

Norfolk & Waveney Prostate Cancer Support Group NEWSLETTER

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Freeze Treatment off to a Good Start – Evening News

Prostate cancer patients are benefiting from a pioneering treatment which has recently been introduced at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital.

The treatment, known as cryo-ablation, was not available in the region until three months ago, when £15,000 was raised by the Norfolk and Waveney Prostate Cancer Group. The treatment helps people with recurrent prostate cancer by freezing the prostate gland so it kills off cancer cells.

The N&N is the fourth hospital in the country to benefit from cryo-ablation and so far four patients have been treated successfully under consultant Mr Edwin Ho.

Michael Beaumont, 69, was the first patient to be treated at the N&N in December last year. The grandfather-of-four from Church Lane, Sprowston, first had the cancer six years ago but it reoccurred last year. Radiotherapy and hormone treatment did not work and doctors told him they were not sure what else they could do to treat his condition.

Mr Beaumont said: "Nothing seemed to be working for me so I went to the Big C Cancer Centre at the N&N and they told me I might be able to take part in this new treatment.

"I was in hospital for two days. On the first day I was assessed and then I was under anaesthetic for three hours. When I woke up there were a lot of people standing around me because I was the first patient to take part. I was the guinea pig.

"I will not know until April whether the treatment has completely cured the cancer but I feel brilliant now. I can run around the block and I feel as fit as anything and the treatment does not hurt at all. It is great news that we are able to get this treatment here and it is a shame it has to come down to money because everyone should have access to the best treatment."

David Haines, 74, is one of the founder members and Chairman of the Norfolk & Waveney Prostate Cancer Support Group. He has been constantly pushing for a national screening programme and encouraging more men to be on the lookout for symptoms. He said: "We have made a good start with the introduction of the cryo-ablation treatment.

"More people are being diagnosed with prostate cancer than ever before, which in a way is a good thing because it means the awareness is starting to work and more people are coming forward to be diagnosed.

The Everyman Male Cancer Campaign is calling on people to support research into more effective treatment for prostate cancer, the most common cancer in men in the UK. Prostate cancer kills 10,000 men each year, yet, despite the seriousness of the problem, research into prostate cancer remains seriously under-funded.

[Extracts from a major article in the Norwich Evening News on 19th March by Sarah Hall, their Health Reporter].

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Awareness Week

We joined forces with the Ipswich and Cambridge Groups to write to all Eastern Region MPs about raising greater awareness and support from Government – and the need for more specialist uro-oncology nurses across the region – to ensure that all Prostate Cancer patients have access to one at all times during their cancer journey.

The local Press and Radio also drew attention again to Prostate Cancer and we answered a number of calls for information and help as a result. We also arranged a “Ladies Drop-in” event at the Big C Cancer Centre.

David Steel on Prostate Cancer – ‘Pole-axed’

It was supposed to be a routine visit to his GP. But in a few short minutes, David Steel’s world was turned upside down.

A simple blood test in 2001, when he was 63, had picked up signs of a potentially fatal prostate cancer that would take months of treatment and a course of radiotherapy to eradicate.

David Steel, now Lord Steel, said at the time that the diagnosis had left him “pole-axed”, while his fight against the disease left him exhausted and unable to carry out some of his official functions.



Describing the day when he found out he was suffering from cancer, he said: “It was a routine blood test by my GP which showed I had prostate cancer. Naturally I was pole-axed. If he had not done that I would not have known anything was wrong. In due course I could have become ill but it might have been too late by then. If it’s not caught quick enough then, like any cancer, it can be fatal.

“The moral of the story is that routine testing for men over 50 is very important.”

After he was diagnosed, Steel went through a long period of taking medication to reduce the size of his prostate so that he would be eligible as a “guinea pig” for brachytherapy – a then new alternative treatment.

But the medication failed to work after several months and Steel had to fall back on conventional treatment and had to choose surgery or radiotherapy. His two consultants disagreed over which path to take and Steel said he was “very lucky” to have the support of his cancer specialist brother Professor Michael Steel, a medical geneticist at St Andrews University.

“It was like going into an auction and listening to the bidding,” he said. “My brother was very helpful and was able to reassure me that there was no real risk if the cancer was caught early enough.”

Steel opted for radiotherapy because an operation would have kept him off work for three months. But the treatment left him exhausted. “Radiotherapy sounded a better idea. Afterwards, when I complained to the consultant that I was feeling very tired, he said the procedure was the equivalent of a major operation.”

The daily courses of radiotherapy required him to take three weeks off work. Steel said he had found being a patient frustrating. He had to cut back on his workload: “I found it annoying not being able to do all the things that I normally do,” he said. “I felt completely washed out, which was very strange for me as I have never really suffered any ill-health in my life.

“I recall one evening I had to host a dinner at the parliament and I was so washed out I couldn’t, and had to ask a deputy to stand in for me. It wasn’t even a very trying engagement, I had no speech to give or anything like that. But even then it was just too much. The tiredness was a great shock to me.”

When asked how he felt when told his treatment had been successful, Steel said: “I was reasonably confident because I had been feeling much better by then. Before and during the treatment I was feeling so exhausted it was obvious that things were not right.”

Lord Steel is active with several prostate cancer charities.

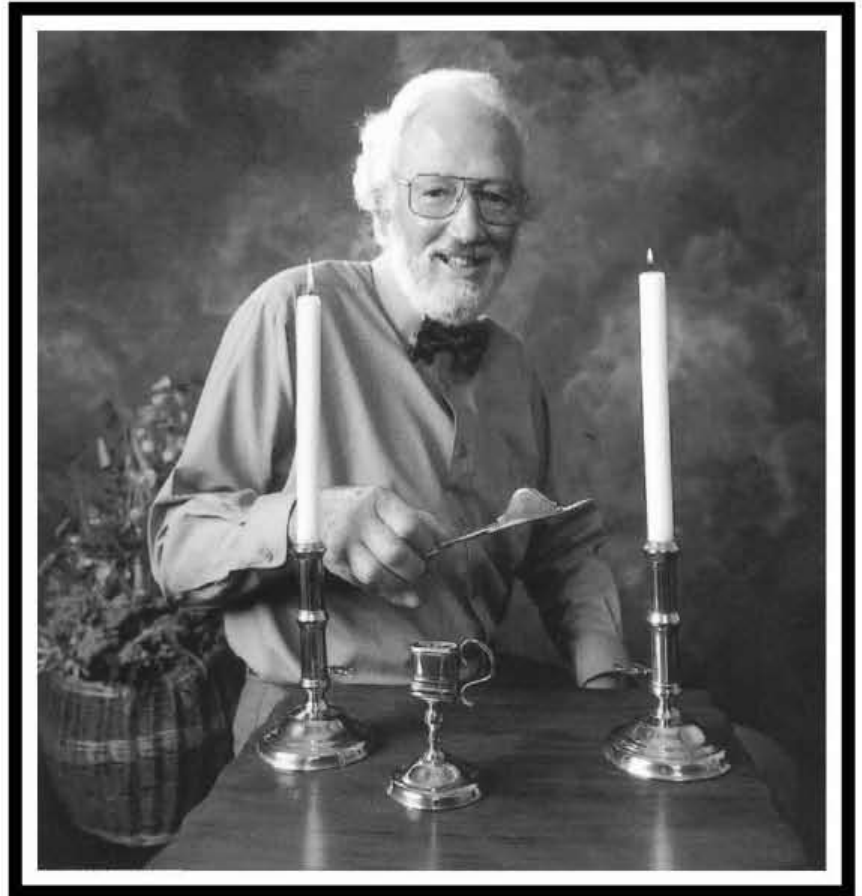
Martin Fry Wolton – A Tribute

Founder Member and first Treasurer of the N&W PC Support Group

Martin died peacefully on February 25th at Priscilla Bacon Lodge, Norwich, surrounded by his family, after a long and courageous battle.

He was a founder member of the Group and took a keen interest in our formation and activities and continued to support us after he stood down as Treasurer last spring. He established our banking arrangements, and quietly kept a grip on our accounts, leaving us in a sound financial position.

Martin was born in 1928 at Shipling Hall, near Bury St. Edmunds, where his family were renowned for their breeding stud of Suffolk Punch horses, an interest he shared all his life. He spent his working career with Cable & Wireless, serving across the world from Uruguay to Fiji, and in Saudi Arabia (where we were both active during the same period).



On retirement, he returned to Norfolk with his devoted wife, Joy, to their beautiful timbered Willowbeck House in the tranquil village of Pulham St. Mary, where for many years, they have bred pygmy goats, and enjoyed a national reputation.

His interest and hobbies were wide ranging, and included Astronomy, (he was an active member of the local Group, and one of his recent pleasures was visiting Turkey to experience a full eclipse of the sun); antiques, (particularly candle snuffers, from the 15th to the 19th centuries, on which he wrote and published the definitive book in 2000) – the photograph above is from the cover of his book – model steam engines, aircraft memorabilia, birds, and vintage cars.

His vintage Jaguar was in pristine condition, and he delighted in showing me over it. Joy referred to it fondly as “his other woman”, and remembers many happy days touring the West Country in it. He was widely travelled and had an unbounded curiosity. A relaxing conversation with him on any subject was a delight and never boring.

His wide circle of friends, of whom my wife and I had the privilege to be counted, will miss him greatly, and our sympathy goes out to Joy, and his family. He was a courteous and gentle man, and an example to us all.

David Haines

A Big Thank You

We continue to receive donations, and thank all those concerned for their support. Acknowledgements are extended to:

	£
Mr H Revell	160.00
Mr J Isherwood	25.00
Mr R R Youngman	25.00
Mr A Brickley	10.00
Anon	10.00
Open Meeting 29 th January	74.22

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Some of our members have been having difficulty obtaining travel insurance. We have been contacted by Freedom Insurance Services Ltd, who say that their Travel Insurance Scheme "has been specifically designed for people with pre-existing medical conditions (and their travelling companions)".

They say they are recommended by many leading charities in the medical sectors, and that they will challenge medical screening processes where they think a particular condition is being unfairly represented.

They can be reached at Richmond House, 16-20 Regent Street, Cambridge, CB2 1DB. Tel 0870 774 3760.

Their website is www.freedominsure.co.uk

If you use them, please send us your feedback!

Dates for your Diary

Wednesday, 2 May
6.00 - 7.30pm

**Radiotherapy Department
Open Evening
Colney Centre, NNUH**

Monday, 21 May – 7-9pm
**Support Group Committee
Meeting, NNUH**

Friday 1 June – 10am-4pm
**Voluntary Charities Event,
The Forum, Norwich**
(We have a stand).

Monday, 4 June – 7pm
**Open Meeting, James
Paget Hospital**
"The PSA – what do the
values mean?"

Monday, 2 July – 7-9pm
**Support Group Committee
Meeting, NNUH**

Monday, 6 August – 7pm
**Open Meeting, East Atrium,
NNUH** Speaker tba

**We are also arranging a
Summer Social event
(Evening Boat Trip).** Details
tba.

How to Contact Us

- **Write to:**
Norfolk & Waveney Prostate Cancer Support Group,
c/o Urology Department,
Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital,
Colney Lane, Norwich, NR4 7FP
- **Telephone the Specialist Nurses:**
Sallie, Claire or Wendy,
Specialist Uro-oncology Nurses,
Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital
01603 289845

Angie or Wendy,
Specialist Uro-oncology Nurses,
James Paget Hospital
01493 453510
- **Committee / Help:**
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