

FIGHT FOR SIGHT NEWS

Autumn 2005

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Simon Weil

Merger success

Dear Supporter

I am writing with exciting news from Fight for Sight.

As you will know, Fight for Sight (registered charity 1091829) is celebrating its 40th year of success at the forefront of research into the prevention of blindness and treatment of eye disease.

Thanks to your generous donations, Fight for Sight has helped to deliver real breakthroughs - but there is still so much more to be done.

With this in mind, Fight for Sight has agreed to merge on 30 September 2005 with the British Eye Research Foundation (registered charity 293204), formerly the Iris Fund for Prevention of Blindness.

Both charities have the same aim - to fund research into the prevention of blindness and treatment of eye disease - and both have a record of successfully raising funds.

It makes so much sense to bring the two organisations and our expertise together, making an even greater impact by combining forces. Together we are confident that we will be still more effective in delivering research to prevent blindness.

The new charity will be known as Fight for Sight, The British Eye Research Foundation (and its registered name will be The British Eye Research Foundation). Our aim is to become the flagship charity for eye research in the country, funding research across the UK that promises to deliver real results.

We very much look forward to your continued support and will be contacting you with further information in the coming months.



Simon Weil
Chair, Fight for Sight



Ruth with daughters
Hannah (left) and Sophie

Mum inspired to run by daughter

Ruth Bellinger from Rickmansworth raised almost £800 for Fight for Sight by completing the Bournemouth 5K run.

Ruth's youngest daughter Hannah, aged almost two, was diagnosed with retinoblastoma (a rare form of eye cancer) when she was just nine months old.

Ruth said: "I wanted to raise money to do something practical for Hannah and other children in her position and

thought running a 5K race would be a good way to do it. I mentioned this to Hannah's consultant and he suggested Fight for Sight as they provide bursaries for specific research projects looking at eye disease.

I had a look at Fight for Sight's website and what they did seemed practical and positive. I wanted to raise money for an organisation which aims to solve the problem rather than just deal with it."

**PROFESSOR
P T KHAW**



Professor who saves children's sight

Peng Tee Khaw is Professor of Ocular Healing and Glaucoma at the Institute of Ophthalmology and Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at Moorfields Eye Hospital.

One of his first patients was a young child who had undergone many glaucoma operations which had sadly failed due to scarring in her eyes. Professor Khaw looked after her but, despite his very best efforts, the little girl lost her sight. "I just felt I needed to do more", says Professor Khaw, "I wanted to use the power of the laboratory to help her and many children like her".

Professor Khaw runs the Ocular Repair and Regeneration research unit which concentrates on preventing scarring and regenerating the eye. Scarring and failure to regenerate plays a part in virtually every major blinding eye disease and the exciting news is that preventing scarring can promote regeneration of tissues including the optic nerve.

Over the years, and with support from Fight for Sight, several new treatments and techniques have been developed to prevent scarring after retinal and glaucoma surgery. Success rates in glaucoma surgery have been improved and new treatments have been taken through to large-scale international trials around the world. These simple treatments have now been shown to benefit not just children but also adults across the world – in both developed and poorer developing countries. In their latest study they have shown that if scarring can be completely controlled after glaucoma surgery no patient got worse over 80 months follow up.

But, although their groundbreaking anti-scarring techniques now help many patients, what is now needed is a whole new generation of treatments to treat scarring, help regeneration of eye tissues and restore sight. There is the potential to improve the treatment of virtually all blinding eye diseases.

"I have seen our laboratory research change the lives of many people including children and their families. We need to help those children to see who can't be helped now".

And that's where Fight for Sight's commitment to raise £1 million to fund a research unit in the new International Children's Eye Centre comes in. This 'hospital within a hospital' at Moorfields Eye Hospital will cater for the needs of children with eye disease and their families and establish a world-class programme of research to provide new hope for children with intractable eye problems.

Professor Khaw's aim is simple: "I have seen our laboratory research change the lives of many people including children and their families. We need to help those children to see who can't be helped now".

Professor Khaw was recently awarded the first international ARVO/Pfizer Translational Research Prize. His use of 'the power of scientific research to change lives and preserve vision' was cited in granting the award.

To donate online visit www.fightforsight.org.uk

Donate just £3 a month and help make children's eye disease history



This young boy has had his sight saved by using improved treatments developed in the laboratory. However, new advances in tissue regeneration are needed to improve his vision so he can clearly see his mother's face again.

As Professor Khaw emphasises, research facilities are vital to ensure that new treatments are developed for children affected by eye disease.

Fight for Sight's commitment of £1 million towards a research unit in the International Children's Eye Centre will help make this happen. In addition to providing a unique place for research into children's eye disease, the research unit will have specific facilities to cater for children and their families such as consulting rooms with play areas.

Your help will make all the difference to children with sight loss

By giving us a regular gift you will help make this happen – and make a big difference to the lives of the many thousands of children who will benefit. By supporting us we can also ensure that researchers can continue making vital breakthroughs in the future.

With your continued support we have the very best chance of finding out the causes of eye disease and developing effective treatments in the future.

So please support us with a monthly gift of £3 or a donation of £25 today. Complete the donation form below or visit www.fightforsight.org.uk to donate online.

Name

Address

Telephone

Yes, I would like to make a regular gift to Fight for Sight of:

£3 a month - or my own choice of £ a month
(please specify)

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE DIRECT DEBIT FORM ALONGSIDE
OR**

Please accept my donation of:

£100 £50 £25 £

I enclose a cheque/postal order/charity cheque made payable to:
Fight for Sight £

Please debit £ from my: VISA Mastercard CAF Card

Card Number:

Expiry Date:

Today's Date: Signature:

If you are a UK tax payer, and want Fight for Sight to reclaim tax on your donations at no extra cost to you, simply tick the box below. I am a UK taxpayer and I want Fight for Sight to claim back the tax on all donations I have made since 6 April 2000 and all future donations.

Just tick here

NB: The Inland Revenue has asked us to inform you that you must pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax we reclaim on your donations in the tax year.

Please tick this box if you wish your donation to be acknowledged.

Fight for Sight



**Instruction to your Bank
or Building Society to pay
by Direct Debit**

Please fill in the whole form in
CAPITAL letters and send it to:

FIGHT FOR SIGHT
FREEPOST KE8578
London
EC1B 1FS

Originator's Identification Number

6	8	0	3	3	4
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Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Reference Number (for office use only)

Bank/Building Society
account number

Branch Sort Code

Name and full postal address of your
Bank or Building Society

To: The Manager Bank/Building Society

Address

Postcode

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Fight for Sight Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with Fight for Sight and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions from some types of account
Registered Charity number: 1091829

402

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This Guarantee should be retained by the Payer

• This Guarantee is offered by all Banks and Building Societies that take part in the Direct Debit Scheme. The efficiency & security of the Scheme is monitored and protected by your own Bank or Building Society. • If the amounts to be paid or the payment dates change Fight for Sight will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. • If an error is made by Fight for Sight or your Bank or Building Society, you are guaranteed a full and immediate refund from your branch of the amount paid. • You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your Bank or Building Society. Please also send a copy of your letter to Fight for Sight.



**Direct Debit
Guarantee**

To donate online visit www.fightforsight.org.uk

SIMON BROOKS



Groundbreaking discovery

Simon Brooks' PhD studentship at the Institute of Ophthalmology in London has been funded by Fight for Sight for the last three years. His research focuses on congenital eye disease and finding out what causes it.

Many of the diseases causing blindness are inherited and are due to a malfunction in one or more of the specialised cells necessary for vision.

Simon studies the genes of families affected by eye disease and as a result has found a new gene which causes congenital cataracts in some people. This type of discovery will have a big

impact on the treatment of patients.

Simon says: "As a result of my work we will now be able to help patients and clinicians with the diagnosis for this disease and my future work on this new disease gene may help us to understand eye conditions such as congenital cataract and microphthalmia (where the

eye fails to fully develop in the foetus).

The results of this type of research not only benefit families directly through genetic counselling, but also provide the first step towards understanding how these mutations in genes can cause blindness, and ultimately what kind of treatments will be effective."

As a result, families affected by congenital eye disease will be helped to make informed medical and personal decisions.

To find out more about Fight for Sight's research projects visit www.fightforsight.org.uk

Over £50,000 from The Clothworkers' Foundation

Livery companies probably had their origins in this country before 1066. The early companies were the medieval equivalent of trading standards departments, checking quality of goods and weights and measures. They also controlled imports, set wages and working conditions and trained apprentices.

The Clothworkers' Company has a history going back almost 500 years.

Blind welfare is a cause with which the Company has been closely associated for at least 300 years. This connection was initiated by John West, Master 1707-8 and his wife, Frances, who endowed a number of charities to

provide assistance for blind and other needy persons.

The Clothworkers' Foundation is one of the 50 largest grant-making trusts in the country. In March this year the trustees of the Foundation responded to an appeal for support with the equipping of furniture for the new laboratory built at the Institute of

Ophthalmology, the Centre for Identification and Development of Novel Treatment Strategies for Ocular Disease, which was officially opened earlier this year.

Since 1996 Fight for Sight has received £51,500 from The Clothworkers' Foundation.

The Incredibles - superhuman effort by triathletes

On 7 August while most of us were having our traditional Sunday lie-in, Paul Shaw, 39, and Anthony O'Leary, 38, were up before dawn taking part in the Michelob ULTRA London Triathlon.

Paul and Anthony swam 1,500m, cycled 40km and ran 10km in a bid to raise vital funds for Fight for Sight.

Anthony completed the course in three hours 33 minutes while Paul completed it in two hours 27 minutes, raising £400.

Anthony, who will also be working as a volunteer in Fight for Sight's Christmas card shop said: "I decided to run for Fight for Sight because blindness can

affect anyone of any age, anywhere in the world. The Triathlon was really hard but enjoyable."

Paul added: "I have a soft spot for Fight for Sight because I cherish my own sight and am happy to have a way to help. A family member on my wife's side was blind for most of his

life and I have fond memories of him and his attitude to blindness."

If you would like to take part in an event for Fight for Sight – anything from a 5K race or 10K walk to a Marathon – call Fight for Sight on 020 7608 4000 or visit www.fightforsight.org.uk

To donate online visit www.fightforsight.org.uk



Website attracts 10,000 visitors

Fight for Sight's new website attracted 10,000 visitors in one month when it launched in April.

The new-look website, launched as part of the charity's 40th year anniversary, features the latest news about fundraising events, research grants and statistics on eye disease.

The charity is looking for a corporate sponsor for the site – please contact Annu Mayor on 020 7608 4000 for further information. Visit the new site at www.fightforsight.org.uk



Taking a leap

Over the summer forty people took part in Fight for Sight's 40th birthday parachute jump at airfields all over the country.

Jumpers had to raise a minimum of £350 each to take part in the 10,000 feet tandem jump. Participants included Vicky Rampley, an advisor at Specs Direct in Haverhill. She said: "It was absolutely fantastic - the most amazing experience ever and I can't wait to do it again!"

Head of Fundraising Annu Mayor said: "We've been overwhelmed by the support we've had from the optical industry in helping us to celebrate our 40th birthday. Many opticians have been helping us raise money for several years and they play a vital part in helping us to fund research into eye disease and blindness. We're especially grateful to all the people who gathered up the courage to take part in our 40th birthday parachute jump."

Fancy having a go? For more information on this and other events visit www.fightforsight.org.uk or call Fight for Sight on 020 7608 4000.



Mullens Opticians

Opticians celebrate 40th anniversary

Opticians all over the country geared up for Fight for Sight's Fundraising Week last month (August).

Events included staff at Mullens Opticians in Stockton Heath, Cheshire, dressing as T-birds and Pink Ladies as well as numerous mufti days, sales of Fight for Sight pin badges, street collections and requests of donations to the charity for spectacle repairs.

Each branch was asked to just raise £40 to help celebrate Fight for Sight's 40th birthday.

Head of Fundraising Annu Mayor said: "This is the first year we ran the Fundraising Week for Opticians and we're delighted with the response."

Opticians have been very generous in their support throughout our forty years and it is great to see that they are as keen to support us now as they always have been."

If you would like to take part in a fundraising event visit www.fightforsight.org.uk or call Fight for Sight on 020 7608 4000.

Overwhelming support from the optical industry



Silhouette UK Ltd



Marchon Eyewear

Optical companies came out in droves to support Fight for Sight in its 40th year. Companies helped in so many ways – by donating their time, money, designer sunglasses, as well as sweating it out in the Flora London Marathon or jumping out of planes from a height of 10,000 feet!

If your company would like to jump on the bandwagon and help Fight for Sight make this a truly memorable year then please call Annu Mayor on 020 7608 4000 or visit www.fightforsight.org.uk



Bausch & Lomb UK Ltd



Nikon Optical UK Ltd



Birmingham Optical Group Ltd



David Thomas



Rodenstock (UK) Ltd



Keeler Ltd

Toasting success at Golf Day

Members of Optician Magazine's golf team (above) recently took part in Fight for Sight's 10th annual Golf Day. The event took place at Stoneleigh Deer Park in Warwickshire in July and was a great success raising more than £13,000. Thirty six teams took part with competitors from Bausch & Lomb, Scrivens, Hoya, Essilor, Dollond & Aitchison and Silhouette. Pictured (from left) are Brian Bowles, managing director of Grafton Optical; Richard Bennett, Optician Magazine head of sales; Matthias Kosack, marketing and sales director of Adidas Eyewear; and Tim Bertram, Optician Magazine's new deputy advertisement manager.



CIBA Vision (UK) Ltd



CooperVision



Metzler International UK Ltd



Carleton Ltd



Flame Health Ltd



Ocuco Ltd - UK



Specsavers Opticians