

Conquering Mt Kilimanjaro, the highest peak in Africa, had its highs and lows for Humpty's Kili Club. Here is what the climb meant to each individual.



Name: Joe Brown

Mini bio: Aged 50, entrepreneur with three kids.

Decided to join the climb to support The Humpty Dumpty Foundation and also for the personal goal of completing the physical and mental challenge of climbing Mt Kilimanjaro. It's the first time the come down is better than the high.

Name: Andrew Burnes

Mini bio: CEO and founder of the largest wholesale distributor of Australian and New Zealand travel products. Married, lives in Victoria. Previously trekked Kokoda.

Name: Kelly Cartwright

Mini bio: 20, Paralympian and world champion sprinter; lost her leg to cancer at the age of 15. Lives in Geelong, Victoria, Won the Sir Edmund Hillary Award for Courage and Determination on Kili.

It was just awesome but it was very hard. The highlights for me definitely were the porters. They were amazing and they would do anything for you. I had a porter with me all the way because they had to help me up rock faces and cliffs. Every night when we got back to camp, they gathered around to sing to us, but one night when I came in more than 100 of them began singing just for me, and circling my tent. Then they accepted me as their sister. It was my personal highlight.

Name: Paul Fegan

Mini bio: Banker and company director, married to Leonie with two children, Stephanie, 20 and Nicholas, 11.

Our daughter Stephanie was admitted to the RNSH a few years ago. She required an emergency appendectomy. The admitting staff, doctors, surgeon and nurses were just first class in their care and attention - she was in the Humpty Dumpty ward - which at the time was funny as she was about 16 and we assumed it was the name of a young child's ward - we did not realise at the time the scale and scope of the Foundations work. The highlights were the camaraderie of the climb group, the visual splendour of what was an enormous human caravan of colour, theatre, movement, logistics and music, and the human story that underpinned each of the climbers. Plus, the singing by Edward as we walked in the dark with only the moonlight on the ascent. And actually getting to the summit. There were a few lows: being sick the day before the final ascent; losing balance and falling asleep while walking; and reaching Stella Point and realizing it was not the summit - very emotional.



Name: Paul Francis

Mini bio: Founder Humpty Dumpty Foundation, married father of three, makes a living from tennis.

One of my highlights was when the Adventure35 team told me that everyone who tried to attempt the final leg of the summit succeeded. There was the relief that after 16 months of planning and organisation that it's done and that it's worked and that everyone got down safely.

Name: Gary Gerstle

Mini bio: Humpty board member and managing director of Man Investments Australia. Married to fellow Kili summiteer Penny, with 3 young children.

Bit by bit, inch by inch, step by step – it's nothing compared to the battle the kids go through. In the words of Winston Churchill – “we make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give.”

Name: Penny Gerstle

Mini bio: 43, married to fellow trekker Gary Gerstle, Mum of 3, lives in Northwood, Sydney. About to complete a Masters of International Law, work with Australia for UNHCR (UN's refugee agency).

As a largely stay at home mum I don't get out much, and certainly climbing an extreme altitude mountain is not part of my daily sandwich-making, cleaning up, ferrying children routine. It is just so intoxicating to get out of your comfort zone and do something for others, with such a fantastic group of fellow trekkers. Until this adventure I had never been able to see the point in climbing a mountain. It had always struck me as such a futile thing to do - after all, you just have to come down again. Now, I get it. Kilimanjaro has taught me more about myself, about determination, courage and friendship than anything else I have done. I will never forget her, or the beautiful, proud, welcoming people of Tanzania. The lowlight? Some of my fellow trekkers could sure snore! Otherwise there weren't any.

Name: Richard Gorman

Mini bio: 55-years young, married to Rowena with two wonderful children Olivia and Charlie (16 and 13). Operates a finance brokerage business that specialises in health.

I decided to join the climb because I think that anything that helps kids is worthwhile and secondly I like the modus operandi of the charity and I like the people as they are a very genuine group who are involved for what I consider to be the right reasons. My wife sat next to me at the first meeting when the persuader stick was pulled out by Paul Francis a year ago and I can still see her mouthing the words “go on, you can do it”. I have recently been in the position of needing assistance when my son broke his collarbone and I can tell you that Paul Francis and Gary Gerstle couldn't have been more helpful.

There were certainly moments from this trip that will stay in my mind forever. The low moments were seeing some succumb to altitude sickness when we all knew it could have been any one of us and watching them bravely suffer when they were undoubtedly in distress. The highs were numerous and therefore hard to prioritize but sitting in that freezing mess tent and been handed messages from home the night before the ascent was very moving



and I remember looking around the tent and there wasn't a dry eye anywhere. Mind you the opportunity to watch the incredible acts of bravery along the way in particular Kelly Cartwright who inspired us all with her tenacity as she did the work of many people to get to the top and finally making the summit myself without been too self indulgent was the most amazing feeling of joy and relief as it was without doubt the hardest thing that I've ever done in my life.

Name: Chris Gray

Mini bio: TV property expert & builds property portfolio's for time-poor professionals at Empire.

My wife Tanya went into labour at 26 weeks and our local hospital at Randwick didn't have enough equipment so we almost had to fly to Canberra. We ended up at RPA. Scott was then born at 34 weeks and spent a month in the special car nursery. Tanya is now pregnant with our daughter so crossing fingers we won't need the equipment we donated. I was looking to donate \$50-100k/yr to charity and wanted to be involved rather than just write a cheque.

No matter how much training you do to climb Kili, my advice is to pray! The 7.5 hour climb to the summit is seriously tough even when you're feeling fit and healthy. Bring on some rain, cloud, darkness, cold, and dehydration, upset tummy, bowel movements, altitude sickness or even just 1 leg and it gets even harder. Luck was on my side and I avoided most of the above but it took so much mental and physical pain to get over the hump of the mountain I was in tears at the top. "Never again" I said and "please remove me from your database" but with a great team around you, anything really is possible. I've got 20+ great new friends

Name: Joe Hockey

Mini bio: Married with two children and another on the way. Turned 44 on Kili and is the Federal Shadow Treasurer and long-time Humpty supporter.

We spent six days climbing a mountain; the kids in hospitals climb a mountain every day.

Name: Kevin Harrison

Mini bio: 41, married with 2 kids, lives in Upwey Victoria and is Kelly Cartwright's Prosthetist - aka Kelly's leg maker.

The highlight was seeing the determination of all the participants. It was an amazing effort for all who set out to reach the summit. Well done all. Thank you Humpty and all other Trekkers, you have changed my life.

Name: Andy Hurt

Mini bio: 43, married with two beautiful boys (2 and 3), sales director in the communications business.

In this fast moving world we live in, it is so easy to forget to slow down and reflect on the things that really matter: our children - our future. Since I signed up for this fantastic journey I have learnt so much about the incredible selfless efforts of so many amazing people that work behind the scenes to provide the necessary support for our children in care. The highlights – the people that we went with and the achievements of not only the financial goals, but the climb and reaching the summit. No lowlights.



Name: David Koch

Mini bio: Father of four, married, and co-host of Channel Seven's Sunrise show and professional adventurer (Kokoda Track and Kili x 2)

The highlight for me was the porters, their insights and culture and outlook on life. The lowlight was that climbing Kili is just as hard the second time round.

Name: Mark Lochtenberg

Mini bio: Married father of three, 48, lives Mosman, works in management in the coal industry.

Kili was magnificent. The mountain was forever distant upon approach but after three days of trekking came more sharply into focus - real, daunting yet attainable. The organisational efforts of the team and *Adventure35* provided the sound structure for success. Varying vegetation with altitude, volcanic geology, expansive landscapes and sculptured topography made for a unique experience to summit a significant mountain with new and long term friends and the support and love from all which combined to make this the most memorable of life's experiences.

Name: Greg Perry

Mini bio: Funds manager, 55, married to Lisa with kids Millie, 11 and William, 10, and two stepsons, James and Jordan.

My wife thought it would be good for me and good for Humpty to conquer Kili and raise as much money as possible for Humpty. Our daughter had a tough start in life and needed all the help we could get from the Children's Hospital at Westmead.

Name: Stephen Roberts

Mini bio: Financial services executive and charity board member. Married with an eight-year-old son, lives Woollahra, no vices (declared), just home, sport and lots of travel.

I'm the one that didn't make the plane. It was an enormous disappointment but I unfortunately did not leave with the Kili Club for our intrepid endeavor. As a direct consequence of the intense training regime we under took to prepare ourselves for Kili, coupled with a pernicious dose of the flu in June, I was afflicted with a temporary heart ailment normally found in elite athletes or as my doctor pointed out elite athletes and "you". It was with great pride that I watch them overcome such huge odds to achieve such a fantastic result - 23 attempted and succeeded to summit. What a bunch. But the whole team really was just fantastic. Well done to everyone. You're all stars!!

Name: Barry Taitz

Mini bio: 34, married with a 15 month old daughter, lives in Johannesburg, brother to Jonny Taitz a fellow Trekker

Highlights were hosting the opening dinner at my house in Sandton where the group silenced a lamb. Lowlights were Day 5 at Karanga Camp where I was forced to descend as a result of worsening Pneumonia. Showed biggest heart for effort and determination over 5 days.



Name: Dr Jonny Taitz

Mini bio: South African-born paediatrician who migrated to Australia and is now director of clinical operations at Sydney's Children's Hospital, Randwick – he is one of the many doctors that use the equipment that Humpty donates to hospitals across Australia. A Humpty board member and is married with two children.

Once you've climbed Kili, everything else is easy.

Name: Chad Walker

Mini bio: 32 ("going on 12"), works in property.

When I saw that pic of climbers at the summit of Kilimanjaro during the presentation at the Good Egg lunch, I just thought to myself that this was a once in a life time opportunity and I had to get onboard. When I told my mother that I was planning to climb Mt Kilimanjaro, and explained the temperature at the summit was something like -30, she looked at me in horror, and said she'd pay \$1,000,000 for me not to go.

Name: Tedd Warden

Mini bio: Lives Somers, Victoria; 55, with three terrific children aged 27, 25, and 21; installs swimming pool covers and safe roof access structures for a living.

It's the best group of people that I have been with, and to come together and do this is so rewarding. Why? An old mate couldn't talk his wife into going [on the climb]. The craziest thing during training was spending five minutes on an empty beach singing, laughing, clapping and talking with a family of dolphins not 10 m from the shore as they put on a wonderful show- what a connection. Thankfully all my tribe have been blessed with good luck and good health so far, but good friends have needed Humpty's support which helps to address cracks in the health system.

Name: Steve Williams

Mini bio: Father of two, married and a 55-years-young lawyer and company director.

Kemp Strang sponsored a corporate team at Balmoral Burn and when we attended the dinner my wife Robyn encouraged me to raise the money and go, as did my kids when we talked about it. I have always liked to tick off the challenges of life and the support I have had from friends sponsoring my climb has been incredible.