



BLUEBIRD  PR

BLUE SKYE THINKING COVERAGE November 2014



Charity of the week

Blue Skye Thinking

Blue Skye Thinking is a charity which supports research efforts that work to ensure that all children diagnosed with brain tumours have a better chance of survival and a better quality of life post-treatment. Current treatment has devastating side-effects – fatally in the case of Skye Hall, whom the charity is named after. Researchers are trying to establish innovative treatments using Biomarkers to treat childhood brain tumours, the No. 1 cancer killer in children. Earlier this year, Skye launched an appeal to #loomtothemoon, to build a loom band which will reach to the Moon, and raise awareness and funds. The charity is run by volunteers, and all money donated goes directly to the forefront of research and treatment. **For further information, please visit**

<http://www.blueskyethinking.org> and <http://www.facebook.com/loomtothemoon>.



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Skye's family is bowled over by club's donation

Grateful father says it's naive to think research is 'well catered for'

By Alex Wynick
news@heraldseries.co.uk

THE father of Skye Hall says he was "touched by the generosity of the Oxfordshire public" after a bowls club raised nearly £1,500 for their cause.

Skye was just five when he died on August 29 after battling a brain tumour for a year.

His parents Andrew and Sally, from Abingdon, set up the charity Blue Sky Thinking to fund research into alternative treatments to child cancers, after Skye was diagnosed with radio-chemo neurotoxicity.

It meant healthy cells in his brain and spinal cord were damaged by the traditional treatments of radiation therapy and chemotherapy.

Mr Hall, who accepted the cheque from Oxfordshire County Bowling Association last week, said: "It is clear that Blue Sky Thinking and the cause which the charity supports strikes a chord with so many people."

Mr Hall, a teacher, who is also father to Jesse, two, said: "We naively believed that children's cancer would be well catered for in terms of funding."

"But though our long journey with Skye over the past year it has become clear to us that the majority of funding for research is made through charities such as Blue Sky Thinking and the donations of the public.

"To date, children's cancer treatments are adapted forms of treatment designed for adults and have serious consequences. It is absolutely the right time to help this research with the funding they so desperately need."

Mike Andrew organised the bowls club's collection, raising money in charity tins at every home match during his time as president.

Mr Andrew, 71, who lives in Mollington, near Banbury, said: "I've known Skye's parents for about eight years through Oxford Operatic Society and it touched my heart.

"I went to see Skye when he was home from hospital and I had on my



Chain of office... Mike Andrew meets Skye Hall during his time as bowls club president. Below, the youngster's father Andrew, left, receives the club's donation of £1,500 from Mr Andrew, right



presidential chain and we put it around his neck. He had a beam on his face that went from ear to ear: It was lovely.

"Apparently when he went back into hospital after that he was telling everyone he met the president."

He said of the cheque presentation: "It was our AGM and my last day as president, so it seemed appropriate to hand over the cheque then. I'm a junior

president at Bowls England now so I'm hoping to continue collecting when I go around the country for that."

For information about Blue Sky Thinking visit blueskythinking.org, and to learn more about its Loom to the Moon campaign visit facebook.com/loomtothemoon

To donate, text LOON66 £2 to 7070 or visit justgiving.com/skye-hall





Skye's story keeps on inspiring others



Andrew Hall



Oxford Mail

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Oxford Mail cont...

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Loom to the Moon held at Lapford in memory of Skye

LOOM bands, those little coloured elastic bands with which people make bracelets, and long loom strands were scattered over the floor of Lapford School hall, all part of making a Loom to the Moon - and a bid for a Guinness World Record for the longest loom band.

This was the idea of Skye Hall who died from the side effects of treatment for an aggressive brain tumour this summer. Skye had turned five last November and would have been six this month.

The elder son of Andrew and Sally Hall who live in Abingdon near Oxford, Skye was a grandson of Michael and Sandy Hall of Credition.

Their daughter, Janet May, who lives in Coldridge, explained: "My nephew was diagnosed with a brain tumour last year at the age of four years, shortly before he was due to begin school.

"He had an operation to remove most of the tumour, but was left unable to walk, and then a course of chemotherapy, which did not really work.

"Then he had radiotherapy. He had chemo and surgery at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford and had to have radiotherapy in London.

"He was still at home for his fifth birthday, when he achieved his target of walking on his own again. The radiotherapy was for five weeks over Christmas, then Skye had very high dose chemotherapy in February after which he had another scan which showed the tumour was stable.

"Skye was due to have second high dose of chemo but he developed Chemo/ Radio Necrosis which is a side effect of the treatment, which led to him becoming paralysed from the neck down - a rare side effect of the chemo/radiation.

"When he developed these

symptoms, this treatment called the Milan Protocol was stopped nationally because it was deemed too dangerous.

"While Skye was having treatment, his friends had taught him about looming. He wore an astronaut type mask and came up with Loom to the Moon during Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment.

"Skye died on August 29 this year. His three year old brother is carrying on the Loom idea," said Janet.

She added that Skye had the same sort of brain tumour as Ashya King, who had been taken to Prague for treatment by his parents.

This was a medullablastoma, a type of brain tumour rare in adults, but which is developed by more than 300 children a year in the UK and is the number one cancer killer in children.

Less than one per cent of cancer funding goes towards research into brain cancer, one of the reasons why the charity Blue Skye Thinking was set up when Skye was alive.

Lack of a cure was unthinkable and those close to him were constantly in awe of his strength of character and fortitude.

Blue Skye Thinking is a charity supporting research so that all children diagnosed with brain tumours will have a better chance of survival and a better quality of life after treatment.

All the lengths of loom made in this country and abroad are sent to Skye's parents in Abingdon to be measured.

Oxford Football Club did a loom that went right around the sports stadium, at least one loom has been received from a child in the USA.

Space is a topic this term for Lapford School pupils who raised £51.80 for Blue Skye Thinking by paying to go to

school that day wearing something to do with space.

Loom bands made on Friday measured 132m. There was also a cake sale after school that day, raising a further £50 for the charity.

Every child in the school took part in making the long lengths of loom, some donating packs of loom bands.

All loom bands need to be finished by December 19 when the World Record will be attempted.

Janet said that other schools who wished to help with the Loom to the Moon project should, please, contact her on: 07792 821 143.

Sue Read



With lengths of loom were Lapford pupils Brady May (Skye's nine years old cousin), Jo, Iris, Savannah and Riley wearing their space gear. SR 1972

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