

# Newsletter

## John Perratt

It is with great sadness that I have to tell you that John Perratt passed away peacefully on the morning of 30th October. John joined the association in 2007 and soon established himself as our highly respected newsletter editor. He was also a key member of the committee and a major contributor to the success of NEDPSA. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

A full obituary will be printed in the next edition of our newsletter.

## Apology

Please accept my apologies for the rudimentary nature of this newsletter. As you will be aware, we're currently in the position of changing editors since John Perratt had to give up the role due to ill health and sadly is no longer with us. John was a fantastic editor for many years and will be an extremely hard act to follow. However, I've no doubt that Toby Heriz-Smith, who has volunteered to take up the position, will carry on the good work in exemplary fashion. We look forward to his first edition in February of next year. In the meantime, this stop-gap edition is intended to keep you up to date with events until normal service can be resumed.

Tony Lowe

## Association Meeting at the ISCA Centre on 15<sup>th</sup> October

We had a healthy attendance at this meeting as members eagerly awaited the arrival of our first speaker, Kerrie Jose from the Patient Advice and Liaison Service. Unfortunately, due to a diary malfunction, Kerrie got her days mixed up and we were left with an empty slot. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise because it gave us a welcome opportunity to discuss the future of NEDPSA and the need for new committee members to take up key roles. The ensuing discussion was lively but productive and gave everyone a chance to express their views. It also resulted in Roy Coker offering to be Treasurer and the afore-mentioned Toby Heriz-Smith to be Newsletter Editor. This unexpected but useful conversation would have continued well into the morning if it hadn't been drawn to a close by the need to take an essential coffee break!

Unsurprisingly, our only speaker for the day was well worth waiting for. Miles Goldstraw, a consultant urologist, who has only recently taken up his post at RD&E, was new to most of us. Miles briefly outlined an impressive record in robotic surgery and then went on to review the various treatments and factors related to prostate cancer. Whilst much of it was familiar to those present, his clear presentational style and easy interaction with the audience held everyone's attention. There were two particular points he raised, which stirred particular interest amongst the audience. One was his intention to incorporate a targeted but limited regime of PSA testing in his own health screening after the age of 40 and the other was the effects of a relatively new drug called Docetaxel. This particular drug is being used to treat all sorts of cancers and has been shown to have dramatic effects on the life expectancy of advanced prostate cancer patients. Sadly, the drug is not currently approved by NICE for this use but Miles was convinced that this would change in the very near future. Since Toby (our editor in waiting) is desperate to get hold of this drug for his own treatment, we hope they approve the drug quickly.

For those of you who weren't able to attend the meeting and would like to find out more, Ruth and Chris Chandler have videoed Miles's talk and copied it to DVD. Local group leaders should get in touch with Ruth if they would like to borrow a copy.

## **Local Group News**

### **Budleigh Salterton & Exmouth Group**

There was a good attendance (19 plus 6 apologies) at our meeting at the Manor Hotel on 8<sup>th</sup> October.

Firstly, David Warner mentioned recent press reports of recent research into prostate cancer and, in particular, a new urine test costing only £10, which is claimed to be twice as reliable as PSA blood tests. Furthermore, this test also reveals the size of the tumours, so often obviating the need for biopsies and perhaps enabling urologists to put patients on watchful waiting for a few years when tumours detected are shown to be under the size of a pea.

Linda Hicks, the wife of our member David, gave details and showed samples of the superb graphite portraits she has made of people's pets. She has kindly offered to accept commissions from members, all proceeds being donated to NEDPSA.

David Warner then drew attention to the letter of 28<sup>th</sup> September sent to all members by our chairman, Tony Lowe, regarding the desperate need for volunteers to serve on the committee. We now have 4 vacancies which must be filled urgently if the association is to continue to function. He asked members of the group to each give serious consideration as to whether they could possibly offer to help in any way they could.

On a happier note, Dorrie Warner gave details of our Christmas Lunch which will take place again this year at the Manor Hotel on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December. She asked all those wishing to come to let her know and give details of menu choices. The price will be £16 per head.



## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

**Monday 16th Nov 2015, – Sidmouth Group** – 10:00am, at the Royal York and Faulkner hotel on Sidmouth seafront.

For this meeting we are pleased to welcome Annie Kerr a Patient Support and Information Nurse from the Force Cancer Charity. Contact Terry Fuller on 01404 46996 for further details.

**Thursday 3rd Dec 2015, – Budleigh Salterton & Exmouth Group** – Christmas Lunch, 12.30 at the Manor Hotel, Exmouth.

Contact David Warner on 01395 445614 for further details.

**Thursday 3rd Dec 2015, – Barnstaple & Torrington Group** – Christmas Lunch, 12.30 at the Commodore Hotel, Instow.

Contact Tony Lowe 01598 740331 for further details

**Thursday 17th Dec 2015, – Tiverton, Cullompton & Honiton Group** – Christmas Lunch, 12.30 at the Ruffwell Inn, Rewe

Contact Sylvia Trow on 01392 841603 for further details.

**Thursday 7th Jan 2016, – Exeter Group** – ‘New Year’ lunch, 12.30 at the Langstone Cliff Hotel, Dawlish. Contact Tony and Valerie Hanson for further details, 01392 874254

**Thursday 21st Jan 2016, – Association meeting** – 10:00am, at the ISCA Centre. Guest speakers will be Tam Jackson, Specialist Nurse for Organ Donation and Claire Turner, Uro-Oncology Nurse Specialist at RD&E, who will be talking about the PSA Tracker and Urology Specific Health & Wellbeing Clinics.

**Thursday 17th March 2016, – Budleigh Salterton & Exmouth Group** – 10.00 at the Manor Hotel, Exmouth when our speaker will be Dr Denise Sheehan. Contact David Warner on 01395 445614 for further details.