

Devon soldier cycles 170 miles in Tesco for Blind Veterans UK

Monday 17 October, 2016

Media release

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A soldier from Devon cycled 170 miles on a static bicycle on Tuesday (4/10) for Blind Veterans UK, the national charity for vision-impaired ex-Service men and women.

Simon Hebson, 43 and from Exmouth, started at 9 am and cycled for more than nine hours straight to raise money for Blind Veterans UK at Tesco Exeter Vale. He was provided moral support by blind veteran John Evans and John's guide dog Johnny whilst he took on the massive challenge. So far, Simon has managed to raise an impressive £711.

Simon says: "I guided John when we did the Blind Veterans UK 100k London to Brighton event together earlier this year. I wanted to add to my previous fundraising by taking on another challenge."

John Evans, 62 and from Talaton, says: "It's amazing that Simon was on his bike all day to raise money for the charity. It's a pretty unusual challenge and I was more than happy to come along to wave the Blind Veterans UK flag whilst Simon cycled 170 miles to nowhere!"

Simon feels strongly about supporting Blind Veterans UK due to his own military background. He served in the Coldstream Guards for 23 years and left the Army as a Sergeant. Now he is part of the Army Reserves as a Team Leader in the Outreach Team, who also came to support him on Tuesday.

Simon says: "It was definitely challenging, not only physically but mentally. You're not moving anywhere, don't see the countryside change but it was great that so many people saw me and supported the cause.

"The challenge has a silly note to it but is also quite unique and many locals understood the importance of what I was doing."

Blind Veterans UK was founded in 1915 and the charity's initial purpose was to help and support soldiers blinded in the First World War. But the organisation has gone on to support more than 35,000 blind veterans and their families, spanning the Second World War to recent conflicts including Iraq and Afghanistan.

For more than a century, the charity has been providing vital free training, rehabilitation, equipment and emotional support to blind and vision-impaired veterans no matter when they served or how they lost their sight.

Visit blindveterans.org.uk/support to learn more about the charity and how you can support its vital work today.

Simon says: "I just want to say thank you to John Evans, the Soldier from Outreach team and the team at Tesco's for their kind support as well as to all those who donated and sent us so many uplifting messages.

It's not too late to support Simon for cycling 170 miles in nine hours for Blind Veterans UK, please visit justgiving.com/Simon-Hebson2

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