

## Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund

# Come rain or shine, you're there for us

Our supporters continue to amaze and inspire us – you're out in all weathers, fundraising in creative ways to help us drive progress in tackling pancreatic cancer.



This spirit is typified by two young supporters who couldn't have had more different fundraising conditions.

When ten-year-old Edward Penny (above, left) from Wiltshire lost his grandpa Alastair to pancreatic cancer earlier this year, he decided to climb Snowdon to fundraise in his memory. But as it turned out, it wasn't conquering the 1000m peak that was the toughest challenge!

Says Edward's mum Estelle: "The plan was to take the PCRF banner to the top of Snowdon and take photos with the glorious view behind us, but as you can see, it wasn't that kind of day! The conditions were so atrocious we were worried that unfurling the banner would act as a kind of sail and we might get blown off the side! We ended up touching the marker stone at the top, taking a few quick snaps, then setting off straight back down."



**Our younger supporters never cease to astound us with their thoughtfulness, energy and sheer determination.**

And while Edward was battling the elements in Wales, 13-yr-old Joshua Taylor (above, right) was using his entrepreneurial skills – and the glorious sunshine – to sell home-made treats to tourists flocking to the beautiful beach near his home in the Highlands of Scotland.

While his mum Sarah recovers from treatment for pancreatic cancer, Joshua's fundraising drive has included making lemonade, cupcakes and cookies to sell to tourists and neighbours and selling bric-a-brac donated by friends and neighbours in his rural village of Laide at a local car boot sale. He's also making games out of

## Hope ahead

We are delighted to tell you that we've been able to fund another £1.4 million of research projects after the difficult decision to halt new grants during the pandemic.

2021 was still challenging for many charities, including PCRF. A large part of our annual income comes from supporters participating in organised national and regional events, such as half and full marathons, 10k runs, treks and cycling events. Many of these fixtures were still cancelled or postponed, so our income remains down compared with usual levels.

But there are things to celebrate: with universities safely opening up their laboratories and facilities, pancreatic cancer researchers have been able to resume their vital projects and we are very excited about the potential of the seven new projects we've funded.

This issue also highlights a raft of uplifting fundraising efforts that supporters have devised within pandemic restrictions and we're very grateful to all those who've been able to find ways to keep fundraising for us. You are truly amazing. Thank you!

**Maggie Blanks, PCRF Founder**

recycled materials with his dad, such as giant dice for a garden or beach version of the dice game Yahtzee, and mini-sized ones for people camping locally.

Joshua's dad, David, says: "Sarah and I are incredibly proud of what he's been doing – all off his own bat – my main role has been as the official tasting guinea pig for his baking!"

We're told that both boys plan to continue their fundraising – Joshua intends to keep up his bake sales for as long as possible and Edward now has his eye on climbing Ben Nevis.

## £1.4 million for seven new grants starting in 2021!



### Dr Laura Woods, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

Dr Woods' project extends her previous PCRF-funded pilot study, which showed it's possible to use artificial intelligence techniques to identify patients at high risk of developing pancreatic cancer from information reported by patients to their GPs. This new project will refine the modelling tool using more patient records and up-to-date information. She will then estimate how well the tool would work in real life and how much it would cost the NHS to implement it.



### Professor Jason Carroll, University of Cambridge

Professor Carroll has developed a new technique that allows him to 'map' protein interactions within a cancer tumour and identify possible proteins that could be a target for new treatments. He plans to apply this technique to pancreatic cancer tumours and use the resulting map to identify potential drug targets among the proteins. He's particularly interested in mapping proteins called 'transcription factors' which switch genes on.



### Professor Len Seymour, University of Oxford

Professor Seymour's project aims to develop a virus that will specifically infect and break down pancreatic cancer cells and activate the immune system to help kill the cancer. Immunotherapy has made slow progress to date in pancreatic cancer, but Prof Seymour's approach unusually targets both the tumour itself and the thick protective coating (the stroma) which surrounds the tumour. He hopes that this potential treatment could ultimately be delivered intravenously, which would benefit patients whose cancer has already spread to lymph nodes and other organs beyond the pancreas.



### Dr Giulia Biffi, University of Cambridge

Dr Biffi's research targets non-cancerous cells that make up to 90% of each pancreatic cancer tumour. Some of these cells, called fibroblasts, help the cancer to grow and to resist chemotherapy. Dr Biffi's new project aims to determine the different ways that various groups of fibroblasts contribute to the growth

of pancreatic cancer. She will also look for ways to block them in order to potentially develop more effective combination treatments.



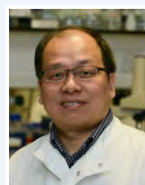
### Professor Hemant Kocher, Barts Cancer Institute, Queen Mary University of London

The thick, scar-like tissue coating pancreatic tumours which prevents chemotherapy from working well is formed by specialised cells called pancreatic stellate cells (PSCs). Healthy PSCs store vitamin A, but in pancreatic cancer, PSCs lose their vitamin A stores and start laying down scar tissue. Prof Kocher has found that replenishing vitamin A stores in these cells can make them change back to normal, enabling chemotherapy to work better. This project will investigate how vitamin A affects the 'genetic machinery' of PSCs to enable this beneficial change.



### Professor John Marshall, Barts Cancer Institute, Queen Mary University of London

Professor Marshall's previous PCRF-funded research showed that the molecule alpha-v beta-6 ( $\alpha v\beta 6$ ), which is abundant in around 80% of pancreatic cancers, drives the spread of the cancer to other organs. This new project will examine how  $\alpha v\beta 6$  causes the cancer to spread and will test two different types of drugs that he has been developing to stop  $\alpha v\beta 6$  working, and determine when and how best they could potentially be used for patients.



### Professor Yaohe Wang, Barts Cancer Institute, Queen Mary University of London

In previous PCRF-funded research Professor Wang successfully modified a virus that was shown to be effective in killing pancreatic cancer cells in laboratory tests. But we now know that the cancer has many different ways to evade treatment and become resistant to 'virotherapy'. Professor Wang is using the latest knowledge to design a new virotherapy that targets pancreatic cancer's multiple resistance mechanisms at the same time, to both kill the cells and prevent them from returning.

## Charity of the Year award: Lazard

**We are delighted to have been chosen as the Charity of the Year for the UK branch of Lazard, the global financial advisory and asset management firm.**

The award lasts for two years and is thanks to long-time supporter Imogen Mazzier, who has fundraised for PCRF since she was a teenager and who nominated PCRF after joining Lazard earlier this year.

Patrick Long, Chair of their Charity Committee said: "We're excited about our new partnership with Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund following their selection as our Charity of the Year for 2021-23. PCRF funds innovative research into a devastating disease and we are impressed by their determination to make advances in diagnosis and new treatments. We look forward to helping our colleagues to see the difference their fundraising efforts can make."

## New biomarker could help diagnose pancreatic cancer earlier

A new study part-funded by PCRF has enabled the discovery of a potential new way to diagnose pancreatic cancer.

The research team, led by Professor Hemant Kocher at Barts Cancer Institute, Queen Mary University of London, used blood samples stored at the Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund Tissue Bank. They identified a protein in the samples that is found at significantly higher levels in patients with pancreatic cancer than in patients with other non-cancerous conditions of the pancreas and healthy individuals.

Prof Kocher believes that the protein, called PTX3, could act as a biomarker – a biological measure – to diagnose the most common form of pancreatic cancer faster than the current method of using scans and imaging techniques.





## Gill's epic fundraising tribute to Blanche

**After her much-loved friend Blanche Phythyon from Pennsylvania, USA was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in late 2019, Gill Bromley made a New Year's resolution to fundraise in her name for a year.**

Gill (64) from Headcorn in Kent started with a January sea swim (for which she says training involved lots of freezing cold showers!) then her hairdresser hosted a ladies' pamper day in her salon for the cause. With her planned aerobathon, coffee morning and cream tea thwarted by lockdown, Gill crafted felt rose brooches to sell throughout the summer and a family member hosted two virtual greeting card and gift wrap evenings.

Sadly Blanche died in August and Gill says grief spurred her on to new and bigger fundraising challenges.

"Blanche and I famously had no head for heights and there were many holidays together where we never reached the top of castle ramparts, church towers and even a lighthouse we visited, so I decided I'd do a wing walk in September," she recalls. "I carried a photo of Blanche in my pocket



Gill (left) with Blanche

so she was beside me to give me courage and I was amazed at how much I enjoyed it – it was a thrilling adventure!"

Gill then rose to her brother's challenge of cycling from the north Kent to the south Kent coast, with three friends joining her on the 6-hour ride. Another friend made and sold Christmas pinatas and Gill rounded off the year by challenging her brother to swim in the sea with her.

Gill's incredible tribute to Blanche raised over £4000 and although the 12-month campaign is complete, it seems she's nowhere near finished. She's currently knitting beaded jewellery to sell and plans to do the aerobathon, coffee mornings and cream tea. Friends are keen to walk the 28-mile Royal Military Canal from East Sussex to the Kent coast with her and she's also planning to organise a music event with friends who play in different bands.

"There's a few other more physical challenges I'm considering too, including kayaking along the river Rother and I may just be brave enough to do a tandem parachute jump!" Gill says.



## Cheers! New beer in Jim's memory raises £2k for PCRF

Warwickshire craft brewery Purity Brewing Co launched a new cask beer called JIMBO in tribute to co-founder Jim Minkin who died of pancreatic cancer in 2020 – with 5p of every pint sold donated to PCRF – raising over £2,000 to date.

Jim, affectionately known as Jimbo, co-founded the



award-winning brewery in 2005 with friend Paul Halsey. Whilst an accountant by trade, Jim had a huge passion for brewing and in Purity's early days was Head Brewer, responsible for their first beers.

Paul, Purity's CEO, said: "I am incredibly proud of the beer we've created and I know that Jimbo would have been proud of the team too. Jim's passing has left a huge hole in the Purity Family. JIMBO allows Jim's character to live on in our great beer and a part of him will always be at Purity."

## Marathon effort by junior doctors



Tahir (left) and Monty

University medical students Monty Matson and Tahir Khan, both 24, turned a personal goal to run a marathon before graduating into a fundraiser for PCRF when Monty's grandma Pamela was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

The two met on their first day at medical school at Robinson College, University of Cambridge and have been friends ever since.

After training for only 8 weeks before their graduation ceremony, their winding 42km route took them from Ely Cathedral to Kings College Chapel in Cambridge. The friends completed their marathon distance in just 4hrs 15 minutes and raised over £2100 – more than double their original target.

Despite recording a time that most amateur runners would be thrilled with, Monty confessed to being a little disappointed with their time. "We'd hoped to run it in under 4hrs but thanks to some very poor map reading, one of the paths on the route turned out to be a field of long grass and stinging nettles, which hampered us a bit! It's funny now, but it really wasn't at the time!"

Now graduated, Monty, is about to start work as a junior doctor at Whipps Cross University Hospital in London and Tahir is starting work at a hospital in his home town of Chelmsford.



# Bake & Share campaign delivered!

Keen baker Lucille Carter from Thorpe Willoughby in North Yorkshire has raised thousands of pounds for PCRF over the years by supporting the charity's Bake & Share campaign each November during Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month.

But when pandemic restrictions ruled out the local church as a venue for her coffee mornings, Lucille and friends devised a creative alternative – offering to deliver 'afternoon tea boxes', packed with tasty treats, to residents in her village for a £10 donation.



"Since I lost my husband Paul to pancreatic cancer ten years ago, everyone in the village has generously supported my fundraising. All the ingredients and even the boxes were donated for free, and a small army of wonderful people helped with baking and delivery," says Lucille.

"We had over 60 orders! People ordered them for themselves and as treats for friends and family members who they couldn't visit. Along with extra donations, we raised over £800 which was fantastic."

"We're hoping to go back to the church hall for our coffee mornings in November as we all look forward to getting together with friends and neighbours, but we've shown that we can still fundraise no matter what the circumstances!"

## Panmure RFC journey to the centre of the Earth

**How did Rugby players from Dundee's Panmure RFC stay match fit during the pandemic? They walked, ran and cycled to the centre of the Earth!**

When club training had to stop, 25 players aged from 18-52 years, plus the club's physio and club President, signed up to the distance challenge. They aimed to cover 3949 miles – the equivalent distance to the Earth's core - in just 30 days. To spice things up, they split into three teams and competed to cover the most ground.

Rather than raising money for club funds, the team generously donated their sponsorship proceeds to PCRF to support a club

player whose mum was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

The teams - Your Pace or Mine, El Presidente's Merry Men and Run Fat Boy, Run – exceeded the target distance by more than 1200 miles and smashed their fundraising target to raise a total of £2650.



***"It was a win-win situation," says club President, Doug Parker. "The lads got some fresh air and exercise and it was great for a bit of competitive camaraderie. Plus we got to help out a really worthwhile charity in the process."***

## I'd like to donate to PCRF

**We value all donations to fund vital research**

Please complete this form on both sides in block capitals and return to:

Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund  
P. O. Box 47432, London N21 1XP

Please make cheques payable to Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email

Keeping in contact via email helps us to keep costs down.



Angels fly off the shelves!



I-r Glenis and Marilyn

After losing her husband David to pancreatic cancer in January 2020, Marilyn Collins from Halesowen, West Midlands, and her sister Glenis Allen raised £2000 for PCRF by hand-crafting beautiful Christmas angels, repurposed from old books and magazines.

"We'd seen similar ones at a Christmas craft fair the year before, and hoped we could raise some funds in David's memory," says Marilyn.

"We scouted for old books in charity shops and used colourful paper from free glossy food magazines - the ones from Marks & Spencer and Asda were particularly good! Once the shops were stocking Christmas baubles we really got going."

Friends, family and their work colleagues spread the word and soon orders were flooding in. Marilyn says her house became like a production line with Glenis's daughter Georgia helping out too.

"It was something that I really needed to do at the time," she says. "We were all still in shock from losing David and it was a comfort knowing that I was doing something positive."

"I've always been a bit 'crafty', but I've not done anything on this scale before. While we're not planning to do it again this year, I do have an order for three angels to make for my cousin's daughter, and I quite fancy having a go at making snowflakes, so you never know!"

Stadium tour for Sue

Tom Harding, his son Eddie and his dad Mick from the Isle of Wight embarked on a 2600-mile fundraiser to visit all 93 league football grounds in England – completing their challenge in just over 5 days!

The trio had planned their fundraiser for 2020 in memory of Tom's mum, Sue Harding, who died in 2019. But prevented by the lockdown they forged new plans for 2021 – accidentally clashing with the Euro 2020 tournament.

"We'd not even thought about whether England would reach the final, but when they did, it was even more important to stick to our schedule so we could get home to watch the match!" says Tom. "We had to visit up to 20 grounds every day. Our schedule was so tight, it was literally a quick stop outside the stadium, take a photo, back in the car and onto the next one."

"Mum would have found our challenge really funny because she wasn't really that big on football," says Tom. "The only team she was interested in was Oxford United because that's where she was brought up, so it was fitting that this was the final club we visited on the tour."

"I can just imagine her rolling her eyes at us, but I do know she would have been extremely proud that we'd done it for her. It was our tribute to a fantastic mum, wife and grandma, and raising £4800 for PCRF is a brilliant bonus."



I-r Mick, Eddie and Tom Harding



Just some of the stadiums on Tom's tour!

I would like to make a donation to PCRF and enclose a cheque for  
£ (payable to Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund).

giftaid it

☐ Yes, I am a UK taxpayer and would like to Gift Aid my donation (please tick).

I want to Gift Aid this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund, until I notify you otherwise. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature:

Date:

☐ Tick the box if you would like us to send you a receipt.

Alternatively, you can donate with a credit or debit card by phoning us at 020 8360 1119 or via the website.

☐ Tick this box if you would like to receive future newsletters

We don't pass your details on to any other organisations.  
Registered Charity No. 1155322



There are many different ways you can help us fund more research and make more progress in tackling pancreatic cancer:

## Take part in an event

Mass participation runs, walks, cycles etc. should be fully resuming in 2022. Please check our website. Whether you sign up for a PCRF guaranteed place in an event or secure your own place, we'll provide fundraising advice and free charity top.



## Give in celebration

You can celebrate a special occasion such as an anniversary, wedding or birthday by asking for donations to PCRF in lieu of gifts. Contact us for ways to organise this.



## Organise your own event



Whether it's a quiz night, charity ball or coffee morning, we're keen to help make your own fundraiser a success. Just email or phone us to let us know your plans so we can discuss promotional materials.



## Set up a Facebook Fundraiser



If you're on Facebook, it's easy to set up a Fundraiser for PCRF directly from your profile. Many of our lovely supporters set up one for their birthday. People can donate to the fundraiser in just a few clicks without leaving Facebook, and the final sum gets paid to the charity automatically.

## Shop online and fund research

You can be raising funds for more research just by shopping online! Here are two easy ways:

- Shop from thousands of leading retailers through the **Give as you Live** website and a percentage of your spend will be donated to us at no extra cost to you! Visit [www.giveasyoulive.com](http://www.giveasyoulive.com) and select Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund when you sign up.
- If you love **Amazon**, did you know that 0.5% of the net purchase of your eligible purchases can be donated to the charity, at no cost to you? First visit [smile.amazon.co.uk](http://smile.amazon.co.uk) to select Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund as your chosen charity, then you can support us every time you shop!



## Buy PCRF merchandise

Support research with PCRF merchandise – including T-shirts, pin badges and trolley token keyrings. See our online shop.



### Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund

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020 8360 1119

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