

# NEWS

Just In Politics World Business Sport Science Health Arts Analysis Fact Check More

## What our Everest adventure taught me and my son about life

By [Guy Stayner](#)

Posted April 26, 2018 04:40:42



PHOTO: Guy and Zack Stayner made it to Everest Base Camp a little later than first planned. (Supplied: Nalam Lama)

We finally made it — 189 days later than originally planned.

Set to a dichotomous soundtrack of yak bells mixed with helicopters echoing through the Khumbu Valley, we arrived at Everest Base Camp.

My son Zack and I were scheduled to be taking in the spectacular views of Mt Everest from Kala Patthar on September 30, 2017 — AFL grand final day.

But Zack and I had been long-suffering Richmond supporters, and an unexpected tilt at the title meant we nervously cashed in our Himalayan chips and [made a huge emotional investment in the Tigers that would pay a handsome dividend](#) last September.

**RELATED STORY:** [How my beloved Tigers' success left me with a grand dilemma](#)

**MAP:** [Nepal](#)



### UNSUPPORTED BROWSER

The browser you are using to view this page is no longer supported by ABC News. We recommend you update to a more modern browser.

[Find out more](#)

### TOP STORIES

- [Show us the money, says disability sector as Morrison scraps Medicare hike](#)
- ['Position is untenable': Shareholders Association calls for AMP chairman to resign](#)
- [These two common cancers are often detected in later stages](#)
- [Danish inventor sentenced to life for killing, dismembering journalist on submarine](#)
- [Opinion: Marvel movies have hijacked cinemas. Here's why they're here to stay](#)
- [What our Everest adventure taught me and my son about life](#)
- [Macron urges US to reject nationalism in speech to Congress](#)
- [Let me see my baby: How to talk about stillbirth and the death of a child](#)
- [Is fixed wireless congestion on the NBN getting you down? You're not alone](#)
- [Rise of instant loan machines sparks fears for low-income earners](#)
- ['Harry will be disappointed': Turnbull speaks on US ambassador switch](#)
- [Opinion: Inequality isn't getting worse, so why do we feel like it is?](#)
- [Farmers question the future of live sheep exports](#)
- [PNG Governor investigated over \\$1.2 million yoga contract](#)
- [Migrant 'caravan' starts to arrive at US border, Trump orders officials to repel them](#)
- [City of Perth to withdraw parking tickets issued to Anzac Day dawn service attendees](#)
- **SPORT** [Jamaican netball team 'extremely shocked' by Netball NZ's refusal to hand over trophy](#)
- [Analysis: We often hear about cannabis use and psychosis. So how strong is the risk?](#)
- ['A mighty people's navy': Beijing's first home-built aircraft carrier readies for maiden journey](#)

Get the headlines to your mobile. NEWS on Messenger



### CONNECT WITH ABC NEWS



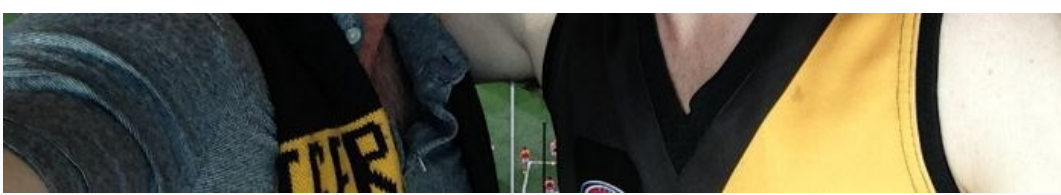


PHOTO: Guy and Zack are Tigers fans, and Richmond's success last year meant the Everest trek was postponed. (ABC News: Guy Stayner)

However, the dream of our father-son adventure did not die. We re-booked the trip for Easter 2018.

After hearing or reading about our story, many people contacted me wanting to know more about our trip.

It was a holiday inspired by my own boyhood adventure with my father, which left memories deeply etched into my then nine-year-old brain.

The idea of having a one-on-one holiday with your child seemed to be a lightbulb moment for many.

Some liked the idea so much they wanted details of our trip to help them plan their own similar adventure with their child.



PHOTO: Guy Stayner's story helped inspire Jane and Gabby Kanizay's mother-daughter trip. (ABC News: Guy Stayner)

Preparing to depart Melbourne Airport for our trip of a lifetime, I saw the mother of a boy Zack went to kindergarten with.

Jane Kanizay was taking her 14-year-old daughter, Gabby, on a mother-daughter trek to Everest Base Camp.

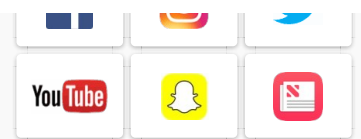
Jane is a Richmond supporter and had shared our story with her friends. She told me it helped inspire her own trek with Gabby.

Coincidentally, Jane and Gabby were booked on the same flights to Kathmandu, and our treks followed identical schedules.

We saw them nearly every day along the route.

Gabby Kanizay is now planning a climbing schedule she hopes will one day take her to the summit of Everest.

It's bizarre to think Richmond's premiership may have had a hand in turning her into a mountaineer.



News Podcasts  
Catch up with ABC News programs. 

**GOT A NEWS TIP? >**  
If you have inside knowledge of a topic in the news, [contact the ABC](#).

**NEWS IN YOUR INBOX**  
Top headlines, analysis, breaking news alerts

**ABC BACKSTORY >**  
ABC teams share the story behind the story and insights into the making of digital, TV and radio content.

**EDITORIAL POLICIES >**  
Read about our editorial guiding principles and the enforceable standard our journalists follow.



PHOTO: Zack Stayner shows off his excitement in front of the west face of Ama Dablam. (ABC News: Guy Stayner)

The sights of the Himalayas were breathtaking, and not just because we hiked to the thin air of 5,600m.

However, this trip wasn't just about sightseeing.

It was about a shared experience with a loved one and trying to overcome the adversities of extreme altitude and cold together.

It was also about education — introducing Zack to other cultures and life perspectives.

Each night he listened to the adventure tales of intrepid travellers from all over the world in the shared dining halls of the tea houses that line the trails.

Zack arguably learnt almost as much about life beyond Australia in 16 days as he had in his previous 16 years.



PHOTO: Guy and Zack saw porters carrying packs weighing more than 100 kilograms. (ABC News: Guy Stayner)

He spent 12 days with a Nepalese guide, Nalam Lama, who can speak three languages and thrashed both of us at cards each night with his near photographic memory.

Before becoming a guide, Nalam spent two years as a porter lugging 40kg loads strapped to his head.

We saw some porters carrying 100+ kilograms up and down the back-breaking slopes of the Himalayas.

Now Nalam spends weeks at a time away from home to support his wife and three children.

When Zack learnt guides like Nalam are paid about \$20 a day he also learnt something about privilege.





**PHOTO:** Zack and Guy's guide, Nalam Lama (centre), spends weeks away from home to earn an income in the mountains. (ABC News: Guy Stayner)

Intelligence and work ethic are just two of many variables that determine opportunity.

When Zack watched a three-year-old Nepalese boy lending a helping hand to a three-year-old Scandinavian girl to climb a concrete fence while both were giggling and talking different languages, it's impossible for him not to reason that prejudice is learned.

And when Zack watched 10 primary-school-aged children squealing with delight playing with spinning tops, the way children have done for hundreds of years, he observed joy is best shared and entertainment is not confined to a screen.

He noticed when yaks have to transport consumables up mountain paths, prices for necessities rise exponentially.

A litre of water that costs 25 cents in Kathmandu can cost \$5 near Base Camp, yet you can still get a chocolate bar for less than you pay at an ABC vending machine.

I knew this journey would be a coming-of-age tale for Zack. What I was less prepared for was the trip becoming an acknowledgement-of-age epiphany for me.

As Zack powered up steep climbs he would regularly look over his shoulder to check my progress.

He would offer his hand to help me up the steepest steps and would always ask if I was OK when hearing a rock sliding down the track — a sure sign of a misplaced step.

The transition of my role from care-giver to care-receiver has now begun and, unlike the trail to Base Camp, there can be no turning back.

It was impossible for either of us to watch Richmond's 2017 premiership without considering that we had forsaken a trip to Everest just for the chance of experiencing it.

While watching a spectacular sunrise over Mt Everest from Kala Patthar at 5,600m 189 days later, it was impossible not to also reminisce the Tigers' flag.

Two completely different adventures — forever linked.



**PHOTO:** The trip was a shared experience of overcoming adversity together. (Supplied: Nalam Lama)

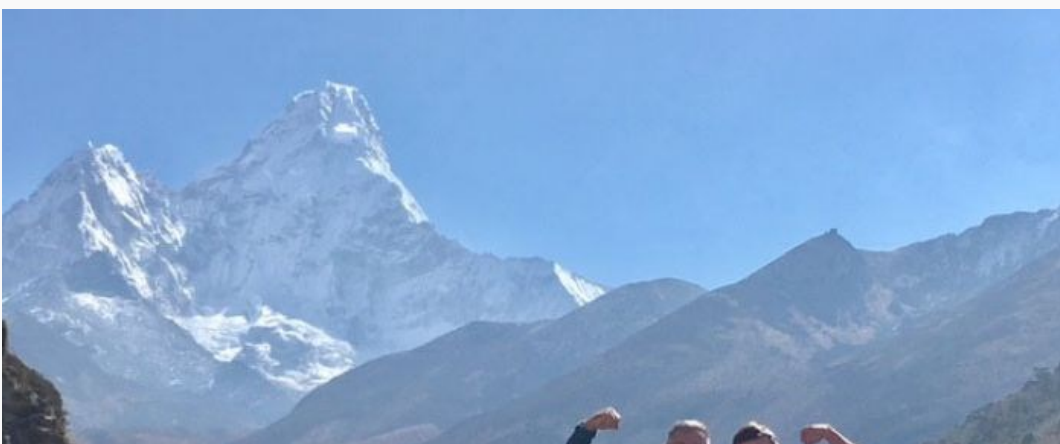




PHOTO: The Himalayan trek was postponed, but the father-son dream did not die. (Supplied: Nalam Lama)

Topics: [travel-and-tourism](#), [lifestyle-and-leisure](#), [community-and-society](#), [family-and-children](#), [family](#), [nepal](#), [melbourne-3000](#), [vic](#)

## FEATURES



### Brisbane execution sites

Brutal and undignified public hangings were supposed to send a warning that serious crimes would not be tolerated in Brisbane.



### 'Grief is grief'

The widows of two Australian soldiers say they received different levels of support because of how their husbands died.



### Forgotten nurses of war

As many Australians commemorate the diggers who served in WWI, other families remember the legacy of the nurses.



### Why do kids never seem to get tired?

Kids' muscles resist fatigue and recover from heavy exercise in a similar way to those of elite endurance athletes, a new study suggests.

## TOP STORIES

- [Show us the money, says disability sector as Morrison scraps Medicare hike](#)
- ['Position is untenable': Shareholders Association calls for AMP chairman to resign](#)
- [These two common cancers are often detected in later stages](#)
- [Danish inventor sentenced to life for killing, dismembering journalist on submarine](#)
- [Opinion: Marvel movies have hijacked cinemas. Here's why they're here to stay](#)
- [What our Everest adventure taught me and my son about life](#)
- [Macron urges US to reject nationalism in speech to Congress](#)
- [Let me see my baby: How to talk about stillbirth and the death of a child](#)
- [Is fixed wireless congestion on the NBN getting you down? You're not alone](#)
- [Rise of instant loan machines sparks fears for low-income earners](#)

## JUST IN

- [Students bask in the light of cost savings after a year of going solar](#)
- [China stakes claim on electric car market with 100 new models](#)
- [Rise of instant loan machines sparks fears for low-income earners](#)
- [Mentor group for overcoming eating disorders helping to stop readmission](#)
- [Chinese diplomats accused of illegally occupying a French Polynesian mansion](#)
- [Where did hangings and executions happen in Brisbane?](#)
- [Let me see my baby: How to talk about stillbirth and the death of a child](#)
- ['Crying shame' to lose app tracking visitors to Tasmania, tourism boss says](#)
- [Macron urges US to reject nationalism in speech to Congress](#)
- [Marvel movies have hijacked cinemas. Here's why they're here to stay](#)

## MOST POPULAR

- [French PM pays emotional tribute to diggers sacrificed on the Western Front](#)
- [When transgender pilot Ayla was invited to the last Royal wedding, all hell broke loose](#)
- [City of Perth to withdraw parking tickets issued to Anzac Day dawn service attendees](#)
- ['It sounded like fireworks': Girl, 13, shot in 'targeted' attack in western Sydney](#)
- [Both bereaved, both grieving — but these war widows got different support](#)
- [Jamaican netball team 'extremely shocked' by Netball NZ's refusal to hand over trophy](#)
- [Toronto police investigate 'incel' Facebook post after deadly van attack](#)
- ['A mighty people's navy': Beijing's first home-built aircraft carrier readies for maiden journey](#)
- [Messages of pride, love and sacrifice as Australia pauses to mark Anzac Day](#)
- [Medicare levy increase ditched, creating \\$8 billion NDIS shortfall](#)

## ANALYSIS & OPINION

- [Marvel movies have hijacked cinemas. Here's why they're here to stay](#)
- [Inequality isn't getting worse, so why do we feel like it is?](#)
- [The problem with an outright ban on plastic straws](#)
- [We often hear about cannabis use and psychosis. So how strong is the risk?](#)
- [The banking royal commission is damaging reputations, but is it enough?](#)
- [The surprise packets of the AFL — West Coast and the Kangaroos](#)
- ['Tremendous energy, tremendous intellect': Trump's trusted choice is one step closer to confirmation](#)
- [It's time we got a personal income tax cut — here's why](#)
- [The AFL's Anzac Day clash is a great tradition, but share it around to make it better](#)
- [Imams shouldn't be judge, jury and relationship counsellor for marriages](#)

## SITE MAP

### Sections

[ABC News](#)  
[Just In](#)  
[Australia](#)  
[World](#)  
[Business](#)  
[Entertainment](#)  
[Sport](#)  
[Analysis & Opinion](#)  
[Weather](#)  
[Topics](#)

### Local Weather

[Sydney Weather](#)  
[Melbourne Weather](#)  
[Adelaide Weather](#)  
[Brisbane Weather](#)  
[Perth Weather](#)  
[Hobart Weather](#)  
[Darwin Weather](#)  
[Canberra Weather](#)

### Local News

[Sydney News](#)  
[Melbourne News](#)  
[Adelaide News](#)  
[Brisbane News](#)  
[Perth News](#)  
[Hobart News](#)  
[Darwin News](#)  
[Canberra News](#)

### Media

[Video](#)  
[Audio](#)  
[Photos](#)

### Subscribe

[Podcasts](#)  
[RSS Feeds](#)  
[NewsMail](#)

### Connect

[Upload](#)  
[Contact Us](#)

