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Jack Brown photo by Yvonne Brown

Jack's hopes for the future

By Betti Blatman

Two years ago I met Jack Brown and his family at an event in aid of the campaign to fund treatment for his neuroblastoma, a rare childhood cancer. The Barnet boy was then seriously ill and his family inspired many in the community to do all they could to help.

Recently, I met Jack's mother Yvonne for an update on Jack's progress. The seven-year-old is doing well and is back at school full time, although taking time out for his treatment means he's slightly behind in his schoolwork.

High dose treatment ahead

Yvonne said: "Jack is currently on a combination of drugs including a low dose chemotherapy agent. The combination works well in the laboratory and is now being trialled in children with neuroblastoma in the USA. Jack's doctors at Gt Ormond Street hospital were amazed at how good he looks and have decided to support the trial. This is wonderful news as it means some of the drugs will be prescribed in the UK, and we will only have to buy about three others from the USA.

"Jack's next set of scans are in December and he's been offered a chance out of the blue to have high dose antibodies at Sloan Kettering in New York, even if he remains clear in December. He's never had

high dose antibodies before, only the low dose, and so it is an exciting prospect, as these are designed to kill off any microscopic residual cells that scans may not pick up.

"But the treatment is expensive and we want it to become available in the UK; we are working towards this end, and so the fundraising continues."

Firefighters raise funds

Community support is still there. White Watch firefighters at Finchley Fire Station raised funds for Jack at Waitrose in North Finchley on Saturday 8 November by giving families and shoppers a chance to climb on board their fire engines. White Watch was also holding a Disco and Charity Auction on Friday 28 November in East Barnet.

For further information visit www.jackbrownappeal.org or you can send a cheque to The Jack Brown Appeal, c/o The 2 Simple Trust (a registered UK charity 1113954), Enterprise House, 2 The Crest, London NW4 2HN.

Tantalising turkey trivia

By David Hobbs

As Christmas approaches and we turn our attention to overeating, spare a thought for the large beast destined to grace the average dinner table. Here are 12 things you probably didn't know about turkeys.

- The Spanish introduced turkeys to England in the early 16th century.
- The modern domestic turkey is descended from the North American wild turkey and was first domesticated by the Aztecs. It was their main source of meat and eggs.
- Left to their own devices, turkeys can live for 10 years.
- Turkeys are not as stupid as you might think. It is a myth that they stand around looking at the rain until they drown.
- Wild turkeys can fly, not very far, but far enough to get up into trees. Fortunately for Bernard Matthews, domestic turkeys can't fly.
- Benjamin Franklin proposed the turkey as the national symbol of the United States, but it lost out to an eagle.
- Abraham Lincoln's son kept a pet turkey in the White House.
- The most popular commercial breed, the White, is so large that it cannot breed naturally.
- Before the Second World War, most people in Britain ate goose at Christmas and turkey was considered a luxury food. Ebenezer Scrooge buying the Cratchits a turkey in Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* is a sign of this, especially as the Cratchits already had a goose.
- The American 'Thanksgiving Turkey' is a 20th century idea. People used to eat pork ribs as pork was only available between November and January, but you could get turkey all the year round.
- If you have a fryer big enough, you can deep fry your turkey. It takes about 45 minutes.
- Norfolk has long been the main centre for breeding commercial turkeys in the UK. From the 17th century onwards they used to be fitted with shoes and walked to markets in London.

Pharmacy opening hours over the holiday period

- **Thursday 25 December:** 10am - 2pm, CW Andrews, 32 High Rd, East Finchley N2 9PJ. Tel: 020 8883 1559.
- **Friday 26 December:** 10am - 2pm, Coral Pharmacy, 129 East End Road, East Finchley N2 0SZ. Tel: 020 8883 0442.
- **Thursday 1 January:** 10am - 2pm, Reena Pharmacy, 222 Regents Park Rd, Finchley N3 3HP. Tel: 020 8346 3532.

Christmas services in East Finchley

St Mary's Catholic Church

Sunday 14 December: Senior Citizens' Christmas Dinner, 2pm; Carol Service, 6.30pm. Tuesday 18 December: Advent Penitential Service, 7.30pm. Wednesday 24 December: Children's Christmas Mass, 6.30pm; Midnight Mass, preceded by Carols from 11.30pm. Thursday 25 December: Masses at 8.30am, 10am and 12 noon. Friday 26 December: Mass with Morning Prayer, 10am.

All Saints' Church

Sunday 21 December: Christmas Carol Service followed by mulled wine and mince pies, 6.30pm. Wednesday 24 December: Children's Service with Carols, 3pm; Midnight Mass of Christmas with Procession of the Christ Child and Blessing of the Crib, 11.30pm. Thursday 25 December: Mass of the Dawn, 8am; Mass of Christmas Day with Carols, 10am.

Holy Trinity Church

Sunday 21 December: Carol Service by Candlelight, 6pm. Wednesday 24 December: Nativity Play and Blessing of the Crib, 6pm; Midnight Mass, 11.30pm. Thursday 25 December: Parish Communion, 10am.

East Finchley Baptist Church

Sunday 7 December: Advent Service, *Bethlehem Baby Brilliance*, 10.30am (crèche provided and activities for children and young people). Sunday 14 December: All Ages Together Carol Service with a presentation by the children and young people, 10.30am (crèche provided). Sunday 21 December: Carol Service, 10.30am (crèche provided and activities for children and young people); Carols By Candlelight, 6pm. Thursday 25 December: Christmas Morning Family Service, 10.30am.

East Finchley Methodist Church

Sunday 14 December: Christmas Gift Service for Deptford Mission and H.A.B, 10.30am. Sunday 21 December: Christingle Service, 10.30am; Carols by Candlelight, 6.30pm. Wednesday 24 December: Christmas Eve United Service at Finchley Methodist Church (Ballards Lane), 11.15pm. Thursday 25 December: Christmas Day Celebration Service, 10.30am.

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