

15 million steps, 7,036 miles, charity boss completes his challenge to walk the coast of Great Britain and Ireland!

Tuesday 29 September, 2020

Daft as a Brush Cancer Patient Care boss Brian Burnie set off walking around the coast of Great Britain and Ireland in March 2018 from Newcastle to highlight the charity's work and encourage other NHS Cancer Centres to adopt the free service.

The Newcastle-based charity and its 350 volunteers provides free transport for patients receiving chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy cancer treatment.

It's taken the 76 year old almost 3 years to complete his incredible walk. Supported by his wife Cheryl, Brian has clocked-up 15,000,000 steps and over 7,000 miles walked.

They were met at the Baltic in Gateshead by volunteers, supporters and well-wishers undeterred by the rain, to take those final steps over the Millennium Bridge back into Newcastle.

Clearly emotional, Mr Burnie said it was **"Unbelievably moving"**

"To all our volunteers, friends and supporters, thank you very, very much. I never thought I would be standing here two and half years later after 7,036 miles walked.

Its been incredible and the response I've had from cancer centres all over Great Britain and Ireland has been beyond belief."

During the walk, the couple were married on the Isle of Skye in August 2018, a secret to everyone except close family.

Brian has walked the coastline of Scotland, the North West, Wales and the Island of Ireland. When returning to England, It was in Torquay when the lock-down came in, forcing their return home.

However, determined Brian walked laps of his back garden and circuits of a neighbouring golf club to cover the distance between Torquay and Middlesbrough, from where he resumed his walk.

Dealing with the developing condition of Parkinson's Disease, Brian admits his walk has been **"Challenging at times"**

Arriving in Newcastle was a **"Huge relief"** said Cheryl, ***"It's been unforgettable! Living an unconventional life for 2 and half years has been a pure adventure, but the main aim was to visit cancer centres and bring awareness to what the charity does in the North East. We've achieved that and I am thrilled we can start planning to take the Daft as a Brush service nationwide.***

Living in our double decker bus has brought it's own unique challenges, but I am so proud of Brian delivering his promise to finish his 7,000 mile walk."

John Holden and Centenarian, Far East Prisoner of War, Mr Len Gibson BEM, both braved the poor conditions to walk with Brian and Cheryl's arrival into Newcastle; ***"I'll do anything for Brian, he's one in a million"***.

By replicating the service provided in the North East all over Britain and Ireland, Brian is convinced his dream of creating a million free patient journeys each year will become a reality.

He adds; ***"It hasn't sunk in yet. It's been one of the best things I've ever done, but now the real work starts; helping cancer patients get to and from hospital on a daily basis, all over Great Britain and Ireland."***

After 15 million steps, Brian is refusing to put his feet up ***"I'll be at my desk tomorrow to begin planning a conference with the trusts we've visited. I am optimistic we can start our first hub in***

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