



UK to Myanmar 2021 And Back Again 16,065 miles

Our Virtual Expedition

6th February 2021

Headline Figures

Number of Teams Walking, Running, Cycling and Riding: 57

Distance Travelled This Week: 1722 miles

Cumulative Distance Travelled: 8671 miles

Distance Still To Travel: 7394 miles

Money Raised for the Ahtutu Charity so far £1798.46

What a long way we have come in five weeks, in so many ways.

The distance we have collectively travelled is quite staggering and we are well on our way to making our eventual target of over 16,000 miles. Many of us are walking more than you have done for many a year, which is of course great for both our mental and physical health.

The distance each group travels each week varies greatly as you will have seen on the facebook group. But that is no issue at all and whether your group is recording 10 or 100 miles doesn't matter. Each group is of a different size, some of you are young and fit, some have replaced fitness with wisdom, some are retired and some busy doing or supporting vital Covid vaccinations. All our circumstances are hugely different, which reflects the glorious eclectic nature of our community.

The UK to Myanmar 2021 Facebook community has been a revelation. For me it is kind of weird seeing work friends, theatre friends and local friends chatting together. It's like a collision of worlds, slightly odd, but equally lovely. Mary has similar disparate groups now chatting to each other. The way you are all supporting each other is fantastic. We clearly have a wonderful group of friends. Please continue being pro-active on the Facebook group, sharing your photographs and stories.

This last week or so has also been shockingly dominated by the political situation in Myanmar. Mary and many others of you here have a large number of friends in the country and I know how hard this is for you. There is a great deal of uncertainty and fear. I am sure I join all your fellow virtual travellers in this group in sending our love to you and Myanmar communities you are involved with.

With love to you all, Keith

For fun only, here is a short quiz. How many can you get?

Who sang the following strolling songs?

1. 1961 Walking Back to happiness
2. 1995 Walking in Memphis
3. 1985 Walking on Sunshine
4. 1973 Walk on the wild side
5. 1986 Walk this way
6. 1967 Walk away Renee
7. 1963 You'll never walk alone
8. 1985 Walking in the air
9. 1963 Walk like a man
10. 1966 These boots are made for walking



Which is higher and which is lower?

- 1 Tryfan or The Cobbler
- 2 Blencathra or Helvellyn
- 3 Ingleborough or Suilven
- 4 Mont Blanc or Elbrus
- 5 Roseberry Topping or Helm Crag
- 6 Half Dome or Matterhorn
- 7 Snowdon or Table Mountain
- 8 Kilimanjaro or Kinabalu
- 9 Ben Nevis or Vesuvius
- 10 Everest or the Selenean Summit



Leg 41, Lahore to Islamabad

A cheery hello to one and all from the Redneck Rambler, aka Suzanne. I live the other end of the village from Mary and Keith and this challenge has proved to be just the motivation I needed to get out and about on dark and cold winter mornings. I choose to head out the hour before sunrise so I can be home to wake up my husband, Lindsay, with a cup of tea

when I return. Lindsay is a wheelchair user and although he loves to enjoy the countryside with the help of a natty bike that fits on the front of his chair, the weather this time of year isn't much of an encouragement.

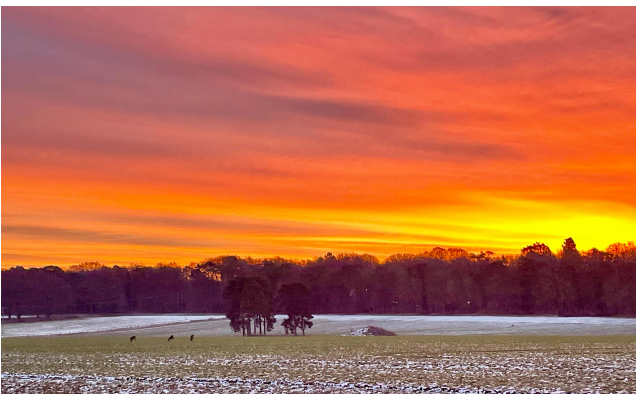


There's often a hint of dawn in the skies when I leave the back gate. Seagulls and geese call to one another as they head east towards the coast. The chorus of birds is growing louder as we move through February towards the Spring and a few deer graze in the fields, raising their heads as they sense me passing by. On clear mornings, the moon is still up and, as many of us do, I remember that it's the same moon that

gazes down on us all, whether here in the U.K., Pakistan, Myanmar or wherever we live on this planet we share, and that thought makes me smile.

I head off at a tidy pace past the woods, fields and estate workshops towards the inn and then up through the village back towards Redneck. It's growing lighter by now. The second part of my walk is always my favourite. I slow my pace a little and head back round to the woods again. On a fine day, I can witness the sun rising behind the trees and kissing the tops of the pines, but even when it's misty and damp, the woods are still a joy to the senses. I follow the paths the deer have made, wandering amongst the beech, oaks, sweet

chestnuts and Scots pine. Singing in the woods early in the morning is exhilarating. No one but the trees, the sky and woodland creatures is there to hear me and I have favourite places where I stop and savour those special moments.



I always have my phone with me and I take photos of anything I find beautiful or interesting, so I can show Lindsay when I'm back home and we're having our first cup of tea together.

It may take a few months to complete my leg of the journey from the U.K. to Myanmar but I'll make it eventually. I'm thankful to be part of this travelling community, and at this time of fear and turmoil in Myanmar, it's a privilege to feel connected with them each morning as I walk.





Myanmar Photographs From
Joan (JAWSPAWS)



What a week it's been, Keith, as you very rightly say. Thank you, everyone, for your lovely words of support.

My trustees had an emergency meeting on Thursday to decide on our charity responsibilities and to talk about how best to support our friends in Myanmar. Not everyone wants to know about the politics or be involved. So, for those who want to know more, I have provided a lot of information about the current situation in one place - <https://www.ahtutucharity.org.uk/articlesetc/> but all of our UK to Myanmar info is in another - <https://www.ahtutucharity.org.uk/latestnews/> - to keep the two separate.

It's not just another day, another coup for me. Here are some of the people I'm worried about.

Firstly, my Myanmar son, Mr Ladycakes himself photographed above. We packed 200+ hygiene packs for the women in the prison including Sustainable/Re-washable bags for around 150. For the others we put sanitary towels in their packs. "What are these? They look like cakes. Is that what they are?" said he, tongue in cheek. "That's right," replied Joan without missing a beat, "Ladycakes!"

My beautiful friend, A, who speaks English better than anyone else in Pathein and is our translator. She is clever, kind and loyal to us. She also has a wicked sense of humour, understand English jokes, and loves to come and eat with us when she can.

My lovely young friend, KKH, who would love to have stayed on to do the post grad degree offered to her but had to leave university to work because her family has health problems. She made me the most beautiful longyi suit (pronounced loonji) last time. Gorgeous girl. Another reason to get the lockdown pounds banished!

Mr JH, larger than life. He is training to be a Catholic priest. If my phones rings with a FaceTime call at 5 in the morning, that's who it will be. His laugh is as big and beautiful as his personality and himself.

Miss ASN, who is going to become a Catholic nun and was in the very first class I taught - one of my babies. She has gone through all sorts of trials and tribulations since that time but has stuck with her original vocation. She is, as she herself says, Beyooooootiful!

E, who is a boy but would rather be a girl, who is funny and clever and kind, but most importantly to her, is beautiful and stylish. I think she used to shake her head at my lack of dress sense or any kind of awareness!

MJ, who lives far out in the country in a house on stilts, and who supports everyone around her. Her cooking is To. Die. For. She is generosity itself.

Mr O, a friend of my Scottish pal Sheila, who has struggled to open a wonderful restaurant in Yangon and is desperately proud of his UK training. We always go. We always eat. We always roll home replete. Five star cuisine.

Our friends at the new and lovely Shekinah Hotel, who made us so welcome and sent their staff to our classes: a hotel which is, in all probability, now sitting empty.

I think of you and those I haven't got space to mention, every day. I hope that you are doing what you feel is right but most importantly I pray that you are all safe. <3 <3 <3

