

Lung transplant man to climb peaks in Britain **Home News**

PAMELA NEWENHAM

A DUBLIN man who received a life-saving double lung transplant last year is to climb Britain's three highest peaks this week in memory of his donor.

Gerry Walker (47) from Rathfarnham hopes to scale Snowdon in Wales, Ben Nevis in Scotland and England's Scafell Pike over a five-day period starting on Thursday.

Mr Walker, who climbed

Kerry's Carrauntoohil over the June bank holiday weekend, couldn't walk without the support of an oxygen tank before his operation in July 2008. Less than a year later the Cystic Fibrosis sufferer scaled Ireland's highest mountain.

"Before my transplant I was using oxygen for over 16 hours a day and exercise would make me completely breathless even with oxygen," he said.

Speaking to *The Irish Times*, Mr Walker said he hopes to have

conquered the final peak, Scafell Pike, before July 29th, as that is his 20th wedding anniversary, as well as a year to the day that he had the lung transplant.

"After climbing the final peak, I'll be going straight to hospital for my one year check-up".

On each summit he will place an engraved stone as a tribute to his lung donor, Martin.

"I know nothing about him except his name" Mr Walker said.

"The double lung transplant

was a very harrowing experience, so I wanted to give something back and raise awareness," he added.

Mr Walker placed a rock which read, "Remember Martin an unknown friend who donated his lungs allowing me to climb Carrauntoohil after a long exile", at the summit of Ireland's highest mountain.

Mr Walker said the lung transplant, which took place at the Freeman Hospital in Newcastle gave him his life back.