

# Fitness fan returns to his roots for 130-mile challenge

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A PERSONAL trainer who spent his teenage years in Huntly has tackled a real beast of a challenge to mark his 40th birthday.

Stuart Amory, who also served ten years in the RAF, ran nearly 130 miles over a week, taking in places which were significant to him during his formative years.

But as if 130 miles were not enough, he launched the week with two major sporting events.

On the Saturday, Mr Amory took part in the Beast, an off-road 10km course which features 25 tricky obstacles

and involves running through all kinds of terrain, including the leg-numbing ascent up the side of the famous Hill of Kerloch.

The next day he returned to familiar territory at Huntly Swimming Pool, where he worked for four years, and took part in the Huntly Triathlon, completing a 1500m swim, a 37k bike run and a 10k run.

His tour of memorable places, schools and houses where the family lived began on the Monday morning at the hospital in Aberdeen where he was born, then moved to Cove where he attended school.

Leaving Aberdeen he passed a flat where the family stayed and covered nearly 35 miles before stopping for the night in Methlick.

Day two involved a longer run than planned as after visiting Crudie School and a former family home at Fisherie, he got lost adding to the day's tally before arriving at his

mum's house in Turriff.

Mr Amory's family moved several times when he was a youngster and after leaving Turriff, his first stop was 26 miles later at Gartly. He rounded day three off in Huntly at The Gordon Schools and with a visit to Rizza's where enduring memories of their ice cream and strawberry bonbons, kept him on track throughout the day.

Last Thursday's tour took him out to Clatt and then back to Aberchirder for the night and for finally on Friday, he ran from Aberchirder back to Huntly for a get-together with former colleagues at the swimming pool, joined by his brother Martin.



Stuart Amory with teenage favourites, Rizza's ice cream, strawberry bonbons and Irn Bru after a day in which he ran more than 30 miles.

Pictures: Lyn MacDonald. Image No. 030897

Mr Amory's challenge was inspired by the plight of a year-old-daughter of a running friend. The girl, called Olivia,



Stuart Amory worked at Huntly Swimming Pool for four years.

was born with a very rare form of liver disease called Biliary Atresia for which there is no cure. She had a corrective operation at eight weeks old at Kings College Hospital and celebrates being 10 years post transplant this month.

He said: "I wanted to do something for my 40th and I had a week clear at the end of September and I was coming to Huntly for a school reunion, so it all really happened from there.

"It has been a terrific week, pretty hot at times but I have really enjoyed visiting all the places from my childhood and taking photos of them."

He has set a £3,000 target which he will donate to Rays of Sunshine, a liver charity, Kings College Hospital in London and the neo-natal Unit at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital.

Mr Amory, who now lives in Surrey



Stuart Amory back in Huntly after his epic 40th birthday run.

and has helped celebrities such as Emily Blunt and Sir Trevor MacDonald with their fitness regimes, runs up to seven marathons a year.

To support his amazing venture, visit his page on Virgin Money Giving.