Ten Days of Surf and Sunshine

May 2, 2015 By Greg Jefferys

April 2015
We are attending the annual croquet day, a day of silly hats, serious croquet and much merriment (and wine). I bump into a friend I have not seen for a while. He notices I am not drinking and I do the tell/explain thing. He knows about Hep C and tells me a mutal acquaintance, Z, has had it for years and had done the Interferon treatment without success. He tells me Z keeps his infection secret but he is telling me because he believes Z will be interested in hearing about the India thing. I tell him to let Z know what I'm doing and to drop in and have a chat. But I never see Z.

May 2
We went up to Byron Bay to stay with my mother and sister and brother-in-law for ten days before I leave for India; after ten days of surf and sunshine I am feeling pretty good but I can definitely feel the virus in me now, feeling a bit bloated in the torso and somehow just aware that things in my body are not quite right. Glad to be heading home to Tasmania and glad that I have initiated the India trip and will be able to do something proactive to try to kill the virus off.

The flight back to Tasmania is long and tiring and we know that immediately we get back home we will only have time for a quick rest and then off to the annual Poetry Night, of which I am the MC.

I am to read a poem in honour of one of our close friends who I mentioned earlier who had liver cancer. He has died.

We stop at the fruit shop on the way home from the airport and bump into Z's wife, who I have not seen for years. A strange coincidence.

She immediately wants to talk about Z's hepatitis C. She tells me that M told them about our conversation at the Croquet Day and she and Z had been talking about it. She say that Z (unlike me) has no idea how he got Hep C and that (unlike me) he never shot up drugs. She gave me the impression that she thought the less of me for having been a drug user 40 years ago, but that might just have been my imagination?

She mentioned that Z did not want anyone to know that he had Hep C and asked that I respect this. She then went on to explain that Z had undergone the Interferon based treatment some time ago and that the side effects had been terrible "like Chemotherapy" she said. The worst thing was that after almost one year of treatment at the end the treatment Z still had Hep C.

She also told us that she had not contracted the virus even though they never used protection during sex, which confirmed what the nurse had told my wife and I.

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