Motor Neurone Disease (MND) is a debilitating disease that generally strikes at random in middle age. It leads to muscle weakness and ultimately paralysis, and is usually fatal within a few years. There are approximately 300 people living with MND in Scotland at any given time and there are currently no effective treatments or cure.

In 2003 University of Edinburgh graduate Euan MacDonald noticed a loss of power in his left thumb when buying a new bike. He later developed a twitch in the muscles of his left arm.

A series of tests followed and shortly after his 29th birthday Euan was diagnosed with motor neurone disease (MND). Despite being given a devastating prognosis of surviving anything between six months and a few years, Euan remained positive.

Within a year of diagnosis he married his girlfriend Liz, and their first son Finlay was born in 2004, followed by Alec a year later. Euan gave up his job in the financial sector in London and returned to his hometown of Edinburgh with his family.

In 2006, Euan and his father Donald became interested in the diverse group of MND researchers at the University of Edinburgh. The pair made a far-sighted and substantial donation that led to the establishment of the Euan MacDonald Centre for MND Research.

More recently Euan developed Euan’s Guide which features disabled access reviews written by disabled people and their friends and families.

The Centre, which is part of the University of Edinburgh, is a multi-disciplinary group of around 35 researchers across Scotland that forms part of a worldwide effort to find a cure for neurodegenerative diseases. The mission of the Centre is to make a difference to the lives of patients with MND through laboratory and clinical research.

Key projects include the synthesis of bespoke voices for patients who have lost their own; the Scottish MND Register; improved cognitive assessment; and advances in modelling the disease ‘in a dish’ using human stem cells. The focus of the Centre is on integrating improved patient care with developing new approaches to slow, stop and, ultimately, reverse this devastating disease.
Thank you to everyone who supported us in 2014

- Thanks to Alexander Scarrott for organising a cake bake in aid of the Centre.
- We are grateful to the Andy McKenzie, Ashleigh Kelly, Jennifer McCluskey, Larry Anderson and Lesley Forrest for organising a charity Christmas Fayre and donating the £157.50 profits from their festive fundraiser.
- We really appreciate Euan’s cousin Angus Armstrong for walking 96 miles along the West Highland Way and in doing so raised £230.
- Many thanks to all the pupils in Arniston Armstrong, Fettes College who helped raise £3,000 by completing numerous 5k and 10k races in aid of the Centre.
- Thank you to Brian Forbes of East Lothian Co-op Bowling Club for organising a ten mile sponsored walk in aid of the Euan MacDonald Centre for Motor Neurone Disease Research which raised almost £5,000.
- Many thanks to Centre colleagues Cathy Bois, Eilidh Campbell, Denise Cranley, Rebecca Devon, Jenny Durkin, Anna Gibbons, Tom Gillingwater, Many Johnstone, Ramune Margeviciute, Phillipa Rewaj, Michele Riva, Craig Rutherford, Nina Raechorzek, Hannah Schlesinger and David Story for completing the Edinburgh Marathon Hairy Haggis Relay and raising £2,000 for the Centre.
- Many thanks to Charles Robertson for hosting a fundraising Karaoke.
- Claire Kelly took part in the Edinburgh Marathon raising £200 for Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) at the Centre.
- When Colin Angus shaved off his beard to raise money in memory of his wife Janey, friends and family generously donated over £5,000 in support.
- A massive thank you to EVERYONE who took part in the #icebucketchallenge in aid of the Centre.
- Many thanks to Ian Laverty for completing the Three Peaks Challenge and raising £250 for the Centre.
- Thank you to Jane Mackie & the organisers of the Charity Burns Night Ceilidh in Stirling for donating £2,210 in aid of the Centre.
- Sincere thanks to colleague Jen Durkin for taking part in the London Marathon in aid of the Centre; Jenny raised over £1,000 by completing this challenge.
- Thank you to Jenny Handley for her continued support of the Centre by completing the BUPA 10 mile run and raising £175 for the Centre.
- We are really grateful to John and Amy Langridge for taking on a three day cycle from Strathclyde Park (Lanarkshire) to Bushmills Distillery (Northern Ireland) a journey of 165 miles.
- Many thanks to Kathleen Aitken for generating over £400 by hosting an evening of opera and song in the University of Edinburgh’s historic St Cecelia’s Hall.
- Kerry, David and Tansy raised over £600 by completing a ten mile sponsored walk.
- Comedian Kevin Bridges took part in ITV’s Celebrity Who Wants to be a Millionaire in aid of the Robert Ferguson Paulley Memorial Fund for MND Research, donating his £5,000 prize winnings to the Euan MacDonald Centre.
- Lindsay Barclay and the Ballater Charitable Chieftains donated £15,000 through their annual Texas Scramble Golf Day: this was the seventh time they have supported the Centre bringing their donations to date to £124,000.
- Huge thanks to Lynne Currie who raised £500 for the Centre by completing the Great Edinburgh 10 Mile Run.
- Congratulations to Margaret Lewis on celebrating her 80th birthday in June 2014; Margaret’s friends and family donated £265 in her honour.
- We are grateful to Lisa Money for raising £150 in aid of the Euan MacDonald Centre by giving up her much loved tea for Lent.
- Neil Ferguson generated £565 by completing the Three Peaks Challenge.
- Nicholas Davidson and Sam Russell made and sold loom band bracelets and animals to raise money for the Centre.
- Thank you to Peterculter Golf Club (Ladies Section) for donating £100 to the Centre.
- Huge thanks to Scott Hastings for organising a second fundraising quiz night in aid of the Centre; almost £10,000 was raised along with lots of laughs and fun.
- Huge thanks to Sing in the City for donating £600 raised through hosting a coffee morning full of laughter, singing and even some dance moves; we were delighted when Sing in the City members visited the Centre to find out more about our work.