

Stars trek Great Wall for cancer

21-day walk is no mean feat

By **LOUISE HALL**
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A STELLAR cast of celebrities including Olivia Newton-John, athletes and cancer survivors will set off on an epic trek of the Great Wall of China tomorrow to raise funds for cancer research.

The 228-kilometre, 21-day Great Walk to Beijing will test the endurance of 100 walkers, including Sir Cliff Richard, Dannii Minogue, Ian Thorpe, Layne Beachley, Joan Rivers, Peter Andre, Johanna Griggs, James Reyne, Paul Mercurio, Kirk Pengilly and Andrew Gaze.

Blisters, aching muscles, stress fractures and foot problems will no doubt play their part but to ensure their feet remain in peak condition, Sydney podiatrist Bronwyn Cooper has offered her services.

In the lead-up to the trek she has assessed the feet of personalities such as Allison Cratchley and Tammy McIntosh from *All Saints* and gay cowboy Adam Sutton, who actor Heath Ledger credited as the inspiration for his role in *Brokeback Mountain*.

Cratchley, who plays Dr Zoe Gallagher in the Channel Seven medical drama, signed up for two stages of



Specialist support ... (above) podiatrist Bronwyn Cooper assesses actor Allison Cratchley's foot fitness; (clockwise from top left) Olivia Newton-John; Sir Cliff Richard; Dannii Minogue; Layne Beachley; Joan Rivers; Ian Thorpe. Main photo: Jacky Ghossein



the walk after she was diagnosed with a basal cell carcinoma on her nose. She is currently undergoing radiation therapy.

"I grew up in the sun. I was the brownest kid on the beach and now I'm paying for it," she said.

The walkers will wear Masai Barefoot Technology shoes developed by a Swiss engineer who studied the gait of Masai tribesmen.

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activity and reduce the risk of foot, back and hip pain."

Ms Cooper is part of a large support team including security officers, physiotherapists, Australian doctors and nurses and bilingual Chinese doctors who will assist the walkers.

Newton-John, who beat breast cancer in 1993, is hoping the trek will raise money for a \$50million comprehensive cancer centre, which

she aims to build in Melbourne, her hometown, in 2010.

Cratchley has a link to the *Grease* star - she once played the body double for Newton-John on a film shoot in Sydney. "I was really inspired by Olivia's idea of a wellbeing centre for all cancer patients and their families," Cratchley said.

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Dead actor was heading home

Fisher & Pavkel