

# James Page, Macmillan Cancer Support: Centenary Year Challenge

## The Target

I will be taking a break from fund raising as such in 2010, to concentrate on a bigger challenge the following year. 2011 is Macmillan's centenary year and it would be perfect to raise sufficient to reach the original target of £100,000 in memory of James Page. This means adding £37,000 to the donations received since the fundraising started in 2001.

## The Challenge

I will travel to Alaska to attempt the ascent of Denali (Mt. McKinley), the highest peak in North America. At 6200m it does not quite reach the heights of Everest North Col but represents a sterner physical challenge. The climb is unaided so there will be no Sherpas carrying the camping and cooking equipment and food and we will have to undertake sorties to carry our equipment to each camp. The latitude also makes this generally a much harsher climate than Everest at these altitudes.



Denali, Alaska



With Gerry 'Posing' at Everest North Base Camp May 2009

I will be accompanied by distinguished ENT Cancer Surgeon, Gerry McGarry. Based in Glasgow, Gerry is involved first hand with the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. We met on the Everest expedition and his experience with Macmillan made this challenge an ideal opportunity for him to raise awareness of their work. Gerry is also an experienced alpine mountaineer and over the next months will be training me in the technical and rescue skills needed to undertake this expedition and to maximise our chance of a successful outcome.

## The Reason

Since James' death in 2000, I have witnessed more of the suffering this disease continues to inflict, including the deaths of friends and colleagues, but I have also learnt more of the vital work undertaken by Macmillan. One particularly inspiring story came in an email from a lady explaining her reasons for choosing to work as a Macmillan fundraiser: *"My sister died of cancer a couple of years ago at the age of 45. Towards the end of her life we got Macmillan in and my mother's words 'they moved mountains for us' – and they really did, the help and support she received was unbelievable, especially the Benefits Adviser who got her benefits she had been repeatedly told she was not entitled to, she received a gift of £500 which helped her pay off some immediate debts and allowed her a short break in Northern Spain, a special place for her and her partner. Right at the end of her life, the District Nurse couldn't get her into the local hospice as there was a waiting list of over 30 people – Macmillan took charge and got her in that day – sadly she died within a couple of weeks but at least she got the care, peace and rest she desperately needed. Even after she had gone, Macmillan was still there for us, offering bereavement counselling to the family and her three teenage children"*.

## The Request

All being well this will be my last major fundraising effort and I am sure those regular supporters will be relieved to hear this. In simple terms, we hope to find up to 37 companies who would be willing to donate £1000 to support Gerry and me on this summit attempt. As in previous years we will pay all our costs so all the money raised will go direct to Macmillan. I realise in times of recession finances are stretched but I also believe this level of donation is achievable because of the generosity of companies and individuals I have experienced in the past. Obviously all contributions to the target are welcome and greatly appreciated and I would not wish to preclude all those regular personal donations we have come to rely on. The need for support has not diminished.

If you are able to help, at whatever level, please contact me at RPA to let me know. Your donation will help cancer sufferers and their families as they try to deal with this terrible disease.

Roger Parker August 2010