr. McKenzie's medical experiment/project was underway, the women found they were fitter, healthier and happier. They loved the camaraderie and support of their fellow paddlers and had regained control of their lives.

They realized that dragon boat paddling could become a means to raise awareness of breast cancer and of the ability of survivors to lead normal lives. They named their team 'Abreast In A Boat' and invited other survivors to share their exciting experience.

Over the years, the movement progressed to other areas in Canada and was introduced to other countries by breast cancer survivors who saw the benefits. These inspirational individuals started communicating across the miles, providing much support and encouragement to see other survivors reap the benefit of dragon boating and the health and fitness benefits it provided. Special mention should be made also to the amazing awareness made to the public on breast cancer.

Dragons Abreast Australia commenced in the northern Territory in 1998. Other states soon followed and now every state and territory in Australia has a Dragons Abreast Association.

How did Prostate Cancer survivors become involved? Eight years ago we (Prostate Cancer survivors) were invited to participate in the festival. We have taken part every year since (sometimes with two teams)

Why do we do it? As well as supporting our Breast Cancer 'sisters' it helps to promote awareness of Prostate Cancer while showing men that you can still actively participate in life after diagnosis and treatment for Prostate Cancer....and besides , it's a hell of a lot of fun and keeps you fit!



## **Recent Events**

### **Glenmore Heritage Valley Veteran Golfers**

This Group of people recently held a Charity Golf Day at the beautiful Glenmore Heritage Valley Golf Club. This year our Group was the chosen charity. As well as raising money the golfers helped raise awareness of Prostate Cancer. Total money raised was \$3350.00.

Many thanks to Malcolm Dean and all of his golfing associates.

### **Grant from Penrith City Council**

Under their 'Community Assistance Program' the Penrith City Council gave the Group a grant of \$1000.00. This money will be used to update the Groups aging IT equipment.

### **Hawkesbury Canoe Classic**

The Group once again assisted with the running of the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic. This event was held on October, 29<sup>th</sup>. Our contribution (scrutineering of the boats) was co ordinated by our hard working Promotions Officer, John Kemp.

### **Donations by the Group to other Organisations**

At the October Group Board Meeting the decision was taken to make donations to some of the Organisations we support.

These donations are:

\$2,500.00 to Blue Mountains and Penrith Valley Cancer Help.

\$1,000.00 to Greater Community Transport – Penrith (to assist with running costs)

We are also planning to donate of two Pain Relief Pumps for the Nepean Hospital Palliative Care unit. The total cost of these units is in the order of \$5,000.00

## **What's to Come**

**Group Meeting – Monday December 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Group Christmas Party**

**Group Meeting – Monday January 16<sup>th</sup>**

Open Forum

Topics of Interest to Members

**Group Meeting – Monday February 20<sup>th</sup>**

Stacey Singelton

Accredited Exercise Physiologist

**All meetings :- Gather at 6-30pm for a 7-00pm start.**



### Contact Us

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**THE FACT THAT  
THERE'S A HIGHWAY TO  
HELL AND ONLY A  
STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN  
SAYS A LOT ABOUT  
ANTICIPATED TRAFFIC  
NUMBERS.**

**PAYMENT OF Membership Fees.** Members can pay their annual Group Membership Fees by direct deposit to our bank account.

Our Westpac Account Name is 'Nepean / Blue Mountains Prostate Cancer Support Group'.

BSB is 032-837 and the Account No. is 206701. Current Fees are \$10.00 P.A. per family.

Don't forget to advise who you are in the Lodgement Reference i.e. "John Smith Fees 2016"



**Would you like to make a cash donation to our group?**

**Do you know any Group or Organisation that would like to make a donation?**

**We are a registered charitable organisation and all donations are fully tax deductible.**

**All donations help us to support cancer and health related projects in our local area.**

**If you are able to assist, contact our Treasurer, Allan Burrow.**

**Board Members of the Nepean / Blue Mountains Prostate Cancer Support Group for 2016 are as follows:-**

<b>President :-</b>	David Wilkinson
<b>Vice President:-</b>	Tom Walsh
<b>Secretary :-</b>	Ross Baker
<b>Treasurer :-</b>	Allan Burrow
<b>Librarian :-</b>	Bob Wittrien
<b>Newsletter Editor:-</b>	Alan Howard
<b>Web Site Manager :-</b>	Peter Murphy
<b>Promotions Officer :-</b>	John Kemp
<b>Membership Co Ordinator :-</b>	John Alexander
<b>Publicity Officer :-</b>	Linda Brandt

The Nepean / Blue Mountains Prostate Support Group Inc. is grateful for the support of its members and various local groups. This enables us to produce this newsletter and cover other incidentals in the running of the group.

The Below the Belt 'Zipper' logo (Page 1) is copyrighted to Ms. Caroline Redwood and is used with her kind permission

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**The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the Group.**

**The Group does not offer medical or other professional advice.**

**Articles presented in this or any other issues are presented only as a means of sharing information and opinions with members.**

**It is important that health professionals should be consulted before making any decisions about any treatments.**

**This newsletter has been compiled by Alan Howard from material culled or provided.**

**email: [nbmpcsgnews@gmail.com](mailto:nbmpcsgnews@gmail.com)**

**Nepean / Blue Mountains Prostate Cancer Support Group Web Site 'www.prostatesupport.org.au**