



MICHAEL BRABANT

# A rhino costume's travels

When people ask me how someone got involved with Save the Rhino, or how come an event happened, I often find myself telling a shaggy dog story. Things seem to circle back round, pop up, overlap, and add a new layer as they go. Let me try to give you an example.

Cathy Dean | Director

**B**ack in summer 2001, when I was coming for my job interviews to become Director of Save the Rhino, I was particularly impressed that our three Trustees at the time – Robert, George and Christina – together with my predecessor Dave, were all training for the 2002 Marathon des Sables (250 km across the Sahara Desert.) They were joined by Bryan Hemmings, a guy who'd grown up in Kenya, fallen in love with rhinos, run the MdS the year before and come 34th out of 700 runners. He helped persuade my Board that it would be entirely sensible to do the MdS in rhino costume, which they duly did, clocking a BBC2 documentary as they did so, thanks to the added presence of our Patron Nick Baker, presenter of *The Really Wild Show*.

Despite the blisters, Bryan stayed in touch, winning a fundraising pentathlon hosted by Trustee George, and also – fluke! – winning a fantastic safari for two people to Laikipia in Kenya at our annual dinner/party, both in 2003. So it wasn't entirely surprising when Bryan popped up again in 2005 with another wheeze: he had rounded up five other people, including Olympic Gold medallist Adrian Moorhouse, to relay-run the rhino costume from Marble Arch to Dover, then relay-swim to Calais and then all cycle to the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. Arch to Arc, rhino-style. Simple (right).

One of Bryan's team was a guy called Vinny O'Neill, and Vinny popped up in our lives again in 2012. In between working on logistics for the London 2012 Olympic Games, he decided to again take on the rhino costume challenge, and ran the London Marathon in a record-breaking 4 hours 17 minutes and 27 seconds! He must have terrified lots of other runners as he turned the corner at Buckingham Palace and pointed his horn at the finish line.

So when, in September last year, we had a call from ASICS, the people who make sports gear, wanting to find an inspiring runner to feature in their campaign for 2013, we introduced them to Vinny. ASICS made a short film, launched in March 2013 online and in its central London store, complete with rhinos

and treadmills and heart-rate/oxygen testing. It's great publicity for us.

And then we had a call from a guy called Michael Brabant, who'd worked on editing the video, and had already rounded up a group of Kiwi mates to climb Mt Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa. Could he borrow one of the rhino costumes and fundraise for us? All eight of the team made it to the summit, Uhuru, as did the rhino costume, by then nicknamed Rihanna (top).

**So, from the Sahara to the summit of Kilimanjaro, via Paris, London, a pentathlon and a party**

Bryan and Vinny are now training for the legendary Comrades marathon (all 89 km of it) in South Africa, along with another friend of Bryan's and my husband. And me. At the moment, we're holding firm to our stated position of running ex-costume: just finishing in less than 12 hours would be enough for me. But you never know – those damn costumes have a way of turning up. And now Bryan's daughter Lyddy is due to come and do work experience with us this Easter.



Keep your eyes peeled... You never know where our rhino costumes will be next!



IMAGES SRI UNLESS NOTED



And there ends another shaggy dog story. Or does it?



From the Sahara to Paris, the rhino costume adventure con't...



SUE FLICKR

**Adam Rutherford** gave our Eleventh Douglas Adams Memorial Lecture on **CREATION**  
The origin and the future of life



Adam (right) took us through some of the biggest scientific theories in biology that attempt to explain where life on earth has come from. Some ideas have been proved wrong whilst others have changed the world. Quite literally, since genetic engineering has enabled humans to begin tackling everything from cancer and HIV to problems such as how to build on the moon, and even how to bring animals back from extinction.

**Stephen Mangan** (left) was our brilliant MC for the evening, and we also had presentations from Cathy Dean, Save the Rhino's Director, and a video from the Environmental Investigation Agency on the rhino horn trade.

We had a lot of help to put the evening together – so a big thanks to our lovely speakers, Douglas's family and friends, Factual Management, Penguin, everyone who donated to the raffle and all those who came along to support us on the evening.

PROCEEDS FROM THE EVENING WILL GO TOWARDS  
SAVE THE RHINO AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL  
INVESTIGATION AGENCY.

## RHINO MAYDAY 2013

Save the date for Rhino Mayday 2013. The UCL Grant Museum of Zoology has kindly agreed to host us again for this year's event taking place on Wednesday 1 May.

Tickets are priced at £15, and tickets are on sale now. Come along for a full day of rhino news, conservation topics, and panel debate from our speakers, all highly respected figures in the rhino world. You can visit the Grant Museum of Zoology free-of-charge on Monday–Saturday afternoons.



## HORNUCÓPIA

December 2012

Our huge thanks to everyone who donated to and bid for last year's online auction and helped us raise £2,500 for rhino conservation. Lots included a Moonlight rhino T-shirt signed by Daniel Craig, Muse, Morgan Nicholls and Kate Hudson that raised an incredible £300, 2 tickets to a QI filming and a signed copy of 1,227 QI facts to blow your socks off, raising over £180 and our biggest-selling lot, a baby white rhino ceramic sculpture by Nick Mackman (above).



## THE ANIMAL PARTY

November and February saw two Animal Parties in aid of Save the Rhino. The Last Tuesday Society very kindly donated a percentage of both parties' profits to rhinos. The Animal Parties take place at Electrowerkz, Islington with a host of stalls and games alongside their animal band and a myriad of fancy dress: from jellyfish to spiders to oryx! We were there with rhino costumes, our Horny Hoopla game, and for Valentine's Day we even took along our very special 'rhino of love'. Party-goers were invited to leave their messages to each other via post-it notes! Among the love messages we found:

'Miss Parrot, no-one does blue hotpants better'  
'You octipi my thoughts x'  
'A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle'

### For tickets and info...

Email our events manager Laura Adams at [laura@savetherhino.org](mailto:laura@savetherhino.org) or call (+44)20 7357 7474  
For more info on Rhino events see [www.savetherhino.org/events](http://www.savetherhino.org/events)

## We our fundraisers

The Going Down South team raised £2,000 journeying from London to Cape Town and visiting rhino programmes along the way



**Mark and David Worsfold**, and their pal **Phil Bailey** kayaked 99 miles on the Wilderness Waterway from Flamingo to Everglades City, raising over £1,000 for Save the Rhino (above)

**Aaron Kulakiewicz** fundraised an impressive £641.51 by shaving his head to raise money for rhinos

### Rhinos seen on Kilimanjaro once again



Huge thanks to **Team KilimanjaBRO** who raised over £8,000 by climbing Kili in December in a rhino costume (above). Rihanna the rhino made it to the summit – the first time a rhino has summited Kilimanjaro since 1994, when Save the Rhino founders Dave Stirling and Johnny Roberts climbed the highest mountain in Africa. The KilimanjaBRO team also made a video to raise awareness called *Gotcha Nose – Help Save the Endangered Rhinos*, which you can find by searching 'Gotcha nose' on YouTube. The team were: **Michael Brabant, Sam Halse, Chris Henderson, Ollie Wards, Alex Dyson, Josh Harris, Joshua Preston, Michael Grieve and Neil Christian**.

**Larissa Benbow** also climbed Kili in October and raised over £4,000.

**And thank you to all of our other fantastic fundraisers who took part in challenges for us in 2012.**