



Aldo and Ken before they set sail!

Atlantic Challenge

RAFT is delighted to announce the safe arrival home of our intrepid fundraisers, Aldo Diana and Ken Maynard. Whilst I am sure we all had a lovely Christmas with all the trimmings, the pair spent their Christmas and New Year rowing their way across the Atlantic.

Aldo had been planning this trip for the last two years and worked tirelessly in preparation. Not only did he build his boat, which comprised 500 pieces all of which had to be pegged and glued by hand, he was also hard at work holding fundraising events including;

a football match, a fire engine pull and two rowathons! Aldo was living and breathing this challenge, which meant so much to him, he put his heart and soul into completing it.

Aldo and Ken are back on dry land and by no means was their expedition a simple and easy one! They overcame horrendous seasickness, treacherous weather conditions, and technical problems to spend a month at sea. But, unfortunately their boat was no match for the force of nature and for safety reasons they had to abandon ship!

Continued overleaf

All of us at RAFT were looking at Aldo and Ken's daily blog to see how they were getting along –



Just one of the many waves they had to tackle!

which at times was a nerve-racking read! We all have so much admiration for Aldo and Ken who have sacrificed so much in aid of RAFT.

They were so disappointed not to complete their row. Despite all their trials Aldo has told us how he and Ken had the best time out at sea, giving them lots of time to reflect and giving them an experience they could only ever dream of. They are already thinking up their next great big adventure!

We are so thankful that both Aldo and Ken are safe and returned home in one piece. They raised in the region of £12,000 for our vital research.

Staff Profile



Name: Felicity Edwards

Job Role: Research Assistant – Wound Healing Research Programme

What made you want to work in Medical Research?

I liked the idea of doing something that would be useful, benefiting people, and had a cause.

When did you start working at RAFT?

October 2006

Why do you like working at RAFT?

I am working in an innovative and exciting environment where everybody is enthusiastic about the work they are carrying out and achieving. We all share the common goal, improving the quality of care and treatment for patients.

What can your day involve?

My work varies enormously and can include data analysis, writing up papers and maintaining laboratory records. One of my core tasks is to look after the group's skin and blood vessel cells – examining how well they are growing and whether they need extra nourishment, so we have enough cells to use in our experiments. We use cells for various different things – testing on our artificial skin scaffold to see how well they interact with the scaffold and if they are behaving in the way we want them to.

What do you hope to achieve in your current role?

I hope to achieve, with the Wound Healing team, a product that would work as a fully functional skin substitute, which is better than any current products already available, making a significant improvement for patient's quality of life.

Why not find RAFT on Facebook and ask Felicity a question about her work?

Community Fundraising



Jack Penn

Jack Penn spent the summer of 2008 working at RAFT gaining valuable research experience as he is studying to become a Doctor. Jack took part in the Paris Marathon on the 5th April 2009 taking in some of the sites Paris has to offer on his way including the River Seine, the Champs Elysees, Arc de Triumph and the Louvre. To date, Jack has raised a fantastic £426!

Neil Thompson is organising a 50 mile bike ride to be held in June. He hopes to get friends and family involved, cycling from Southport to Liverpool, then on to Widnes and Fiddlers Ferry and then back to Rainhill. We wish them all the very best for it.

RAFT's Fundraising Officer, Veronica Pearce, sister Amy Pearce and Mark Bonshek have set themselves the challenge of running the BUPA Manchester Great Run on Sunday 17th May 2009. They are hoping to raise £1000 between them for RAFT's vital research and have been steadily training to

try and run the 10K in under an hour.

If you would like to support them please visit www.justgiving.com/run4raft.



Veronica and Amy and Mark Bonshek

Laura Ripley, RAFT's Team Secretary, not satisfied with completing one skydive in her life, is going back for more! This year she is planning on completing a solo skydive, along with her friend Oliver Aylott. They will both be jumping to raise vital funds for RAFT.

John Ripley, Carpenter and Joiner at Firminger & Firminger Ltd has generously offered to donate £100 for every loft or extension he completes throughout the year. John is married to Laura, RAFT's Team Secretary. This is such a kind offer to support RAFT's vital research in this way, especially in these difficult times.

Everyclick



Why not add

Everyclick.com as your homepage and use it instead of your current search engine?

Everyclick allows you to search the web and raise vital funds for RAFT at the same time. There is no cost to you or to RAFT; funds are generated from the advertising revenue.

Everyclick acts like any other search engine but donates to the charity of your choice. Everyclick has already raised £500,000 for charities. Everyclick Search delivers a range of results including News, Images and local classifieds.

Go to www.raft.ac.uk click on How You Can Help to Register with Everyclick – it really is that simple!

Thank you, this is such an easy and effective way to fundraise for our vital work.

Scars are not just “skin deep”!



A typical form of common pathological scar known as a keloid.

The Problem...

Skin wounds that produce permanent scarring are commonplace, and result from a variety of injuries (burns and mechanical trauma), surgical procedures, or disease. Scarring can affect people of every age, sex and racial origin. These scars can affect both function as well as appearance. They are for life and currently there are no reliable effective therapies to offer scarred individuals.

- In England alone, every year approximately 56,000* patients are treated in A&E for injuries that result in scars.
- Around 10,000* are hospitalised for burn injury and millions undergo surgical procedures which result in scarring. It is estimated that almost one third of these are affected by abnormally excessive (pathological) scarring.
- A staggering 41% of burn accidents happen to children under 12 years of age,

and half of these occur in the home and to children under 2.

The inelastic nature of scar tissue together with its tendency to contract over time can severely limit the movement of any body site affected; resulting in disability and in children, growth retardation. Multiple extra surgical procedures are frequently required to reconstruct features or release scar tension to allow normal growth or re-establish mobility of joints and other body parts (such as eye-lids and mouth). These can number in their tens for a single individual and significantly add to the distress suffered by patients and their families.

What we are doing

RAFT's research is working towards a future where patients can look forward to life free from disfiguring and disabling scars. In order to do this, we are:

- Looking at how normal scar cells behave in laboratory models that mimic wound healing – studying the points in the healing/scar formation process when scar healing cells turn on and are turned off so that we can learn to manipulate these events and control scar production.
- Comparing cells from abnormal scars and normal scars not only to gain a better understanding



Scarring after a burn injury.

of what goes wrong in pathological scarring but also to gain clues about how to control pathological scarring to see if it can be transformed into scar-free healing.

- Certain body tissues heal without scarring and yet contain similar cells to those that produce scars in the skin. The RAFT team is comparing their behaviour and investigating why this is so to see if this knowledge can be harnessed to reduce or even eradicate scarring in adults and children.

How your donations have helped...

Your donations have helped our team identify a promising anti-scarring agent which will be tested in clinical trials later this year. We are eagerly awaiting the results. If successful, this research could provide a future free from distressing scars, not only those resulting from burns but also those caused by other traumatic injury or indeed after surgical procedures.

We need your help

Medical research is costly and ongoing, we need your continued support to ensure our work continues and we can achieve the best results possible.

* Figures collated from the Health episode statistics for hospital submissions FY 2004-2005: Published on line by The Health and Social Care Information Centre – <http://www.hesonline.nhs.uk>



This young child has pathological scarring leading to contractures so he is unable to lift his chin.

Research News

Burns and Anti-Scarring

We have recently recruited a fourth large Plastic Surgery centre at Queen Victoria Foundation Hospital to take part in our multi-centre phase 2 clinical trial of one of our potential scar prevention agents. Furthermore, the regeneration section of the anti-scarring research programme has established a key international collaboration which will speed our investigation of the role of a particular family of scarring related proteins.

Skin Cancer Research

Your support has enabled us to begin the recruitment process for two post-doctoral scientists to expand the skin cancer prevention arm of the Free Radical group. This will enable our work to progress at a quicker pace with increased knowledge and skills.

Artificial Skin

The Wound Healing group were recently awarded two best research paper prizes, one at the UCL Department of Surgery Research Symposium 2008, London, and the other at the European Conference of Scientists and Plastic Surgeons 2008, Berne, Switzerland. The team would also like to thank the company, Becker Industrial Coatings, for their kind donation of a rheometer, which will allow measurement of how closely our Smart Matrix prototypes (artificial skin) resemble the texture and elasticity of real skin.

Flora London Marathon 2009



Kirsty Flynn, Helen Waters and Clare Stapleton in training!

It is that time of year again when thousands of people will be pounding the streets in preparation for the Flora London Marathon. I am sure you have seen runners out and about training, making the most of what the spring weather has to offer, all in preparation for this year's Flora London Marathon taking place on Sunday 26th April 2009.

Our thanks go to the following runners who have dedicated the last few months to training and working hard drumming up support.

RAFT Golden Bond place runners:

- Kirsty Flynn
- David Forster
- Simon Hayes
- Andrew Lowe
- Joanne Murray-Brown
- Angela Seymour
- Andrew Sheppard
- Clare Stapleton
- Helen Waters
- James Winter

RAFT supporters with their own place:

- Bob Jenkins
- Rob Jenkins

We really do appreciate the enormous challenge it is to take part in an event such as this and all at RAFT wish each one of them a good run and the very best of luck.

We thank them so much for raising vital funds for RAFT. If you would like to support any of our runners please contact Laura on, 01923 844760.

Regular giving

Without support such as yours RAFT would no longer be able to carry out its lifesaving research. Our work is expensive and we have to raise every £1 to pay for specialised skills and equipment; from the low-cost to the very expensive, we raise the funds for it all. But, we need continuous help.

Would you consider making a monthly contribution to our vital research so we can ensure patients receive the best treatment science can offer and in the quickest time possible?

Medical research is expensive and we have to plan for tomorrow. Your gift will help RAFT's

scientists and surgeons transform the lives of patients suffering from severe burns, traumas of the skin and skin cancer.

RAFT has the difficult task of competing with the more well known charities for its vital funding. A small monthly gift will make a huge difference to RAFT; we need you now more than ever.

If you feel you are able to contribute to RAFT's work please complete in the form on the back page and return to:

Leonor Stjepic

CEO, RAFT, Leopold Muller Building
Mount Vernon Hospital, Northwood
Middlesex HA6 2RN

Thank you!

Mobile Phone Recycling

Do you have old mobile phone handsets cluttering up drawers at home? Do you get an upgrade every year and then are unsure what to do with the other phone? Well, we have the answer! Why not recycle them for RAFT, for every old handset we can raise funds for RAFT.

15 million mobile phones are replaced in the UK each year, and if they are not traded in they end up in drawers, toy boxes or filling landfill sites where than can be potentially harming the environment.

Together with Mobile2Cash.co.uk we are collecting old phones. It is simple – just put your phone in an envelope, cut out the label (on the flyer enclosed) and pop it in the post. Mobile2Cash will pay RAFT up to the value of £150 per handset depending on its age and quality. It really is that simple!



Thank You

We are delighted to take this opportunity to thank all our major donors, trusts and foundations who have supported us in the past year – we really would not be able to carry on without their help.

We are very pleased to announce that Fake Bake UK Ltd has selected RAFT as its chosen charity to help raise funds for RAFT's vital research into skin cancer.

Fake Bake's 'Save your Skin Campaign' was launched on Tuesday 20th January 2009 at the prestigious Paramount Members Club in the Centre Point Building, London.

Fake Bake's CEO, Sandra McClumpha, says - "I am thrilled to be able to do this for RAFT and hope that we can work together to spread safe health messages, particularly to the young, about excessive and unprotected sun exposure and the use of sun beds.

Together, we hope to educate the public and RAFT's expertise in skin cancer research will help us give unbiased information to those at risk. I want us to raise funds for the

charity for them to be able to continue this vital research work". RAFT is delighted to be working in partnership with Fake Bake and to promote the dangers the sun can bring.

Harry Townsend

We would like to thank Harry Townsend and the Myfanwy Townsend Melanoma Research Fund, long time supporters of RAFT, who have so kindly donated £12,000 towards our Skin Cancer Research. Harry, who set up the Myfanwy Townsend Melanoma Research Fund in memory of his late wife, is dedicated to raising awareness of skin cancer and supporting research.

Harry has climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, ran the Death Valley marathon, trekked the Grand Canyon rim to rim, completed the 5 day 100km of the Sahara race and walked the Pilgrim Trail across northern Spain to Santiago and pushed a wheelbarrow end to end of the north coast of New Zealand - all in aid of raising skin cancer awareness and supporting research such as the work done at RAFT.

Support our Research Today!

Please pay **RAFT**

£3 £5 £10 Other £ I wish to pay monthly.

I wish to make my donation on the 3rd 10th 25th day of the month.

I would like my first donation to be made during the month of

(please choose a start date at least one month from now)

I would prefer to give a One-off Gift of £.....

We always like to thank our supporters for their generosity, if you would prefer not to receive a thank you please tick

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Remember for every £1 you give, **RAFT** can claim back 25p (as at 6 April 08) from the taxman at no cost to yourself.

I want **RAFT** to treat all donations I have made for this tax year, the six years prior to the year of this declaration and all donations I make from the date of this declaration, until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid donations*

I do NOT pay UK income tax.

*I understand that I must pay an amount of Income Tax/Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the amount **RAFT** reclaims on my donation in the appropriate tax year.

Your details

Name:

Address:

..... Postcode

Tel No:

Your bank details

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Standing Order

To (name of bank)

At (your bank's full address)

..... Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Your Bank Sort Code: / / Account No:

Please pay **RAFT** Standing Orders from the account detailed on this instruction.

Signature: Date:

RAFT's Bank Details – Barclays Bank Plc (Ruislip Branch), 54 High Street, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 7AT
Account No: 10745804 Sort Code: 20-73-53

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO RAFT @ LEOPOLD MULLER BUILDING, MOUNT VERNON HOSPITAL, NORTHWOOD, MIDDLESEX, HA6 2RN

We would like to keep you in touch with RAFT's work (and the activities of our trading subsidiary, RAFT Enterprises Limited) to help us achieve our charitable objectives and to keep you informed about events and services. RAFT will not disclose your personal details to a third party although information will be shared between RAFT and RAFT Enterprises Limited, both of whom will be processing the information held on you. If you would prefer not to receive this information, please tick this box.



RAFT is a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) – a membership organisation of the leading medical and health research charities in the UK.



Charity No. 299811



How you can help ...

Please help **RAFT** by ticking one of the boxes below & returning the slip to:

Leonor Stjepic, CEO, RAFT, Leopold Muller Building, Mount Vernon Hospital, Northwood, Middlesex, HA6 2RN

- I would like to make a one-off donation of £
- Please tick if you require an acknowledgement of your gift.
- I would like to receive information on leaving a gift in my will to secure RAFT's future.
- I would like to be a volunteer helper.
- I would like to run a fundraising event.

(For regular giving see overleaf)

Name:

Address:

.....

.....

..... Postcode

Tel No:

Email:

Date:

PLEASE SELECT PAYMENT METHOD
MasterCard/Visa/AMEX/CAF CharityCard/ or Cheque

Card No:

Expiry Date: __ / __

Last 3 digits of the code (on the reverse of the card): ___
(This information will be retained by **RAFT** only until your gift has been processed)

Signature:



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Your Details

Name:

Address:

..... Postcode

Tel No:

Bank Details

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Standing Order

To (name of bank)

At (your bank's full address)

..... Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)
.....

Your Bank Sort Code: / /

Account No:

Please pay **RAFT** by Standing Order from the account detailed on this instruction.

Signature:

Date:

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