

Blood & Bones, Sweat & Tears – 250km walk In memory of Jose Gelabert

What inspired this walk - I lost my dad on the 15th of September 2017, he was my hero and inspiration. While he was in palliative care, I would go on bush walks and report back with photos. Dad would tell me stories of first discovering the Australian bush when he arrived in Australia, or reminisce about working on remote projects. So, with that same spirit, I am packing my backpack and putting on my walking shoes.

I will be aiming to raise \$3000, split between two charities close to my heart, by walking 250 km from Sydney to Newcastle on the Great North Walk. The walk encompasses Sydney Harbour and national parks, goes past Lake Macquarie and up the north coast. I will be starting on the 7th of March and the walk will take me between 12 and 15 days, depending on the weather.

Dad's journey: After being diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma, a type of blood plasma cancer, in early 2014 & then Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF) in 2015, he responded to treatments. But slowly medications stopped working; his bones gradually began to crumble and his lungs weren't able to supply life-giving oxygen to his blood.

Dad had worked incredibly hard in construction for 40 years and was looking forward to retirement, so that he could focus on hobbies and his granddaughter. While he was healthy he had renovated the family home, built our huge garage, and could be counted on to help friends with backyard projects. But, the diseases took his strength and independence, and he grieved this loss deeply.

I would have given anything to ease his suffering, for the multiple myeloma to have been caught earlier and for the treatments not to have ravaged his ailing body. That's why I've chosen to support The Snowdome Foundation and the Lung Foundation, so the future can be a bit brighter for those diagnosed with life-limiting illnesses.

The Lung Foundation supports patients affected by lung disease, and also provides training to specialist respiratory nurses, promotes lung health and funds important research into treatments and cures. More information can be found on their home page - <https://lungfoundation.com.au/about-us/>

To donate please visit <https://www.mycase.com.au/page/170864/in-memory-of-jose-gelabert>

Snowdome Foundation funds research & fast tracks human trials of genomic-based medicine, enabling doctors to diagnose & treat blood cancers in a more individualised way, reducing suffering & the indignities that befall patients. In doing so they fill a gap between charities that support cancer families and the broader cancer research funds. For more info - <http://www.snowdome.org.au/about-us/>

To donate to please visit <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/maxine-gelabert>

Any donations & support are highly appreciated. Thank you so much for joining me on this journey

