

Autumn 2009

BRTnews



Our great scientist

The Institute of Neurology's Professor John Hardy was recently named a Fellow of the Royal Society – an honour awarded in recognition of his contribution to science worldwide. He joins an outstanding group of over 1,400 Fellows and Foreign Members of the Royal Society whose achievements represent the vast contribution science makes to society and who all rank among the international leaders in their field.

With a total of 351 articles on Alzheimer's disease published in the period between January 1985 to April 2008, Professor Hardy is also the most highly cited author on Alzheimer's disease research in the UK and fifth internationally, according to a recent study.

Historically, Professor Hardy has worked on the genetic analysis of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

You may recognise Professor Hardy's name – we featured his work on Alzheimer's in our 2006/07 Annual Review. The BRT currently supports several of Professor Hardy's projects and has recently obtained a generous three-year grant from The Peacock Trust for research into Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP), which he will share with a fellow PSP researcher, Dr Rohan de Silva.

Professor Hardy's wider research interests are in the genetic analysis of disease. While historically he has worked on the

Welcome

We hope you enjoy our newsletter. Inside, we focus on our fantastic supporters and tell you about some of the exciting things they have been doing to raise funds for brain research at UCL's Institute of Neurology.

As ever, we would like to thank all of you for your continuing generosity in these difficult times.

New email newsletter

You can now get our newsletter delivered straight to your inbox. Sign up at www.brt.org.uk/getnews

genetic analysis of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, his team also works on Parkinson's disease, PSP, other movement disorders and, most recently, motor neurone disease.

In all cases, Professor Hardy's aim is to help with our understanding of diseases and in the search for treatments.

His growing focus has been on the genetic analysis of complex traits related to disease. Additionally, this has made him increasingly interested in population genetics because the risk variants for human traits are likely to be different in different racial groups.

In all cases, Professor Hardy's intention is to develop an understanding of the underlying genetics of a disorder to help with our understanding of disease mechanisms and in the search for treatments.

Battling Bryn



New look BRT

Noticed anything different about us lately?

Earlier this year we worked in collaboration with TRUE, a brand design agency, to bring the BRT's 'look' up to date, introducing the bold new logo and colours you see on this newsletter. We hope that our new image brings a bright future for the BRT, attracting the attention of more individuals and organisations to help fund our research at the Institute of Neurology.

New website

Hand in hand with our new look comes our improved website with:

- More information about the researchers and projects your donations help to support
- Facts about the neurological conditions covered by the Institute's research
- Tools to organise and participate in fundraising events
- Information on the many ways you can donate
- Inspiring stories from our supporters
- Latest BRT news

www.brt.org.uk

Over the past year, Bryn Ruston has been pulling out all the stops to raise funds for the BRT. A father of two, he suffers from a malignant brain tumour and has already undergone two craniotomies in the past two years. Yet he is using his experience to give other brain tumour sufferers hope by doing all he can to raising money for neurological research.

Bryn originally started supporting The Brain Research Trust by selling items on eBay and donating a percentage of the profits to the charity. But he and his wife Linda soon upped the ante by putting together a work team to take on the Taff Trail Challenge – an ambitious bike ride measuring 35 miles from Pontsticill Reservoir to Cardiff Bay's oval basin.

The Rustons and their enthusiastic participants managed to quadruple their original target.

Starting with an initial fundraising target of £500, the Rustons and their 23 enthusiastic event participants (pictured above) worked hard to gather sponsorship from friends and colleagues, eventually managing to quadruple their original target, bringing in over £2,000 in total for the BRT.

Going for a second round

Not satisfied with just the one arduous sporting event, Bryn and his friend Ricky MacGough (pictured right) entered a 24-hour mountain bike race in August.

While the men put their stamina to the test on the track, their wives, Linda and Jane took to the trackside to collect money for the BRT, helping to boost their fundraising total even further.

We would like to thank all of those who took part in the Taff Trail Challenge at Glamorgan County Council, and those who sponsored the team, as well as Ricky and Jane MacGough, and of course, Bryn and Linda Ruston, for being such inspirational fundraisers.

There are many organised challenge events throughout the year that you can take part in to raise funds for neurological research. To see a selection, visit our website: www.brt.org.uk/events



A massive thank you

Thank you to all of our fantastic supporters who held events for us over the past year and raised bucket loads of money for brain research. They include:

- ICON plc, Phoenix Theatre Group, Vernon Lodge no. 1802, Wavelength salon and Lesley Read for arranging charity raffles on our behalf
- Gillian Key for putting together a coffee morning
- Margaret and Claire Simmons for organising a golf day
- Maurice and Jeanette Abrams, Patricia Goldsmith, Norah Handscomb and Emily McNaughton for organising donations in lieu of birthday and wedding presents
- June Banwell for organising a carol concert
- Mary Wicks and Jill Birch for organising a Blackberry Walk
- John Williams for donating ticket sale proceeds from his 'Scanners Night'
- Bletchley Bowls Club for organising a charity bowls game and Lowestoft Spiritual Centre for donating proceeds from 'An evening of Clairvoyance'



ICON staff presenting a cheque to Dr. Patrick Lewis

Your turn!

Holding a fundraising event on behalf of the BRT is not only rewarding, it can also be a lot of fun! If you feel inspired and have a fundraising idea, we will give you all the support you need to make sure it is a success.

Give us a call and discuss your idea on **020 7404 9982**. For more information and a copy of our fundraising pack visit www.brt.org.uk/organise

A legacy for future generations

Please remember that gifts left to the BRT in wills are extremely valuable – the knowledge that money will be available to us in future years makes it easier to invest in long-term research at the Institute of Neurology.

Once you have provided for your family and friends, please consider leaving a gift to the BRT in your will. You may have had someone close to you who suffered from a brain condition and would have benefitted from advances in brain research. You can make a lasting difference to future generations by helping to drive forward research into brain disease with a legacy.

You can even request your gift to be used for research into a specific condition.

Gifts both large and small – even several hundred pounds – help to fund essential equipment, specialist departments and researchers. You can even request your gift to be used for research into a specific condition.

If you are thinking of making or changing your will, we can send you useful information that you can give to your solicitor. Speak to us in confidence about leaving a gift to The Brain Research Trust.

Call Yasmin or Nick on **020 7404 9982**, or write to us:
The Brain Research Trust, 15 Southampton Place, London WC1A 2AJ

Find out more at www.brt.org.uk/donate

What legacies can achieve

In 1994, Emily Watts' brother, Graham, died from Motor Neurone Disease (MND). As she had no other surviving relatives, Miss Watts left a large share in her estate to the BRT and asked that it was used to fund research into MND.

Because of that bequest – which allowed the BRT to create an endowment – the Graham Watts Fund now supports an active research programme under the leadership of Professor Linda Greensmith.

Linda's research team numbers 14 staff members, including six PhD students and two Clinical Research Fellows. Their goal is to learn more about the mechanisms that play a role in this disease and to develop and test novel therapeutic approaches for the treatment of MND.

Their work, made possible by the gift left in Miss Watts' will, has since resulted in clinical trials to test a new drug compound, which may eventually lead to better treatment for this debilitating condition.



Look cool with our logo!

You can use our new logo when you fundraise for us. Download it at www.brt.org.uk/logo

At the races

The London Marathon 2009

It was another fantastic year for the London Marathon. Blazing sunshine made conditions tough for the runners but brought the crowds out in force and certainly made for a great atmosphere. The BRT had 16 runners taking part, most of whom had pretty emotional reasons to raise funds for neurological research.

Tim Loughlin, whose brother John sadly passed away from a brain tumour in August 2007, was determined to run for The Brain Research Trust this year, having been forced to pull out of last year's run through injury.

Some of Rockchapel's close-knit community even braved a sponsored head-shave.

Tim, who originally hails from the village of Rockchapel in County Cork, Ireland, displayed great resourcefulness in calling on business contacts, family and friends (and friends of friends!) to raise funds. Not only that, but everyone in Rockchapel's close-knit community got in on the act: the whole of his home village joined in fundraising activities – some people even braving a sponsored head-shave – and ultimately raising a total of around €5,320. Tim, meanwhile, had raised an amazing

£8,000 making his total over £12,500. All in all, the London Marathon raised a total of over £47,000, in aid of the BRT. Thanks to everyone who took part.

Our supporters run all over the UK

While the London marathon is the UK's most popular run, there are many others up and down the country that remain hugely popular. This year we had 6 people running the Edinburgh Marathon for us, raising well over £4,000. Other people have participated in runs ranging from 5 km to 26 miles in Belfast, Nottingham, Milton Keynes, Birmingham, St Albans and Bournemouth.

... and even worldwide!

You'd be hard-pressed to beat one of our fundraisers. Roger Comish first raised funds for the BRT running the Edinburgh Marathon in 2005. He has since run a further four marathons. As well as Edinburgh, he has run in London, Tokyo, Chicago and, in September of this year, Berlin. The five marathons together have raised a fantastic £7,000.

You can be a runner

If you have the running bug, why not get in touch? We have places in a number of the major runs in 2010; all the details are on our website, or email fundraising@brt.org.uk for further info.



From the top: Marathon runner Harriet Mcilwham with Yasmin and Nick of the BRT; Proud Tim Loughlin with Marathon medal; Roger Comish at the Tokyo Marathon

London Triathlon is a no-brainer

Eight people took part in the 2009 London Triathlon for The Brain Research Trust, with most favouring the Olympic distance event – no mean feat, since it entails a 1,500 metre swim, followed by a 40 km cycle, and finishing with a 10 km run.

A big thank-you to all of our participants in this summer's London Triathlon for The Brain Research Trust, who braved the elements – and Royal Victoria Dock – to raise vital funds for neurological research.



The No-Brainers, left to right: Frances Foster, Susie Mosson and Anne Allis

Frances Foster, Susie Mosson and Anne Allis formed a team, named *The No-Brainers*, and each of them took on one element of the event. Despite the unseasonal weather, the girls, from HR Consultancy Chiumento, had great fun and raised over £2,000. Susie said, "We had a great time and are so pleased that people donated so generously. We're now planning our next challenge!"

All in all, a total of well over £5,000 was raised from the London Triathlon. The Brain Research Trust would like to thank everyone who took part, including Marie Cartwright, Keith Foley, James Hardy, Tom McCaul, Greg Spencer and Ben Walden.

We'd love to hear from you!

Comments about this newsletter, ideas for the next edition, feedback on our new website, or general suggestions about the work we do – we'd like to hear it all. Email newsletter@brt.org.uk or write to us:

The Brain Research Trust

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