

Wednesday 29 January, 2020

## STRATFORD LOCAL TACKLES TE ARAROA TRAIL FOR THE STROKE FOUNDATION



Henry Marchant from Stratford began his journey from Cape Reinga on October 8 to walk the length of New Zealand (also known as Te Araroa Trail) for the Stroke Foundation, in memory of his mother.

Henry's mother suffered from a number of strokes before she passed away in March 2018. Henry told us: "My mum had four TIAs related to her uterine cancer and then in September 2017 had a major stroke which left her unable to care for herself. She then had another stroke in February 2018 which left her paralysed.

"I was unaware of the potential effects and uncertainty surrounding recovery from stroke. We were always unsure about how much my mum would recover and were concerned about future strokes. We all struggled to see such an intelligent, strong woman unable to care for herself or communicate her feelings."

Tackling Te Araroa Trail is something that Henry chose to do to support the Stroke Foundation, because of the huge impact stroke had on his family. Yearning for a challenge, this trek is a chance for Henry to not only raise awareness of stroke and the Foundation but undertake a personal ambition to explore the solitude of backcountry New Zealand.

Having kicked off his journey at the top of the North Island in Cape Reinga, Henry's walk has so far taken him along 90 Mile Beach, through Northland forests, over the Tongariro crossing the Tararu Range and canoeing the Whanganui River from Whakahoro to Pipiriki, completing the North Island just in time for Christmas.

"I've absolutely loved it so far," Henry shared. "We have a beautiful country that has been amazing to explore. It has also been great to be part of a community who have also taken on the trail. I've met some really cool people."

Henry has just begun the second leg of his journey which will see him tackle the historic Queen Charlotte Track in the Marlborough Sounds, along the Richmond Ranges and through Craigieburn Forest Park, on to Mackenzie Basin and the Mt Aspiring National Park and finally down to the southerly terminus at Stirling Point, Bluff.

Henry is aiming to complete his journey on April 5 which would have been his mother's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Fundraising has been a big part of Henry's adventure and so far, he has raised over \$5,600 for the Stroke Foundation. Henry explained, "I think the Stroke Foundation plays a huge part in helping victims of stroke and their families through this time. If the money I raise can have just a tiny, positive impact on people who may go through similar events, I will be really proud."

Robbie Ross, National Fundraising Manager at the Stroke Foundation said: "The Stroke Foundation helped over 5,500 stroke survivors in the past year and it's vital that we have people like Henry to both raise awareness of stroke and help raise funds. We're incredibly grateful for his support and taking on this challenge.

"The money raised will go towards supporting our critical Community Stroke Advisor (CSA) service, which helps stroke survivors and their families at such a difficult time. Every donation helps to support thousands of New Zealanders across the country."

To support Henry visit, [givealittle.co.nz/fundraiser/a-long-wander-for-the-stroke-foundation](https://givealittle.co.nz/fundraiser/a-long-wander-for-the-stroke-foundation).

For more information about stroke and the Stroke Foundation visit, [stroke.org.nz](https://stroke.org.nz).

- ENDS -

#### **Media enquiries:**

The Stroke Foundation of New Zealand

Lauren Ellis, Media and Communications Advisor, [Lauren.ellis@stroke.org.nz](mailto:Lauren.ellis@stroke.org.nz) / 027 506 9822

#### **About the Stroke Foundation of New Zealand**

The Stroke Foundation is the only national charity in New Zealand focused on the prevention of and recovery from stroke. For 40 years we have actively promoted ways to avoid stroke and dedicated ourselves to working closely with stroke survivors across the country. The generosity of New Zealanders enables us to help thousands of stroke survivors every year; providing them with critical services to ensure the best possible outcomes - not just for themselves, but also their family/whānau and carers too. Three quarters of strokes are preventable, so we will continue our vital awareness campaigns and health promotion programmes - saving thousands of lives. To find out more about the important work the Stroke Foundation does go to [www.stroke.org.nz](https://www.stroke.org.nz).