

Media Advisory:

**A Gift from MDS Nordion, Tom Hanks' "Space Mouse"
To Be Unveiled at The Hospital for Sick Children November 29**

**Syd Birrell to do Book Signing at World's Biggest Bookstore Nov 27 with
Space Mouse as Guest of Honour**

- When:** November 29, 2005
-11:15-11:40am, statue unveiling and dedication
-Approx. 11:45am tour for media of Dr. Kaplan's Neuroblastoma Research Lab
- Where:** -Unveiling: The Hospital for Sick Children Garden Patio Atrium (enter off Elizabeth St)
-Lab tour: congregate in the Garden Patio for guided tour
The Hospital for Sick Children: 555 University Avenue, Toronto, On, M5G 1X8
- Who:** In honour of James Birrell who died of 4 years ago of neuroblastoma* at the age of 8, the Birrell family (father: Syd, mother: Pam, sister: Rebecca (13), brother: Ben (8) aunt: Diana), The Hospital For Sick Children and SickKids Foundation dignitaries, MDS Inc. and MDS Nordion executives, other neuroblastoma children and families, patients of The Hospital for Sick Children and James Fund supporters welcome "Space Mouse" to The Hospital for Sick Children for generations of children at the hospital to enjoy. "Space Mouse" will make his permanent home in the cafeteria having made the trip from Sotheby's in New York where he was auctioned off on September 27th.
- What:** Canadian life sciences company MDS Nordion logged the winning bid for the 6 foot tall, 700 pound Mickey Mouse statue and have donated it in memory of James Birrell to The Hospital for Sick Children. Designed by Tom Hanks, Space Mouse was one of the more popular 75 person sized Mickey Mouse Statues auctioned by Sotheby's and The Walt Disney Company as the culmination of celebrations commemorating the 75th anniversary of the world's most famous mouse. Space Mouse sold for \$17,500 (\$15,000 US), which will benefit The James Fund, Canada's leading fund fighting neuroblastoma, a deadly form of childhood cancer. Hanks is the James Fund's Honourary Patron. The James Fund was established in the name of James Birrell to fight the disease that ultimately killed him.
- Book Signing:** "Space Mouse" will be on display at The World's Biggest Bookstore November 26th and 27th (20 Edward Street). Syd Birrell, James' father, and author of "Ya Can't Let Cancer Ruin your Day" will sign copies of his book starting at 1:30pm on Sunday Nov 27th. Partial proceeds benefit The James Fund.

“Space Mouse” Background

Tom Hanks designed Space Mouse with James in mind having befriended him over the phone and through letters where they shared a mutual fascination about space. Hanks also starred in James’ favourite movie, “Apollo 13,” the true story of three astronauts who battled incredible odds to make it back home when all seemed lost.

Information on Syd Birrell’s book: “Ya Can’t Let Cancer Ruin Your Day”

James’ remarkable and spirited fight against neuroblastoma is the subject of an uplifting and inspiring book by his father Syd called “Ya Can’t Let Cancer Ruin Your Day.” With a foreword by Tom Hanks, the book is the collection of journals Syd wrote and shared via email throughout James’ five-year illness, chronicling not only James’ fight against cancer, but also the extraordinary adventures they shared as a family as they tried to pack as much living into the very short time they had left with James. The book, which was released this summer with the generous support of MDS Nordion, has sold briskly, available both at Chapters and Indigo stores nation-wide and also at Indigo.ca (\$19.93, the year of James’ birth); the book is also available at www.greentrainbooks.com. A portion of the proceeds from each book benefits The James Fund at SickKids.

Background on Tom Hanks’ involvement with James

Mr. Hanks contacted James by phone after learning of James’ fascination with the Apollo 13 story and a friendship began. Shortly after James’ death, he wrote about the impact of his connection to James.

“James Birrell was a good kid,” **Tom Hanks wrote the family.** “James was a cheerful voice on the phone and a diligent pen pal who was a big fan of space ships and railroad trains. When neuroblastoma took James away, that word was new and ugly.”

About The James Fund for Neuroblastoma Research at SickKids

The James Fund was established at SickKids Foundation by the family of James Birrell to generate funds and knowledge leading to new therapies for the treatment of patients with neuroblastoma. It has rapidly grown to be Canada’s leading neuroblastoma research initiative and actor Tom Hanks is its Honourary Patron. To date, nine research projects have been funded, six papers published, a drug-testing unit has been established and several international collaborations are underway bringing new hope to the parents of children suffering from this terrible childhood cancer.

About Neuroblastoma:

Neuroblastoma is a type of childhood cancer that begins in the embryonic cells which normally develop into parts of our nervous system. Neuroblastoma usually occurs in children under the age of five and is the most common type of tumor found in babies under one year of age. Over the last twenty years there has been modest improvement, due to research, in the prognosis for children diagnosed with neuroblastoma at less than one year of age, however, despite research initiatives, there has been little

improvement in the prognosis for older children with widespread disease at diagnosis. In seventy percent of patients the original tumor has already spread to other parts of the body before any symptoms are seen. The vast majority of these children die.

About MDS Nordion's Role with The James Fund

MDS Nordion played a small role in James' treatment during his battle with neuroblastoma supplying the medical isotope, iodine-123, for a drug used to diagnose and monitor the disease. However, through circumstances, the company developed a lasting relationship with the Birrell family.

About MDS Nordion

MDS Nordion (www.mds.nordion.com) is a world leader in radioisotopes, radiation and related technologies. MDS Nordion is part of MDS Inc. (TSX:MDS; NYSE:MDZ). MDS Inc. has more than 8800 highly skilled people in 27 countries. MDS Inc. provides a diverse range of superior products and services to increase our customers' speed, precision and productivity in the drug development and disease diagnosis processes. MDS Inc. is a global, values-driven health and life sciences company, recognized for our reliability and collaborative relationships as we help create better outcomes in the treatment of disease. Find out more at www.mdsinc.com or by calling 1-888-MDS-7222, 24 hours a day.

-30-

NOTE TO EDITORS: SYD BIRRELL AND FAMILY AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW; B-ROLL, HEADSHOTS AND ART AVAILABLE INCLUDING OF JAMES ALSO OF SPACE MOUSE.

For additional information and/or to arrange for an interview, please contact:

Susan McLennan
Media Advisor for the Birrell Family and The James Fund
Babble On Communications
Ph: (416) 699-1846
Cell: (416) 525-5177
Email: s.mclennan@sympatico.ca

Shelley Maclean
External Communications Specialist, MDS Nordion
Tel: (613) 592-3400 ext. 2414
Cell: (613) 614-7997
Email: Shelley.Maclean@mdsinc.com