

media release 19 March 2007

## **Walking length of New Zealand to raise money for dyslexia**

Dunedin man Jim King is walking the length of New Zealand to raise money for dyslexia and promote New Zealand's inaugural Dyslexia Awareness Week which commences next month.

King aged 47 started his journey at Bluff on February 14 where he found the southern most rugby posts he could find, kicked a ball signed by All Black greats Tuppy Diak and Jeff Wilson over, then heading off on a journey he expects will take 52 days to complete.

Along the way he plans to visit other All Blacks including Colin Meads and Wilson Whinneray to add their signatures to the ball which will be auctioned on Trade Me at the end of his trip with funds going to the Cookie Munchers Charitable Trust.

The Cookie Munchers Charitable Trust was established in 2003 with the purpose of improving the educational opportunities available to children and young people throughout New Zealand. The Trust is sponsored by Cookie Time Limited and its primary focus is Dyslexia.

"The Cookie Munchers Charitable Trust gives hope and support to dyslexic children and their families throughout New Zealand. Its scholarship program provides a solution to families that simply cannot afford the help they so desperately need," Guy Pope-Mayell, Managing Trustee of The Cookie Munchers Charitable Trust, said.

The Cookie Munchers Charitable Trust is the principle sponsor of the Dyslexia Foundation of New Zealand that was launched in November last year to give a voice to the thousands of New Zealand's that are dyslexic and struggle with no specific resources or funding, and no recognition from the Government.

Advocating change to New Zealand's education policy to recognise dyslexia is a key goal of the Dyslexia Foundation of New Zealand.

Increasing the awareness, recognition, understanding and acceptance of dyslexia as a way of thinking in New Zealand are the primary aims of The Dyslexia Foundation of New Zealand.

The Foundation's focus is to have dyslexia recognised by the Ministry of Education so that dyslexia assessment, learning opportunities and resources can be made available to dyslexic learners throughout every school in New Zealand.

King says teachers thought he was "just lazy" at school.

"I always had trouble at school learning but there was no such thing as dyslexia back then," he said.

He is following in the footsteps of his great uncle he walked the length of New Zealand aged 75 in 1971 to impress a woman 25 years younger.

Pope-Mayell said international statistics suggested up to 10% of the New Zealand population could be affected by dyslexia.

"This means we have over 70,000 school aged children who are in our education system who are struggling as their way of learning is not understood or catered for."

There are many successful and famous people who are dyslexic. They include Tom Cruise, New Zealand's Weta Workshop's Richard Taylor and Virgin high flyer Richard Branson.

Donations can be made via the Cookie Munchers Charitable Trust website at [www.cmct.org.nz](http://www.cmct.org.nz) or by phoning 0900 Dyslexia (0900 39753).

The Dyslexia Awareness Week will be between April 23 and 29 and will see a range of activities throughout New Zealand all aimed at raising awareness of dyslexia and giving a unified voice to the cause.

More information at [www.dyslexiafoundation.org.nz](http://www.dyslexiafoundation.org.nz)

ENDS

---

***For more information please contact:***

**Jim King**  
**0274 821 910**

**Guy Pope-Mayell**  
**Managing Trustee**  
**0275449496**

**John McKenzie**  
**enthuse ltd**  
**021 384 730**  
**03 384 7338**

---