

Will you dance with me? Olympic-spirited Britons invited to join world's first dance from John o'Groats to Land's End

Submitted by: Dance Britain

Thursday, 30 August 2012

How far would you dance for charity? Ordinary teacher Ben Hammond has set out to become the first person to tackle the extraordinary challenge of dancing every step of the way from John o'Groats to Land's End (<http://www.dancebritain.com>). Shaking, shimmying and shuffling over a thousand miles until 13th October, 34-year old Ben is seeking great British dancers, dance-lovers and non-dancers like him to dance part of the iconic British route and help him accomplish a charity endeavour like no other.

Two weeks in and Ben has already danced 250 miles (<http://www.dancebritain.com/dance-britain-the-story-so-far>) through Scotland's windswept highlands and over the vast Cairngorms national park. So far he's been joined by troupes of cheerleaders, elderly keep fit classes, toddlers in tutus, fanatical Zumba instructors, freestyling school pupils, and even the odd Highland dancer with traditional Scottish piper accompaniment – not to mention the impromptu dances he's had with hundreds of locals and tourists in shops, hotels, bars, cafes, tour buses and thousands of supportive toots, waves and dancing jigs he's received from passing motorists. As he approaches Edinburgh and the borders he's on the lookout for more great dancing Britons to join him:

"Whether you join me to walk like an Egyptian through Edinburgh, Bollywood along the borders, streetdance through Salford, tango to Trafford, limbo through Liverpool, do the worm round Wolverhampton, ballet into Birmingham, kick the can-can around Cardiff, swing around Shepton Mallet or line dance all the way to Land's End, I'd love to dance with you!"

Ben's epic mission will see him dance the equivalent of 60 marathons in 60 days, take over three and a half million dance steps and consume the same daily calorie intake as Bradley Wiggins during the Tour de France. So far he's danced higher than ski lifts, up hills steeper than 20% and has already endured serious muscle strains and a recurrent bout of appendicitis.

Ben hopes the extreme effort is worth something, as he hopes to raise £50,000 to help build a better Burma through the work of five organisations including Amnesty International, the Burma Campaign UK and Ben's own educational charity LearnBurma. Ben is trying to use dance as a popular, engaging symbol of the freedoms we have but which have been denied to so many in Burma. It's a country he experienced first-hand as a refugee camp teacher in 2004/05 and which now has the best chance in a lifetime for real and lasting change.

Any like-minded dance-lovers, fitness fanatics, charity challenge addicts or fun-loving families and friends can join Ben at <http://www.dancebritain.com> (<http://www.dancebritain.com>).

Contact

Press enquiries - 0772 33 780 44 / press@dancebritain.com

Ben's direct line (when he's not dancing) - 07538 062797

Notes for Editors

- Ben Hammond is director of educational charity LearnBurma, lecturer at the Institute of Education (London) and a former teacher at Deptford Green School, south-east London.
- People can follow Ben's dancing adventures online at <http://www.dancebritain.com> - with short daily highlights films, live GPS mapping and regular tweets from his jiving hands.
- Journalists who wish to cover Dance Britain for Burma are welcome to join or interview Ben at any paved location along the route. See full details at <http://www.dancebritain.com>
- Ben's full route is published at <http://www.dancebritain.com/route>.
- Key locations include:
 - Edinburgh – Sat 01/09 1400-1800
 - Newcastle – Thurs 06/09 1900, Fri 07/09 0900
 - York – Mon 10/09 1900, Tues 11/09 0900
 - Leeds – Weds 12/09 1200-1500
 - Bradford – Weds 12/09 1700-1900
 - Manchester – Sat 15/09 1700-1900
 - Salford media city – Sun 16/09 0900-1200
 - Liverpool – Mon 17/09 1900, Tues 18/09 0900
 - Chester – Tues 18/09 1530
 - Birmingham – Sat 22/09 1700-2000, Sun 23/09 0900
 - Stratford upon Avon – Sun 23/09 1830, Mon 24/09 0900
 - Cardiff – Sat 29/09 0800-1900
 - Bristol – Mon 01/10 1800, Tues 02/10 0900
 - Bath – Tues 02/10 1400
 - Glastonbury – Weds 03/10 1900, Thurs 04/10 0900
 - Taunton – Thurs 04/10 1900, Fri 05/10 0900
 - Exeter – Sat 06/10 100-1800
 - Plymouth – Tues 09/10 1300
 - Penzance – Fri 12/10 1900, Sat 13/10 0730-1100
 - Land's End - Sat 13/10 1730-1930
- In 2011 Ben became the world's longest dancer (5 days, 15 hours, 15 minutes, at The Scoop at More London, October 11-16), in June danced through the Glastonbury Festival and earlier became the first person to ever dance the London Marathon.
- 'Dance Britain for Burma' is a fundraising and awareness-raising project organised by Ben's charity LearnBurma and supporting Amnesty International, Burma Campaign UK, LearnBurma, Partner's Relief and Development and Prospect Burma.