

Wessex Medical Research

Funding research to fight disease



Registered Charity
No 274839

The newsletter of WESSEX MEDICAL TRUST

Autumn 2011

Channel Swim Champ!



What can we say that has not already been said? At 2 am on Thursday 31 August, Roger Allsopp arrived at Cap Gris-Nez and, after a gruelling 17 hours and 51 minutes in the water and at the age of 70 years and 4 months, claimed the title of oldest person to swim the Channel. His record was formally endorsed and a certificate presented to him later that morning by an official from the Guinness Book of Records (*see picture on page 2*). We are delighted to add our congratulations to those many which Roger has received from all over the world on this supreme achievement. As we in WMR well know, this was 'just another' milestone in Roger's five year campaign to raise money for the Breast, Prostate and Ovarian Cancer research being undertaken at Southampton by Professor Paul Townsend and his colleagues. The current objective of Roger's fundraising

efforts is to provide a new mass spectrometer machine which will greatly speed up the rate of analysis of all the samples which Paul's team are painstakingly working through. To donate, go to www.justgiving.com/rogerchannelswim

We've moved

Taking advantage of an opportunity to move back into Southampton General Hospital (which those of you with particularly long memories will recall is where we started life), we now find ourselves in amongst our colleagues at the Faculty of Medicine. Our new contact details are:

Mailpoint 420
Level B South Academic Block
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www.wesmed.org.uk

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“Wessex Medical Research is one of the few charities to support young medical scientists, doctors and nurses in the early stages of their research careers”

Innovation Grants 2011

Once again, the quality of the applications was sufficiently high for the Trustees to award more than the usual five Innovation Grants. The successful applicants, together with their projects (and the customary ‘plain English’ translation) are as follows. Congratulations to them all.

Dr Ann-Marie Hughes “Open hand for stroke”

To develop new software and portable electronic stimulation devices for use at home to restore accurate movement to the arms and hands of stroke victims

Dr Kai Yang

“Fabric based medical device”

Development of a new wearable device to improve the hand movement of patients suffering from stroke, brain injury, some spinal cord injuries and certain neurological disorders

Dr Alexander Johnson

“Polymersome nanoparticle mediated delivery of GSK3 β inhibitors as a potential treatment for Alzheimer’s disease”

Development of a new kind of nanoparticle which could be used to target therapeutic drugs to the brain cells of people with Alzheimer’s disease

Dr Hans Michael Haitchi

“Crystal structures of ADAM33 catalytic domain inhibitor complexes to identify novel asthma therapeutics”

To establish the exact shape of this particular protein which will enable drugs to be designed to fit into its active site and block its harmful activity

Dr Annette Louise Hayden

“Development of novel LSD1 inhibitors for prostate cancer”

To investigate whether a protein which is involved in prostate cancer can be targeted with certain drugs which will lead to killing the cancer cell.

Dr Matthew Rose-Zerilli

“The development of next generation sequencing for the analysis of B-cell tumours: understanding disease progression in patients with chronic lymphocytic leukaemia”

Analysing patterns of genes in patients with a particularly aggressive form of lymphocytic leukaemia to identify very early diagnosis and prescribe special treatment.



Congratulations and thanks to Pauline Oliver who has taken over as Chairman of the Salisbury Volunteer Group.

Roger Allsopp receives his certificate acknowledging that he has become the oldest person to swim the Channel from Anna Orford of the Guinness Book of Records, with Professor Paul Townsend in support



Come fly with us!

Have you seen our advertisement on the smart new plasma screens at Southampton Airport? Through the generosity of one of our Trustees, we have been 'given' for two years from July 2011 a 10 second slot every 30 minutes on all 20 of the plasma screens now fitted adjacent to the departure boards, both airside and landside, at the airport. Not a great span of time but we are told it is all about 'brand awareness'. The objective is to encourage travellers (particularly those who pass through the airport regularly and who hopefully will see the advertisement on repeated occasions whilst they are waiting for their flights to be called) to visit our website (which is currently being revised and updated) where they can find out more about us. We are able to change the message on the screen four times each year so look out for a Christmas message from the beginning of October.

PhD Studentships

As the result of receiving some generous legacies during the past few years, the Trustees have been able to award two PhD studentships for medically-related topics in the University of Southampton. Each grant will be for a total of £80,000 spread over the four year term of the student's work. Applications were invited in the spring from potential supervisors of the PhD students. No less than 42 applications were received which clearly showed the popularity of this form of grant. After a rigorous peer review process over the summer, involving both internal and external reviewers, the two successful projects were announced as follows:

For commencement in October 2011

"The development of next generation sequencing for the analysis of B-cell tumours: understanding disease progression in patients with chronic lymphocytic leukaemia."

Aiming to identify the genetic signatures of different forms of chronic cancer lymphocytic leukaemia so that the right treatments can be put in place as early as possible.

Principal supervisor: **Dr Jonathan Strefford**, Senior Lecturer, Cancer Sciences,

For commencement in October 2012

"Molecular characterisation of ERAAP association with Ankylosing Spondylitis"

People suffering from Ankylosing Spondylitis are much more likely to have certain genetic variants of the enzyme ERAAP. This project will investigate how the function of the enzyme is linked to the disease thereby providing either a biomarker of disease severity or a target for therapy.

Principal supervisor **Dr Edd James**, Lecturer in Cancer Immunology

The successful supervisors are now busily engaged in identifying and recruiting suitable students to undertake these research projects.

The Trustees are delighted to have been able to make these grants: it really does show the enormous benefits which can be secured by legacies left to Wessex Medical Research.

For over a year now, we have been promoting the idea of recycling used mobile phones and printer cartridges for the benefit of WMR. This is an ongoing appeal so please dig around and see what you can find. You can either send them direct to recycle4charity (go to their website as above for freepost instructions—but remember to tell them it's for the benefit of Wessex Medical Research and give our reference number C16805) or call the office for a freepost envelope.

We are proud to be a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities and are pleased to report that we successfully passed the AMRC 2011 peer review audit.

amrc
ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL RESEARCH CHARITIES

amrc ✓
PEER REVIEW AUDIT 2011

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Events, events

The summer has seen the customary range of events staged by our hard-working volunteer groups to both raise funds and raise awareness of our cause. A brief synopsis:

- ♦ In May, Romsey Group held a successful coffee morning at the home of Mig and Cheryl Walton in Toot Hill.
- ♦ June saw a special concert organised by the New Forest Group at the Nuffield Theatre in Southampton. We were delighted to welcome Esther Rantzen as compere and you will see from the picture that she really entered into the mood of things!



- ♦ In July, New Forest Group held another successful hogroast at the home of Kath and Ray Smith in Dibden Purlieu (pictured) whilst Romsey Group provided an excellent cream tea, kindly hosted by committee member Malcolm Cole.

Dates for your Diary

2011

October 27	Speaker Supper <i>New Forest</i> <i>Speaker: Dr Julie Parkes</i>
October 28	Christmas Crafts and Card Sale <i>Totton</i>
November 3	Luncheon <i>Gosport & Lee</i>
November 10	Speaker Supper <i>Salisbury</i> <i>Speaker: Professor Tim Elliott</i>
November 20	Indian Supper <i>Romsey</i>

2012

January 13	Quiz Night <i>New Forest</i>
February 10	Quiz & Chips <i>Salisbury</i>
February 16	Salisbury Playhouse Theatre Event <i>Salisbury</i>
February 17	Quiz Night <i>Romsey</i>
March 20	Antiques Evening <i>New Forest</i>
March	Jazz Evening <i>Salisbury</i>
April 22	London Marathon
May 24	Ladies Night <i>Romsey & Winchester</i>
2013	
April 6	London Welsh Male Voice Choir Concert <i>New Forest</i>

Please check the website for additional activities and give us your active support wherever you can.