Families unite in tandem skydive to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust

Friday 2 June, 2017

The father of a little boy who passed away 14 years ago and grandmother of a little girl who had a tumour the size of an orange on her brain are preparing to jump out of a plane to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust.

Matthew Lawton, 42 from Scissett, will be accompanied by 73 year old Mollie Fountain, from Clayton West, this weekend as they take on a tandem skydive to raise much-needed funds for The Sick Children's Trust. The duo are members of Scissett Working Men's Club which has selected The Sick Children's Trust as charity of the year – and have therefore decided to take on the challenge to thank the charity for helping their families in the most desperate of times.

14 years ago, Matthew's five year old son, Nathan, became seriously ill with what was believed to be meningitis. He was rushed to St James's University Hospital, Leeds, where it was discovered he had a rare life-threatening immune condition called hemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis (HLH). Tragically, six days later, Nathan passed away from a secondary lung infection. And in 2015, Mollie's granddaughter, Darcey Fletcher, was rushed to Sheffield Children's Hospital for emergency treatment when it was discovered she had a brain tumour. On both occasions, The Sick Children's Trust supported the families with free 'Home from Home' accommodation, just minutes from their loved one's hospital bedside.

Matthew and Mollie are hoping to contribute towards Scissett Working Men's Club's £5,000 fundraising target by taking on the three-mile tandem skydive on the 14th anniversary of Nathan's death, Saturday 10 June. **Matthew, who sits on the Scissett Working Men's Club committee, says:**

"Both Mollie and I feel so passionately about The Sick Children's Trust after they helped our families when we needed it the most. By the charity giving me free 'Home from Home' accommodation in its Eckersley House in Leeds, I was able to be with Nathan in his last days which was the most important thing in the world. If I'd had to drive back home every night, leaving him in hospital, it doesn't even bear thinking about.

"And at this most traumatic time of my life, the team at Eckersley House were there, supporting me in whatever way they could. For that, I will always be incredible grateful which is why in a week's time I will be jumping out of a plane with Mollie."

The Sick Children's Trust runs ten 'Homes from Home' across the country, three of which are in Yorkshire. In addition to Eckersley House in Leeds, it runs two 'Homes from Home' in Sheffield, Treetop and Magnolia House. **Mollie, who will be taking on her first ever skydive, adds:**

"I can't thank The Sick Children's Trust enough for keeping my daughter-in-law, Chrissy, by my granddaughter Darcey's side when everything felt so out of control. The charity kept them together when it mattered the most, so we want to give something back and ensure families going through a similar experience have the support of The Sick Children's Trust."

Although the accommodation is provided free of charge to families, it costs The Sick Children's Trust £30 to support a family for one night. **Regional Fundraiser, Laura Leverton, says:**

"We're absolutely delighted to have been selected as The Scissett Working Men's Club charity of the year and we're so excited to hear all about Matthew and Mollie's brave skydive!

"As a charity, we rely entirely on voluntary donations to keep our ten 'Homes from Home' running, so with the money raised from this skydive we will be able to keep more families from Yorkshire and beyond together when they have a seriously ill child in hospital.

Scissett Working Men's Club have already raised £2,505, if you'd like to help them raise more and support Matthew and Mollie, please visit: https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Molly-Matt-skydive or donate at the club.

For further information about The Sick Children's Trust, please visit http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org/

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