

**PROSPECT**  
The West of England  
Prostate Cancer Support Group

NEWSLETTER 17 (April 2007)  
Acting Editor Joe Bradley  
10 Stanton Drive, Ludlow, SY8 2PH  
(Tel. (01584) 877827)

**ROGER TABB**

I am sure most of you know by now that Roger Tabb died on 5th March of a chest infection acquired whilst his resistance was lowered by chemotherapy. I believe Roger began his career in the Royal Dockyard at Devonport. He concluded it working at the Ministry of Defence, Bath - presumably, as the Royal Dockyards were by then in private hands, he had a hand in the letting of contracts for the repair of warships - almost a poacher turned gamekeeper role reversal. In retirement at Midsomer Norton he found great enjoyment in playing golf. Prostate cancer came along and Roger seemed to make a good recovery following radical prostatectomy. This was at the time Prospect was launched and Roger became a founder member and also a Committee member from the very outset. He undertook more jobs than the other Committee members felt able to and he did them well. Soon he had the membership lists all sorted out and the Helpline set up and running under his supervision. Then, one day, he announced that, through his golfing connections, he had found a year long sponsor for Prospect. This raised a five figure sum which paid for the running of the Group and allowed us all free membership until last year. Most cruelly Roger's reprieve from prostate cancer proved a short lived blessing - he was diagnosed to be suffering from oesophageal cancer and surgery did not stem the disease. With his customary good humour he carried on his work on the Committee as long as he could and we were all impressed by his dignity and courage in misfortune. When he had to resign he passed everything over in good order and we missed very much his friendly presence, his Cornish accent and his "can do" attitude on the Committee. His memorial service was extremely well attended showing how much he was appreciated in every walk of life. Three members of your Committee were present and his widow, Sybil, concluded her letter of thanks for the flowers we sent her by sending Prospect her best wishes for the future.

**THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Wednesday 18th April 2007 at the BAWA Centre, Southmead Road, Bristol at 7.30 pm. When business is concluded Mr. James Rowntree of the Centre for Sport, Exercise and Health will give his talk on "Exercise and Cancer Recovery" that he was unable to give in January. Please come along if you possibly can.

**2006-2007 IN RETROSPECT**

The decision at the 2006 AGM to introduce an annual membership subscription raised doubts in the minds of some. Prospect was spending each year more than its annual income but no crisis point had by then been reached. There was speculation that Prospect might haemorrhage members leaving the Group unable to carry out its primary function. In the event the result was as follows: starting from a listed membership base of 69 members Prospect finished the year with 47 fully paid up members. Only 7 members actually resigned and it was reported to us that 6 members had left the area - one to Australia. No response was received from 12 members after several attempts to contact and it is conjectured that these were the members who had severed their connection with Prospect during past years when no

## 2.

systematic assessment of the membership had taken place. (The mathematically gifted who have noticed that the figures don't quite add up are asked to be more trusting, new members and deaths need also to be taken into account). On a very heartening note membership subscriptions plus donations totalled £850 which is getting on for twice the basic subscription per member.

Another point which exercised the AGM last year was the failure to recruit newly diagnosed prostate cancer patients into the Group. Some have been recruited during the past year (at a worryingly young age) but not enough. The website has helped and there is evidence that the specialist nurses and others are handing out our leaflets more regularly than we gave them credit for. Our chief hope now centres on the proposed meeting between clinicians and recent patients which we were told at the Members' Meeting last October was scheduled for this year and which would provide us with an opportunity to publicize Prospect. The platform's chief concern was the total absence of members willing to serve on the Committee leaving a dwindling number of Officers shouldering ever increasing burdens. Fortunately there are this year some candidates who have come forward and it is hoped they will re-energize the Committee and provide us with a fund of new ideas.

### THE FLORA LONDON MARATHON, 22nd APRIL 2007

45-year old Lt.Col Paul Meldon is running in the London Marathon for The Prostate Cancer Charity. He asked me if any of our members would back him by joining his list of sponsors but not, he insisted, Prospect itself because he appreciated that our funds were for our own work in the fight against prostate cancer. I asked him why he had chosen prostate cancer expecting to hear of some personal or family link with the disease. His reply was that it was only when he had looked into it that he had realized how little he and other men knew about it, how little publicity it got compared with, say, breast cancer and what an impact it had on society. I was so impressed that he had chosen prostate cancer only after considering so carefully where he felt he could do most good that I promised to support him myself and give his efforts publicity in the newsletter. Would you like to support him too? If so, before the day of the event, go to <[www.justgiving.com/paulforprostate](http://www.justgiving.com/paulforprostate)> - you might like to add "Prospect" after your name to show where you are coming from.

### HOUSE OF COMMONS MEETING

The follow up to the discussion the Chairman had with his M.P. prior to the main meeting was a written Parliamentary Question to the Department of Health. In due course this elicited a response signed by Rosie Winterton which outlined the Government's on-going programme into the treatment of prostate cancer in this country. This read very well and any member who would like a copy has only to ask me for one. Notably it contained the key phrase "we are committed to introducing a national screening programme for prostate cancer once screening and treatment techniques are sufficiently developed ...." A supplementary question (essentially "Can't we do something better now?") was asked but this received short shrift from the Department. Even so the question would seem to have been well-founded - compare the detection rates per million men in the population: USA 1550, UK 1250 and the annual death rates: USA 202, UK 400 - and the Department thinks the USA are over-testing.

### DID YOU KNOW?

In the USA the Prostate Cancer Foundation has calculated that a man is 33% more likely to get prostate cancer than a woman is to get breast cancer.