

Mark Hannaford – A Man of Extremes

Submitted by: World Extreme Medicine

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The world's leading doctors, nurses and surgeons in the extreme medicine community will gather together for a four-day conference held at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh from Friday November 18 to Monday November 21 2016. The World Extreme Medicine Conference and Expo (<http://www.extrememedicineexpo.com/>) will see over 100 speakers who specialise in medical practice outside of a clinical setting share their knowledge.

Mark Hannaford, aged 51, is one of the masterminds of the team responsible for creating this exciting and educational event.

"I have been interested in travelling the world from a very young age. I was six years old when I received my first atlas and what interested me most were the maps and then the stamps from exotic places such as Tanzania and Namibia. Interestingly, I ended up owning some land in these territories. The colours of the stamps were mesmerising and the place names were even more intriguing. I now share my passion of the great outdoors with my two children Jamie and Freya."

My Early Career

"This love of travel began my journey towards World Extreme Medicine. I started working as an assistant field geologist in Australia, and after realising I had no strong passion for chemistry I moved to Operation Raleigh, which is now known as Raleigh International (<https://raleighinternational.org/>). As the Project Manager for the Tanami Desert Crossing in Northern Australia, I provided leadership for a group of international volunteers. We carried out scientific data collection during a study stretching from the Tanami Desert, across the Northern Territories and to the coastal shoreline of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

"Operation Drake was launched in 1978 by HRH Prince Charles and Colonel John Blashford-Snell and had scientific exploration and community service as its aims. Raleigh International continues to inspire young people to change the world and I was certainly one of them. It was around this time I also organised my first properly sponsored fundraising event with support from McAlpine and Sainsbury's. We took a group of keen cyclists and fundraising volunteers from London to Land's End, then to John O'Groats and back to London.

"During expeditions, organisers have a moral obligation to supply medics. In the 1980s I found out that many doctors and medics working in the wilderness and on expeditions were volunteers. In some cases, they had received minimal training for tackling problems in extreme environments. This approach could have disastrous consequences."

Across the Divide

"In April 1997, I founded Across the Divide. We began with safety in mind and were the first company to introduce salaried medical staff on all of our international events. This is supported by rigorous risk assessments and comprehensive event safety procedures to ensure the wellbeing of the entire team. The corporate and community events we run help change the lives of individuals. We help plan and manage both UK and overseas events and expeditions.

“Since we started out, we have run hundreds of events and have facilitated the raising of over £87million for charitable and socially worthwhile causes, supported by my old school friend and entrepreneur David Weil. I’m looking forward to reaching £100million in the next three years.

“Across the Divide has provided medical support for CBS’s Survivor Series and helped Helen Skelton run and kayak for Comic Relief. We’ve helped Ben Fogle and James Cracknell ride from Edinburgh to London. Even Sir David Attenborough has reached out for our expert support. We have helped the BBC’s Children in Need Rickshaw Challenge team to raise more than £12million over the past five years. We are working with them again this year and have also taken part in the Countryfile Ramble for Children in Need.”

World Extreme Medicine

“In 2002 we introduced World Extreme Medicine as a training provider of expedition, wilderness and remote medicine courses (<http://www.extrememedicineexpo.com/>) for medical professionals. It was around a Campfire in Namibia we coined the phrase ‘World Extreme Medicine’ as an umbrella term for all practices of medicine outside of a clinical environment (<http://www.extrememedicineexpo.com/>).

“We run courses in the UK and also in a number of carefully-selected locations around the world, including the Everest base camp. World Extreme Medicine provides quality training for medics who want to work in remote environments. Our courses are suitable for expedition doctors, paramedics, nurses and individuals providing medical cover (<http://www.extrememedicineexpo.com/>) in inhospitable locations. The courses enable participants to become valuable medical practitioners in a range of environments.

“Through this we have created the World Extreme Medicine Conference and Expo. Since 2012 we have brought together healthcare professionals across four disciplines: disaster and humanitarian medicine, extreme, expedition and space medicine, human endurance and sports medicine plus prehospital medicine. At the Conference and Expo these professionals showcase and share the latest developments in extreme environment healthcare and educate others in what they can do differently.

“My business partner David Weil has generously supported a bursary by World Extreme Medicine for a doctor from Nepal to attend the conference. Dr Aban Gautam (<http://mhn.org.np/>) leads a group of young medical doctors who are developing a higher standard of healthcare and education in Nepal. We have invited him to attend the conference and share the life-changing work Mountain Heart Nepal (<http://mhn.org.np/>) provides in one of the poorest and least developed nations in Asia.

“We’re looking forward to welcoming incredible individuals from across the globe to our event. It is now in its fifth year and continues to stimulate new thinking, build professional relationships and share new and more effective approaches to medical practice in challenging environments. New medical research findings will be shared, so that the World Extreme Medicine event will be making history, following in the footsteps of the scientific giants who are now household names.”

Masters in Extreme Medicine

“Education is a huge part of World Extreme Medicine. This year we introduced a Master’s programme in partnership with the University of Exeter Medical School. The Extreme Medicine programme educates in the practical skills, knowledge and understanding needed to perform at the highest possible level in the field of extreme medicine (<http://www.extrememedicineexpo.com/>). The new post-graduate course includes environment specific modules that educate in mountain, jungle, desert and polar regions.”

About World Extreme Medicine Expo 2016

Location: Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh, EH8 8AS

Dates: Friday November 18 to Monday November 21

Website: <http://www.extrememedicineexpo.com/>

Videos: Being a Doctor Just Became the Most Exciting Career: <https://vimeo.com/170846844>

Extreme and Wilderness Medicine – Our Story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BhPrFGFIFXI>

Mark Hannaford LinkedIn: <http://lnkd.in/B3CEKN>

A message transmitted from the International Space Station by astronaut Kate Rubins to the event organisers here: <https://vimeo.com/184097597>

A message from astronaut Tim Peake: <https://vimeo.com/186260992>

Ends

Journalists are welcome to attend the conference and are asked to register their interest as early as possible. High resolution imagery and interviews are available on request.

Media information provided by Famous Publicity. For more information, please contact Tina Fotherby at 07703 409 622 or tina@famouspublicity.com, Adam Betteridge at 0333 344 2341 or adam@famouspublicity.com or George Murdoch at 0333 344 2341 or george@famouspublicity.com.

Timeline for Mark Hannaford:

1980 Project Manager for Raleigh International - Northern Australia Tanami Desert Crossing

1986 Attended Middlesex University to study Geography & Geomorphology

1990 Travel Photographer for Camerapress

1997 Across the Divide Founded

1998 Adventure Travel Photographer for AWL Images (Jon Arnold Images and John Warbuton-Lee Photography)

1990 Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society

2002 World Extreme Medicine Founded

2005 Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts

2007 BT Entrepreneur of the Year Award

2012 First World Extreme Medicine Conference

2012 Royal Society of Medicine Wall of Honour

2016 Founded Extreme Medicine Masters Programme and became Honorary Senior Lecturer. Also began work as Editor for Journal of Extreme Physiology & Medicine.

2016 Fifth World Extreme Medicine Conference

2019 £100million fundraising target set to be raised

About the World Extreme Medicine Expo:

The World Extreme Medicine Conference and Expo will take place at Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh, EH8 8AS from 18 – 21 November 2016. Bringing together many of the world's brightest medical minds, it will focus four core disciplines:

- Disaster and humanitarian medicine
- Extreme, expedition and space medicine
- Human endurance and sports medicine
- Prehospital medicine

The conference's mission is to break down barriers, build bridges and make connections within the extreme medicine community.

The term 'Extreme Medicine' was first coined by Mark Hannaford and Dr Sean Hudson as an umbrella term for these extra-clinical medical practices.