

## THE ASCENT in Katie's own words



On 2nd May 2011 the Trustees met with Katie, her close friend - Fadi Hadad (also from Deloitte) her family and friends at an open evening in Chrisanne's house to welcome Katie and thank her and Deloitte for their wonderful support and generous donation to the work of the Trust. *(See photos at foot of page). (Further details as to how this donation will be used will appear on this website following the return of Chrisanne and Reay from their visit to Malawi in July 2011).* Here in Katie's own words is her memorable record of the highs and lows of the Deloitte ascent (and descent) of Mount Kilimanjaro:-

Kilimanjaro Trip 1st November -6th November 2011

Day 1

Up at 6am, breakfast in the hotel and then set off in the mini buses for the 3 hour journey to Kilimanjaro. Checked in at the mountain and were provided with our pack lunches for the day. First part of the trek was through the jungle and we saw some monkeys in the trees. Spirits were high and people started getting to know each other. Trek took 5.5 hours to our first Hut - Mandara Hut. We were welcomed by the porters singing and dancing. Girls stayed in a 20 bed hut and boys in a 30 bed hut. It was Fadi's birthday so they made a cake and we all sung Happy Birthday to him after dinner. Everyone went to bed early. People up to the toilet all night with the effects of the diamox tablets.

Day 2

Up at 6am. We were provided with a small bowl of water to wash our face with. Had breakfast, filled our water bottles and then we set off just after 7am. Early into our trek it started raining heavily. Lunch had to be eaten under our ponchos as there was no shelter anywhere. Arrived at the next camp at 2:30pm and was so happy to put on some warm clothes. Everyone's sleeping bags were damp so we laid them out to dry in the hut. Same sort of hut as the previous one with 30 beds in it. It was much colder this night. Played uno under candle light. Many people started to feel ill and were up through the night. Toilets were horrible with no running water and you had to walk out of the huts and with your torch for 5 minutes to get to them.

Day 3 - Acclimatisation day

Stories this morning were of a rat running over someone in their sleep and of people getting sick. It was a nice fresh day on the plus side, and we could see the glaciers and Khuru peak which seemed so far away. I started to feel ill again early into the trek, took some more pills and continued. We walked to 4050m and then back down. We were back for lunch at the hut and had a brief from our leaders on what to expect on summit night. I went to bed early as I was feeling ill and very cold. I started to feel upset that if I didn't keep my food down that I wouldn't have enough energy to continue the trek. Restless night all round as lots of people up and down to the toilet and people snoring because the air was so dry.

Day 4

Woke up at 5:45am to rain and big flashes of lightening. Had a very sore throat and dry nose from the cold dry air. By the time we were packed and ready to leave it

fortunately the rain had stopped and there was a lovely sunrise. We trekked for 6 hours to Kibu Huts the scenery was so barren and it was really dusty. No trees to hide behind to go to the toilet. The huts were the worst huts. The room was so small and it was hard to sort out our stuff for summit night. I ate lots of bread for dinner as was finding it difficult to keep food down and you lose your appetite at this height. Everyone was feeling very tense about summit night and we all slept at about 5pm as it was so cold and we had to be up at 11pm.

#### Day 5

I was so delighted to wake up and see that it wasn't raining or snowing. Wore 4 pairs of bottoms and 5 layers on top, gloves, hat and scarf. We set off at midnight with our head torches on. First 1.5 hours were ok, it was up hill at a steady pace following the person's head torch in front of us. My hands and toes were cold and my nose kept on running. First short stop was good to get organised. The next 1.5 hours were tougher, we were getting breathless easily and having to take deep breaths. Stopped at a cave to drink so warm water from our thermal flask and I put my thermal foot warmers in. Trek became harder and harder and water bottles and bladders froze. The final push to Gillman's point over Jamaica rocks was very hard. Sunset was beautiful and we realised why this part of the trek was done at night when we looked down and saw how steep the climb we had just accomplished was. We had to make a quick decision at Gillman's point if we wanted to continue to Uhuru peak. A few of our team did not have the choice as they were feeling very ill. I decided to continue for the additional 2.5 hours to the peak. Everyone went at their own pace at this stage as it was very difficult to breathe and you were exhausted with every step. A porter walked with me and it was nice to have someone that was not feeling as tired to chat to and keep me motivated. He sang a song and helped me with my frozen water and made me eat an energy bar even though the thought of eating made me feel sick.

**THE PEAK:** The final steps to the peak were emotional as people were coming down and cheering me along and I was so glad just to see the peak. Some of the Dubai team were still there when I reached so we got a quick photo together and then started to head back to Gillman's point and back down to Kivu hut. I took in the scenery more on the way down and there were lovely glaciers. The walk to Gillman's was still very tiring but there was a sense of relief and achievement that we had reached the highest point in Africa. The descent from Gillman's point was much better and although it was very steep and sore on the knees we felt the oxygen slowly coming back into our lungs. Got back to Kivu hut and collapsed on the bed for 20 minutes before having to sort our stuff and continue the walk back to the 2nd hut. Arrived at the hut at dinner time ate and went straight to bed. Had a bloody nose and really cracked lips.

#### Day 6

Woke up with very sore muscles but was delighted to think that in 12 hours we would be able to have a shower. Everyone was on good form and managed to eat something more than bread for the first time. Walk was pleasant and the sun was shining. Arrived back at the check in point at around 3pm and one of the Deloitte partners had arranged for a celebratory beer for all of us. Got the mini bus back to the hotel had a quick shower and headed down for our celebratory dinner. The Deloitte partners had arranged a lovely bbq for us and did a great speech that included funny quotes and things that had happened on the trip.

Submitted by Katie Fyfe on 7 June 2011



Katie in Inverness 2.5.11

Katie looks none the worse for her adventure on Kilimanjaro.



Katie & close friend, Fadi in Inverness

Fadi, also part of the team.

The Trustees were delighted to meet them both.