

October 2012



# WCB newsletter

## Stepping Stones Appeal

In January 2011 the Wales Cancer Bank applied to the Stepping Stones Appeal in Velindre hospital for funding to expand the sample collection in Cardiff. The appeal is based in the Velindre Cancer Centre and it provides funding for research into lung cancer. WCB was very pleased to be successful in this bid and was honoured to become a recipient of funding donated to the appeal from wonderful fundraising activities such as Mair's Walk and the Captain's Climb.



In September 2010, 50 climbers including 15 former Welsh rugby captains tackled Mount Kilimanjaro in Kenya to raise money for lung cancer research. The climb was the brainchild of Huw Evans, the national rugby team sports photographer whose family was affected by lung cancer.

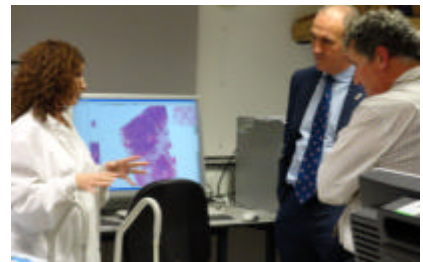
Mair Ap Gruffydd is an inspirational lady who was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2006



Bob Norster trying his hand at mounting sections

and has since organised annual walks that have raised hundreds of thousands of pounds for research into lung cancer.

([www.mairs-walk.co.uk](http://www.mairs-walk.co.uk))



Fiona Morgan explaining the digital imaging equipment

In October 2012, Mair, some of the Captains and other Stepping Stones supporters visited the Wales Cancer Bank laboratory in Velindre to meet WCB staff and see for themselves what impact the funding was having—to see if the gain had been worth their pain!



Mair in the lab

The funding has allowed WCB to instigate the collection of tissue and blood samples from lung cancer patients in Cardiff and make them available for ground breaking cancer research. The money has been used to employ a

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research nurse to consent patients and a laboratory technician to assist with the collection, processing and storage of the biological samples. As a direct result of this funding, a number of lung patients from Cardiff have now had their samples submitted to the Stratified Medicine programme for molecular analysis. This initiative looks at the molecular detail of each patient's tumour and records any genetic mutation information. This data can help inform the clinician of the best treatment for that individual patient.

We hope the evening was an enjoyable, 'hands on' experience and that the fundraisers are happy with the way in which the fruits of their efforts are being utilised. WCB looks forward to welcoming everyone back for an update in the future.

Patients in Cardiff have been more than willing to donate samples to WCB and have given touching reasons for doing so:

'The reason I have consented to WCB is that when I die I have got very little to leave. Through donating my samples, I will be leaving something that I hope will benefit future generations'

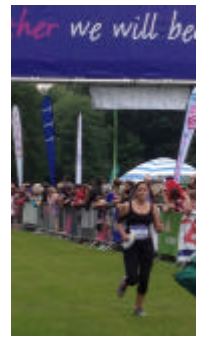
'I consented to WCB to forward research in the area of lung cancer. Also having been affected by different cancers I hope that future generations of my family will benefit from research carried out using my samples'

## WCB staff take on the 2012 Race for Life



Sian, Pam and Suzanne with Blue the dog, Tegan and Alisha in Swansea

WCB staff and patients have once again shown their support to raise money for cancer research by taking part in the 2012 Race for Life. On 22 July the sun came out in Swansea and Suzanne Williams, lead WCB nurse (pictured holding dog!), Pam Hayward, WCB nurse and past patient and Sian Roberts, a patient who has previously donated tissue to the WCB ran the 5km course starting at the National Waterfront.



Sophie crossing the finish line in Cardiff

The weekend before Sophie Norton, WCB nurse, was not so lucky in Cardiff as the sun stayed away and the rain came down. It didn't dampen spirits or enthusiasm and Sophie finished the 10km course in Bute park in 55 minutes! She is now in training for the Cardiff Half Marathon in October.

**'This is such an exciting project -- and a real investment by today's generation for the Welsh people of tomorrow.'**

**Huw Edwards**  
BBC

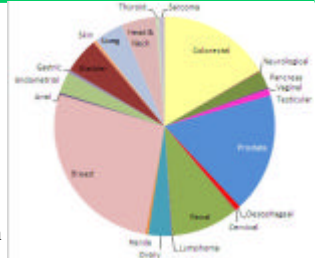
**Christmas cards and great stocking fillers are now available from the Cancer Research Wales online shop. Go to the website at:**

<http://crw.org.uk/shop-with-us/products-page/>



## Collection update

6,800 patients have now consented to donate tissue and blood samples to the Wales Cancer Bank. The updated breakdown of sample profile shows that the breast, prostate and colorectal collections are still the largest with the lung figures gaining momentum with the new funding.



# Thoughts from a Patient's experience

By Caroline Harry

My name is Caroline and in 2004 at the age of 34, after much to-ing and fro-ing to my local GP from the June up to the New Years Eve, I was finally examined properly by a doctor. I had been sent for a blood test, which showed I was anaemic, so I was told to take iron tablets. I was so weak, tired and swollen under my arm, my bra hurt, the seatbelt in the car hurt. Much to my surprise, I wasn't examined physically by the GP at that point—that only happened in the December of 2004.

But it wasn't until the following March that it was suggested by my breast cancer nurse that I should have a skin biopsy. I'd had the mammogram, been treated for mastitis and was given various antibiotics, but the redness in my breast spread. My breast tissue became pitted and looked like orange peel. The nipple became grey, sore, and I had a horrible discharge that leaked from under the breast. A tiny skin sample taken by a doctor gave us the results I dreaded. Wednesday, March 23rd 2005, I was diagnosed with Grade 3 ductal carcinoma. On April 5th I started chemotherapy and on 14th of April I had a CT and bone scans. Luckily the cancer hadn't spread. It was only after the bi-lateral mastectomy (I requested for both breasts to be taken) that we found that many of my lymph nodes had cancer in them; I think it may have been 10 out of 15. I had two different types of chemo FEC and Docetaxel and radiotherapy and I was treated at home with Herceptin. Having Herceptin at home was relaxing, and I actually looked forward to seeing Sheila my nurse for a chat.



Caroline  
(photo by Geoff Mock)

***'The Wales Cancer Bank is looking to the future – our children and grandchildren deserve the best chances we can give them. Supporting this project will help ensure they receive them.'***

**Katherine Jenkins**

It was while in hospital, staring out of the window towards Mumbles that a friendly lady popped into my room and asked for a chat. Her name was Suzanne, and she worked for the Wales Cancer Bank. I'd never heard of it until then. She explained that she worked on vital research in helping find out how to treat cancer, and in order to help patients, we could help the WCB by donating tissue not needed for diagnosis after surgery. It turned out that one breast that I had removed was healthy and the other was riddled with cancer. So, the WCB had something remarkable from me to work with. Something good had to come out of this awful time in my life. If it meant I'd be helping people in the future that may be unlucky like me, then it was a pleasure to donate my breasts to cancer research. If the breast tissue had been incinerated, what a waste it would have been.

I was delighted just recently to find Suzanne on Facebook. So I sent her a message to tell her I'm doing fine. I also see my breast care nurse sometimes in passing and she gets a huge thank you hug from me when we meet. Luckily, I only attend hospital to attend lymphoedema clinic now, a small price to pay for still being alive to watch my kids grow up! Tonight, it's my youngest son's school prom. It is things like this that make me so grateful to still be here. Without research into cancer, many of us wouldn't be here.

My experience of the WCB was that they treated me with respect and dignity and I would urge anyone who is approached not to hesitate in agreeing to donate tissue and blood samples— you never know who you might help!

# CANCER RESEARCH WALES EVENTS



With the 2012 London Olympics fading into memories, why not revitalise your fitness campaign and be inspired to take part in one of three exciting Cardiff based challenges and raise money for Cancer Research Wales at the same time. Sponsor forms can be downloaded from CRW's website (<http://crw.org.uk/events/>) and entry packs for the Cardiff Burn or the St David's Day run can be obtained by contacting the CRW office on the number below.

## The Cardiff Burn 28th October

The Cardiff Burn is organised by Multisport Wales. This extreme event includes 10km running, 30km biking, 3km kayaking, 2km foot navigation and a special phase! This event is open to male pairs, female pairs, mixed pairs, solo/own kayak. Juniors must race with a responsible adult. Entry is in pairs and costs £45 per person or £40 per person if you're entering solo or have your own kayak. Participants are encouraged to raise sponsor money for Cancer Research Wales.

Registration opens at 8.30am      Race starts at 10am  
Venue: Llandaff Rowing Club, Cardiff

## Cardiff Half Marathon

14th October

Race starts at 9am at Cardiff Castle and takes in Penarth marina, the barrage, goes through Cardiff Bay, up to Roath park before finishing at the Civic Centre. 13.1 miles of beautiful Cardiff!

## Contact

Cancer  
Research  
Wales  
on:  
**02920 316976**

## St David's Day Run

3rd March 2013

In partnership with British Military Fitness, there are both 5k and 10k routes available, as well as 1k for children.

Director —  
Professor Malcolm Mason

Director of Scientific Services —  
Professor Gerry Thomas

Manager —  
Dr Alison Parry-Jones

IT Manager —  
Mr Daniel Naeh

Wales Cancer Bank  
Room GTB2 (1)  
Ground Floor, UHW  
Heath Park  
Cardiff CF14 4XN

Phone: 029 20743243  
Fax: 029 20744309



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E-mail: [walescancerbank@cf.ac.uk](mailto:walescancerbank@cf.ac.uk)  
[www.walescancerbank.com](http://www.walescancerbank.com)