

BRAIN TUMOUR RESEARCH CAMPAIGN



BTRC FUNDS PHD POSTS

Two new research posts have been created with the help of our generous supporters. Working under the supervision of Mr Kevin O'Neill and Dr Federico Roncaroli, the two PhD students will investigate what causes low grade tumours to transform into more aggressive ones, making use of the data and tissue collected for our registry. We are delighted to be co-funding these students with Imperial College London and Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Birmingham.



Dr Karolina Janczar

Dr Karolina Janczar (left) graduated recently in Poland; she has already spent two months in Charing Cross Hospital's Department of Neuropathology working as a visiting student on a BTRC-funded project on meningiomas. During her PhD, Dr Janczar will test the hypothesis that substances released by microglial cells in tumours are as important as genetic changes in low grade tumour cells, in inducing malignant transformation. If this hypothesis is proven, she will then explore the possibility of using medications to slow down (or stop) these changes.

Dr Bob Homapour (right) is currently working as specialist registrar in neurosurgery in Birmingham, although he, too, has previous experience at Charing Cross working with Kevin O'Neill in a clinical capacity. Dr Homapour will cooperate closely with Karolina to investigate the clinical significance of the changes observed *in vitro* (in laboratory conditions) and to understand if such changes may correlate with the outcome of patients.



Dr Bob Homapour

Research goes full steam ahead!

Part of our 5-year plan was to concentrate their efforts on the role of microglia (a type of immune cell in the brain) in brain tumours and our fundraising efforts are beginning to bear fruit. As BTRC's Scientific Director, Professor Manuel Graeber, said, "*BTRC has planted a small tree, whose branches are starting to grow - we hope it will grow into a strong oak*". Our tissue bank and tumour registry are providing the data we need, and each project that we fund is adding some pieces to the puzzle.

Meanwhile, the BTRC-funded project "**Microglia in Gemistocytic Astrocytomas**" that Fatemeh Geranmeyeh undertook last year is published in one of the leading medical journals, **Neurosurgery** (January 07 issue) - and we hope that it will form the background for other experimental studies to be undertaken next year.

FOURTH AMBER BALL 23 MARCH 2007



InterContinental London Park Lane

The fourth BTRC Amber Ball will form part of the launch celebrations of London's newest 5-star hotel - the **InterContinental London Park Lane**, after its 12-month closure for a complete renovation. Take the opportunity to witness its transformation, reflecting London's pre-eminence in the world of fashion, art and design, at the same time supporting our excellent cause, as favoured charity of London's incentive and corporate hospitality industry!

Mouth-watering prizes have already started pouring in - how about 10 nights in Tahiti and Bora Bora? Or 5 nights in a One&Only resort in the Maldives? A booking form will soon be available - but meanwhile save the date and start planning your wardrobe!

"This is the century of the brain"

RAISING FUNDS

Fundraising events this year have ranged from the resourceful to the truly wacky....

Sunbury Walkathon



As featured in our last edition, brave Scottish fire-fighter Alan Geddes (left) whose son's teacher suffered a brain tumour, undertook a 12-hour "walkathon" around a five mile circuit of his village, Sunbury on Thames, in July. Starting off at 7am, Alan walked 42 miles on a blazing hot day – the last lap wearing his kilt and accompanied by a bagpiper! Various supporters joined him along the way for a lap or two and Alan's ordeal ended at the village school where he was given a hero's welcome by many of the pupils & teachers. His efforts raised over £3,500 for BTRC!



Some of Alan's charity muggers at work!

Salisbury Plain Sponsored Walk

After losing a beloved family member to a brain tumour earlier this year, the Moss Family and their friends set off on a sunny Bank Holiday weekend on a 5-mile sponsored walk on Salisbury Plain, in memory of their lost loved one. In spite of the sadness, it proved a therapeutic trip down memory lane, and the family has resolved that it will become an annual event.

Bank Holiday Boxing Match

The Tunnel Inn in Gloucestershire was the venue for an exciting evening of enthusiastic amateurs who wanted to enjoy knocking seven bells out of each other for charity! 350 people looked on, and the event was reported on Radio Five Live, the Racing Post and various other journals.

Sponsored Swim around the Scillies



Scilly Swimmers!

As part of a team of 9, Suzanna Hunt braved freezing cold, shark infested waters, plagued by jellyfish and some treacherous currents, as they swam a 20-kilometre circuit around the Scilly Isles. Suzanna's father had been suffering from a brain tumour for some time (and has sadly passed away recently) - she wanted to help save others from the experience that she and her family endured.

1940s weekends

Twice in the past year, the Cambridgeshire-based "Ramsey 1940's Committee" have held nostalgic weekends taking the local community back in time to experience wartime spirit (without the danger of course!) – over the two weekends they raised £900!



What's ahead:

Remember Veronica, our pilgrim, who last year walked solo from Winchester in England to Santiago de Compostela in Spain? Well, she is off on her travels again next year – this time from Fatima in Portugal to Lourdes in Southern France. A journey of just over 1,000 km, Veronica's pilgrimage will start in Fatima, known to the Portugese as the "altar of the world" since a holy apparition to a group of children in 1917; passing through Santiago again, and continuing on to Lourdes, where the Virgin Mary is said to have appeared to Saint Bernadette. **Watch out** also for news of a mother and daughter duo following in the footsteps of the Maasai Trek! **Ramsey 1940's Weekend** (see above) is being held again on 18th & 19th August next year.

Not so NICE!



The 11 brain tumour charities that form UBTC joined forces this year with 3 other charitable bodies (Brain Tumour UK, SDBTT and IBTA) to form a consortium, speaking as a single voice to appeal against the decision by NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence) to restrict access to 2 brain tumour therapies, Temodal and Gliadel wafers. NICE granted an unprecedented number (9) of appellants - however, at the eleventh hour, they admitted that a miscalculation in the appraisal model had been made and cancelled the appeal hearing, sending the appraisal committee back to the drawing board. While we all welcomed this decision, it has nonetheless added to the confusion among PCTs, other medical centres and patients. As a result of our pressure, Professor Mike Richards (the government's "Cancer Czar") made a clarifying statement to a gathering of all cancer networks that NICE had withdrawn their Final Appraisal Document and until such time as it was reissued, PCTs should continue to base their own assessments on available evidence.

www.wayahead-btrc.org

Brain Tumour Research

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BTRC acts in association with
Way Ahead

Reg. Charity No. 295895

VOLUNTEERS

We urgently need people who can give a little of their time to help promote our cause.

Please contact

wendy@wayahead-btrc.org

020 8601 2402

If you would like to support any of our fundraisers, we'll put you in direct touch with them – or better still, why not start a project of your own?

OTHER WAYS TO HELP

By adopting BTRC as one of your preferred charities

Take the time to understand & spread the word about this devastating disease and the need for research

Raise money - consider donating part of takings from any local fundraising events to BTRC

Consider Payroll Giving (Give as you earn) - are you willing to pledge a monthly amount ?

We promise that 100% of funds raised go to the projects, and all administration costs are absorbed by trustees and volunteers.