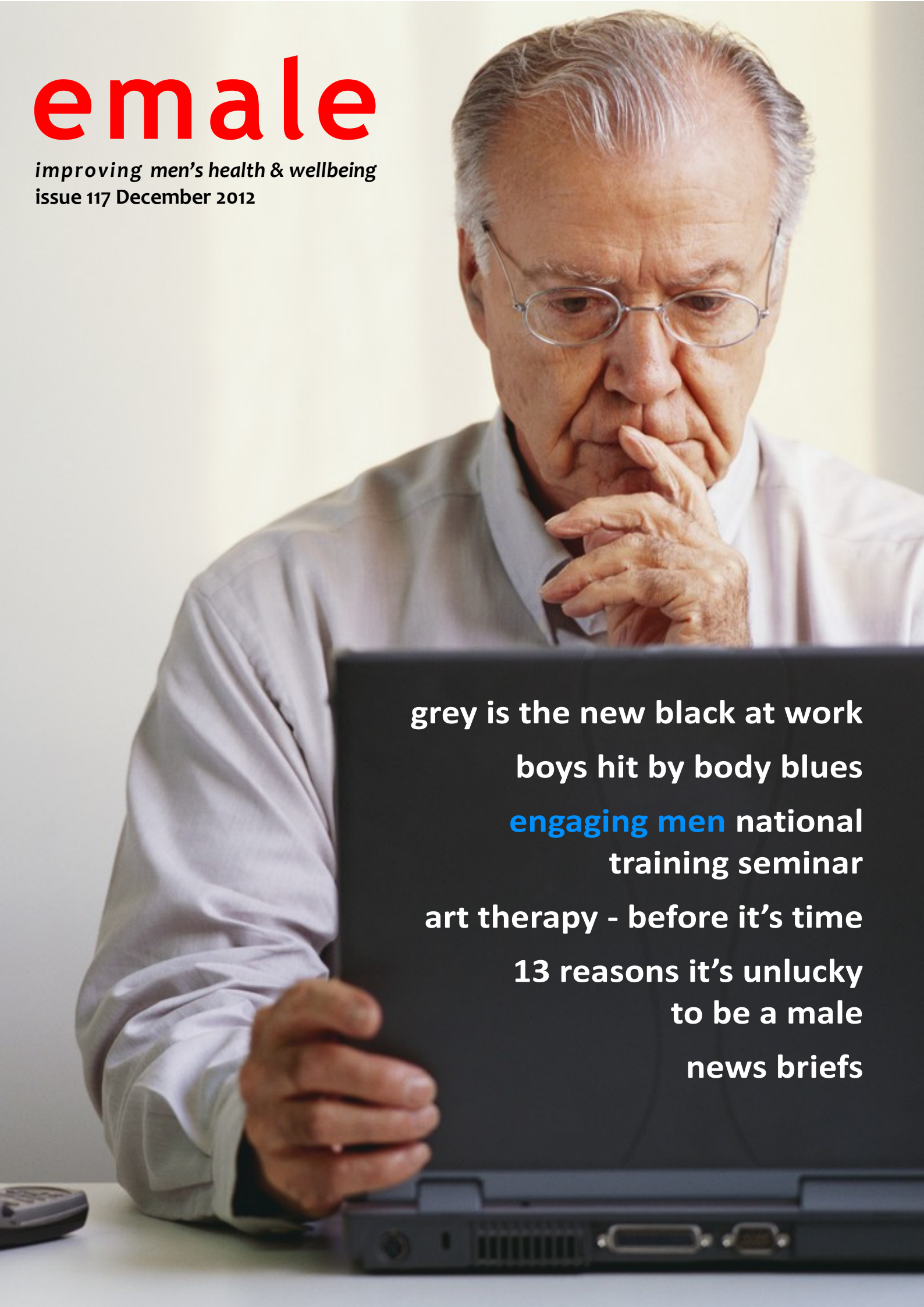


emale

improving men's health & wellbeing
issue 117 December 2012



grey is the new black at work
boys hit by body blues
engaging men national
training seminar
art therapy - before it's time
13 reasons it's unlucky
to be a male
news briefs



'Des Bettany after seeing action in Europe in WW2 was evacuated from Dunkirk and posted to North Malaya. He was eventually imprisoned by the Japanese at various prisons camps on the Changi Peninsula with some 100,000 other prisoners of war (POW's) . You may well ask, how did he make it through all of this? Well, he painted to keep his sanity.

From out of the misery, starvation, exploitation and brutality that resulted in so much loss of life and serious injury (physical and mental) a series of artworks that helped Des and his mates survive the ordeal has now come to light in a family collection. This artwork of his service life before and after the Capitulation of Singapore is a range of fascinating illustrations, done often with humour.

However, while painting to keep his head, he nearly lost it, as he was also painting political cartoons of the Japanese and hiding these. They were found and after some quick talking and who knows what else occurred, Des was warned by Col Saito, if he ever painted like this again, he would get a short haircut (be beheaded). We are sure he was punished but he, like so many other ex POW's chose not to share the horrors they went through with others. I guess in telling of the horrors, they just relive them again.

This new website has been put together by us, Des' family as a tribute and to help raise awareness of what the POWs went through, as seen through the eyes of one man, Des Bettany. It also give a rare insight on how others kept 'sane' by looking forward to such things as: The Changi University; The Theatre and Musical Programs; working to help other ie making rubber souls for boots or limbs for amputees; getting up to mischief: sabotaging their own work and more; or partaking in things of Faith.

After 70 years in a cupboard, at last, this artwork is available to all who have access to the internet. All the artwork can be viewed at www.changipowart.com . Please share this site with your contacts, members, family so the message gets out to many of what these men went through and some of the strategies they used to keep sane.

Should you have any added information, or if you would like an illustrated address to your group, please contact Des' son, Keith at keithbettany@internode.on.net or phone 08 8276 3960.

Keith Bettany, Des' son lives in South Australia, is a strong advocate on men's health and is passionate about the growing community men's sheds movement and other initiatives that help mates support mates.

My thanks to the Bettany family for being able to reproduce some of the artworks and I recommend the site to all readers.