

KTHY In-flight Magazine article

Pro Cancer Research Fund (Charity registration No 1090822) was registered as a charity on 27th February 2002. The charity was founded by Professor Mustafa Djamgoz who is Turkish Cypriot and is based at Imperial College, London University after an article about his research into prostate cancer in the Sunday Times, and the public response was so great that the idea to start his own charity came as a result of this public response.

Professor Djamgoz has started a whole new line of investigation into breast and prostate cancer entitled 'Neuroscience Solutions to Cancer' and the results of their findings are very exciting and they are currently looking at new non invasive and accurate diagnostic tools and targeted treatment methods and there is even the possibility of a vaccine. The charity's aims are to support this promising and new line of research, increase awareness and more recently give patient support from its drop in centre in North London.

The patient support group is mainly Turkish Cypriot and they wanted an event that would raise much needed funds, awareness and bring a positive light to a serious disease.

Why The Orchid Walk? North Cyprus was chosen because of its spectacular scenery, and its treasure of wild orchids. Surprisingly North Cyprus has 32 confirmed species, subspecies and varieties of wild orchids. The research that we support is new and novel and we try to reach those affected by cancer in new and novel ways so the Orchid walk was the perfect way to bring awareness as these orchids are rare and novel. When you think of Northern Cyprus Orchids are not what comes to mind, so we were raising awareness of the beauty of nature in Northern Cyprus and cancer in a soft, gentle and way with the beauty of nature helping us by using a not so well known fact about Northern Cyprus 'Orchids'.

The first walk took place in February 2004 and we walked from Ozankoy to Karsiyaka. Each walker has to raise a minimum of £1000 to take part on the walk. The local walkers do so by purchasing a ticket locally. We had expert guides Maureen and Tony Hutchinson who are dedicated to showing and preserving the beauty of these wild flowers, and who were our expert guides and have been since. Initially the walk was thought of as a one off but due to the response of our walkers it has become an annual event. Most of the walkers who came out with us on the first walk still come with us and introduce new friends each year. We also have around 200 walkers who join us locally. Next year we hope to have the largest group of walkers from the UK and are hoping for around 400 walkers locally. It just keeps on growing!. It is an amazing experience and the success of the event is measured by the growing numbers each year.

The next walk is planned for 25th February 2007. The travel dates are 22 Feb-1 March 2007.. It is a truly wonderful way to support both a novel line of research into breast and prostate cancer and to help those who are affected by cancer and

to make a difference. If you would like to join us please contact us on 020 8886-5111 or visit our website www.theorchidwalk.com.