

Andes trek tests prof Ray to the limits of endurance

BY EMMA STONE

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ADVENTURER Ray Dupree has returned triumphantly from a charity trek across one of the world's most daunting mountain ranges.

A number of his companions tackling the challenge of the Andes in South America were not so fortunate.

Some in his group suffered the debilitating effects of altitude sickness. One had a heart attack.

The 67-year-old university academic of Russell Terrace in Leamington was taking part in a five-day long trek to raise funds for the Alzheimer's Society.

In total he covered 40km of rugged landscape.

Prof Dupree's late wife suffered from the condition and his family was helped by the society in the early stages of her condition.

Through sponsorships and donations the semi-retired Warwick University physicist raised £4,000 for the charity from his walking trip.

Despite being the oldest walker in a group of 50, Prof Dupree was pleased with his stamina and endurance.

He said: "I got on pretty well. I was a bit surprised at how fit I was.

"It was difficult in the sense that on the first day we had the acclimatisation and 30 per cent of the group needed medical attention for altitude sickness. One person had a heart attack."

The relentless schedule saw the walkers trekking during most of the daylight hours available to them.

Prof Dupree said: "The days were 12 hours long - we got up at 5.30am to pack up, had breakfast and would get started at 6.30am and if you did reasonably well you got to the next camp at 5.30pm.

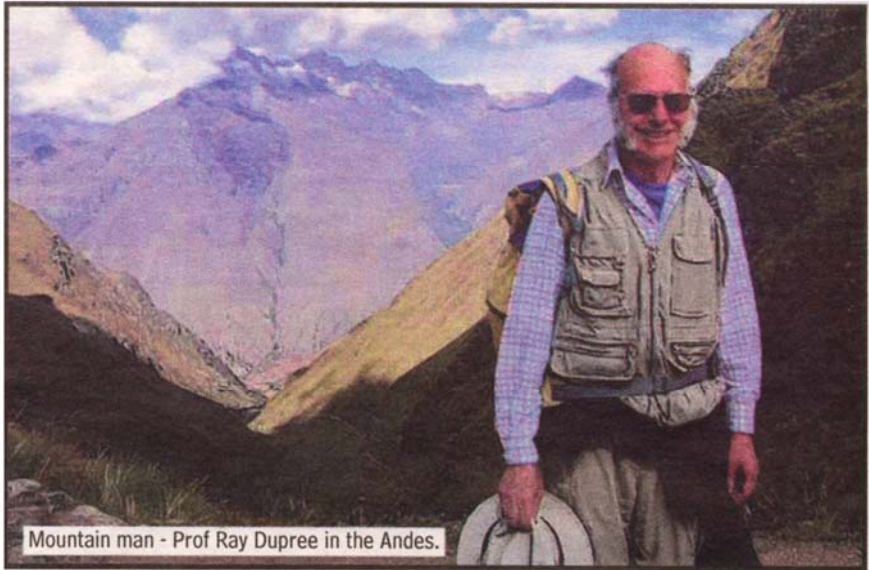
"There were a lot of people who were less fit than I was and it was sheer determination that got them through."

Prof Dupree says he feels a lot healthier as a result of the trip. He lost an inch around his waist and six pounds in weight.

"I felt very fit and I have been walking along the pavement with a spring in my step," he said.

"Some of my family were relieved when I came home. I don't think my son thought I would make it."

A website is still open for donations for the Alzheimer's Society: www.justgiving.com/raytrek



Mountain man - Prof Ray Dupree in the Andes.