



Press Release

Immediate Release

5 October 2023

Hospital Manager Completes Epic Challenge to Scatter Her Dads Ashes

A HOSPITAL manager from Wales has completed an epic challenge in memory of her dad who died of lung cancer and scattered his ashes around the three peaks (Snowdon, Ben Nevis and Scafell Pike) mountains.

Stephanie Coxon, 39, manager of a hospital which supports men with mental health issues and brain injuries, was joined by five of her colleagues as they took on the three peaks challenge and raised more than £1,000 for the charity which helped her dad, Howard Haywood, who died of lung cancer in 2022, when he was only 75.

The group, who were raising funds for Matthew Walkin's Make a Smile foundation, a charity set up in memory of a school friend of Stephanie, will be used to support those accessing care at Velindre Cancer Hospital in Cardiff. They climbed and descended the peaks of Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon over the course of four months.

The team of Cygnet Health Care employees work at Cygnet Hospital Brunel, on Crow Lane, Henbury, a 32-bed hospital providing neuropsychiatric and neurodegenerative rehabilitation for men with mental health difficulties and acquired brain injuries.

Steph, who lives in Caerleon, explained: "Amongst the group there are many aching limbs, but lots of incredible memories made along the way.

"It has been the most physical and emotional challenge of my life. We have had fun along the way and considering none of us were walkers before we started, I couldn't be prouder or more grateful for the wonderful people who have embarked on this journey with me.

"Each mountain has brought a wave of emotions, I never forgot the reason I am doing it and as much as I have enjoyed the challenge, I wish it were for another reason.

"The challenge has taken a lot of endurance, courage, dedication, perseverance and tenacity. I hope my Dad is proud of me for taking on this challenge and giving him some amazing views for his final resting places."

Describing her reasons for raising funds for Velindre, Steph explained: "If you have lived alongside someone with cancer you'll understand and appreciate that helpless feeling, of not being able to fight the fight for them, or take away the pain on the difficult days and the heartbreak it brings.

"The charity we have chosen is one who works to make the journey for those fighting cancer a little bit easier, by providing items they need or will make things easier whilst they're in hospital.

"Velindre is an incredible service that supports patients going through the darkest days. They provided outstanding care to my dad and knowing the pain of families going through cancer journeys, I am grateful we can support them in some way.

"It gave us more time with my dad following his diagnosis, with incredible treatment that allowed him to live with Stage 4 lung cancer for longer than we ever thought imaginable. Research into this terrible disease, is giving families more and more time, I hope I live to see a cure."

Describing the differing challenges, Steph explained: "With Ben Nevis, the drive was mammoth, the walk felt never ending going up but the journey, the views, the company, were incredible.

"The most challenging was Scafell Pike due to the tough and unrelenting terrain but we particularly enjoyed Snowdon.

"We had an absolute blast doing that particular climb and were so proud of the fact we tackled the Watkins path. I've always known my team have a 'can do' attitude; it's part of what I love most- but they have resilience in limits I never knew possible.

"I am so grateful to not have walked the path alone and to have created such incredible memories in honour of my wonderful dad. My mum has made each of us keyrings celebrating each climb, she and dad ran a craft business together, so doing that gave her a way of marking our journey in his memory'

"Thanks to all who donated, sent messages of support and generally listened to all our mountain stories. Most of all, thank you to my exceptional colleagues who completed this with me- I am eternally grateful and know my dad would be so proud of us all."

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Notes to Editors:

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