

# NEWS RELEASE

## ROWER WITH ALZHEIMER'S PUTS OAR IN FOR DEMENTIA RESEARCH

For the second year running, Jamie Graham, diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's at just 59, aims to row 22 miles from Henley to Eton, to raise £100,000 for Alzheimer's Research UK. Former Olympic rowers Col Alexander Lindsay and Hugh Matheson will join Jamie and his veteran crew of oarsmen when they set off on the Forget-Me-Not-Row on Wednesday 1 June.

Thanks to everyone's generosity, the 2010 Forget-Me-Not-Row raised a record £97,000 for Alzheimer's Research UK, the largest amount ever raised in a single sporting event for the UK's leading dementia research charity.

Before his diagnosis in 2007, Jamie, from Dauntsey in Wiltshire, had a high-powered job in information technology. Since then his life has been turned upside down - he's had to give up driving and can no longer use a computer, read or write. But despite everything, his sense of humour remains firmly intact and he still rides his bike, enjoys long walks and plays tennis.

Jamie explained his motivation for taking to the water again to support Alzheimer's Research UK: "Last year's Forget-Me-Not-Row was brilliant! So we've decided to get the blades flashing again to raise even more money for Alzheimer's Research UK. This time we'll be rowing in the opposite direction, downstream from Henley to Eton.

"It's dreadful that there's so little funding available for research into Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. But we're thrilled to make a difference through the Forget-Me-Not-Row. All the money we raise will go towards a specific research project, looking at the link between physical activity and Alzheimer's. This is particularly significant for me as I find keeping fit and active really helps.

"Although there are many things I can't do now and words sometimes fail me, I'm very lucky to have the devoted encouragement of my wife Vicki and family and friends. My local dementia support group, the Swindon Forget-Me-Not-Centre, is also a huge inspiration in keeping me active."

Former Olympic rower Col Alexander Lindsay, 74, who lives nearby in Cirencester and competed in the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome, said: "Jamie is a remarkable man and I greatly admire his continuing efforts to raise desperately needed money for Alzheimer's Research UK. I'm keen to do everything I can to support him and proud to be part of this year's Forget-Me-Not-Row."

Hugh Matheson, who rowed in the Olympics in 1972, 1976 and 1980, added: “Jamie and I have been friends since our school days and I admire his willpower and determination. I rowed with Jamie last year and I’m delighted to be on board again to help defeat dementia.”

Miranda Mays, Community Fundraising Manager, added: “Jamie and Vicki Graham are Champions of Alzheimer’s Research UK, in recognition of their outstanding and enduring support. Last year’s Forget-Me-Not-Row raised a record amount for us and it’s incredible to think they’re taking on this exciting but mammoth task again - we wish them every success.

“There are over 5,500 people in Wiltshire living with dementia today and 820,000 across the UK. These numbers are forecast to rise significantly in the next generation but funding lags far behind that of other serious diseases. We rely entirely on our wonderful supporters to fund our pioneering research.

“The money raised from the Forget-Me-Not-Row is helping to fund a four year research project led by Dr Magdalena Sastre at Imperial College London. Dr Sastre’s team is looking at a particular protein which increases during exercise and the possibility that it could protect against Alzheimer’s. Research is the only answer to defeat dementia.”

To help Jamie raise funds for crucial dementia research, visit [www.forgetmenotrow.com](http://www.forgetmenotrow.com) to find out more about the row and for information on how to donate.