

Special Report

The London Marathon 17th April 2005

Lorries and Loos!

Arriving at Blackheath, one of the three starting places, I packed all my belongings into a special bag with my number on it, which then went on one of the many lorries, each displaying the numbers of the bags they were collecting, for example; 11,000 – 12,999. Later these lorries were escorted across London and parked in the Mall, so we would be able to collect our belongings immediately after the finish line. The next important thing was the loo! The queues were enormous. By the time my turn came, the gun had gone off and the race had started, but the people at the back had not even moved! Fifteen minutes later I crossed the start line and was on my way.

The first half of the race was very enjoyable. Right from the start there were thousands of people lining the route, cheering and encouraging us on our way; there were bands playing and everyone was having a great time in the sunshine.

Every couple of miles there was a drink station, very necessary on such a warm day. Jeremy, our two sons and my friends had banners which were visible from a long way off. I knew roughly where to expect to see them and could pick them out from the enormous crowds. It was wonderful to see familiar faces and feel their support.



Going The Extra Mile

After crossing Tower Bridge we headed east and round the Isle of Dogs. At about 19 miles the going began to get very tough and it was depressing to know we were running further and further away

from the finish! This was one of the longest and hardest miles in the race. However, at 20 miles, once we had turned back towards the finish, things improved. The crowds were enormous and there was a real carnival atmosphere. It was a wonderful feeling to run down

the Embankment and turn into Birdcage Walk. The Marathon website tells me that my official time was 5:47:47- under the six hours I had anticipated, so I was very pleased. We headed home and out to dinner with all our friends. It was a lovely end to a memorable day. The next day, however, was a different story!

A Big Thank You

To everyone who sponsored me, thank you very much for being so generous. I have raised £3,500- much more than I ever hoped for. Half will go to the Lawrence Home Nursing Team and half to St. Anne's Hospital, Liuli, Tanzania. I would like to say a big 'thank you' to Jill Mavin- I couldn't have done it without her! Jill and I will continue to run, if you would like to join us, ring me on: 01993 831140 or Jill on: 01993 831091. And thank you Jeremy for being so patient!

Gail Huntingford