

There's something about Mary

BY EVE KELLIHER

KILLARNEY woman Mary Cronin set her sights high in every sense to raise cash for a good cause when she scaled one of the highest peaks in the globe.

Mary completed the Kilimanjaro Trek 2009 – climbing the 19,640ft - high Tanzanian mountain – for the Light of Maasai charity.

"I would like to thank all who all who helped and sponsored me on my adventure. The expedition raised approximately €20,000 for the charity," said a delighted Mary.

The Killarney climber also paid tribute to the local guides, porters, cooks and assistants from Zara Tours who helped get the team to the top of the mountain safely and securely.

The first day of the adventure saw Mary trek five hours through tropical forest, in temperatures of close on 30 degrees. This was followed by a seven-hour trek the second day, followed by a day of altitude acclimatisation at Zebra Rock.

Day four saw the party embark on the alpine terrain and the following day they started climbing at 11pm in order to reach the summit of Kilimanjaro at daybreak. They then progressed on to Uhuru peak for a further three hours before reaching the absolute summit at 7.30am.

The awesome sight of Africa's highest mountain, with glaciers circling is something Mary said she will never forget.

The group didn't sleep during the trek itself, which took approximately 18 hours.



Reaching their peak: Mary Cronin, Killarney (right) on Uhuru peak, Kilimanjaro, pictured with Ed McEntee, Belfast, and Geraldine Carty, Dublin.

"This is without doubt the most difficult challenge of my life, both physically and mentally exhausting, but absolutely worth every second of the adventure," said Mary.

Afterwards, she met with Elaine

Bannon who runs the Light of Maasai charity in Rombo, Kenya.

"I was fascinated by the amazing works being done for the people of Rombo, Kenya, by a lone Irish woman," added Mary.

"I then celebrated St Patrick's Day in Moshi, Tanzania, with my fellow trekkers and newfound friends, and ponder how lucky I am, and my family and friends, to live the life we do. I felt proud and privileged to be Irish."

Firies village gets what it was owed

AFTER years of living with foul smells and inadequate services, locals in Firies have been told they are to finally receive a modern sewerage treatment plant.

And according to Cllr Brendan Cronin, who lives in the parish, it is nothing less that they are owed after suffering for so long.

The signing of the €1.8 million contract document for the construction and operation of the new Firies treatment plant was described by Cllr Cronin as the single most important day in the parish for many years.

The contract between Kerry County Council, Bowen Construction and EPS Mallow is for the design, building and operating for the new plant.

"This is long overdue and it's something that I have been hammering on about for since I set foot in Kerry County Council," Cllr Cronin remarked.

"The previous Kerry County Manager, Martin Riordan, fast-tracked the project and now, at last, we have dry ink on the contracts," he added.

"In the 10 years that I have been on the council this in singularly one of the



Brendan Cronin: scheme.

most import projects for my parish," Cllr Cronin insisted.

"Kerry County Council has been playing catch-up. A lot of planning permission was granted but they never put in the infrastructure that was needed to go with it," he added.

"This new plant is owed to the people of Firies and it will mean an end to the desperate smells, seepage and breakdowns that have been causing so many problems for residents there," Cllr Cronin said.

Construction work on the new plant is expected to begin on site in the next eight to 10 weeks and all works must be completed within 18 months with the plant due to begin operating in Autumn 2010.



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