

# RANDBURG SPORT

## THE STONE SENTINEL

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He is 15 years old and reportedly the youngest South African to have summited Aconcagua, the highest peak in South America at 6 962m and one of the seven summits.

Jayson Funnell, took part in the climb as part of a 12-man South African expedition, which included his father, Raymond Funnell.

His mother Lynne said, "The aim of this adventure was to raise awareness and encourage people to become blood donors and join the SA bone marrow registry, run by the Sunflower Fund.

Armed with a banner promoting the cause, Funnell continued the climb, despite his father's flagging energy. "My dad said he was too tired to continue as he was worried he might not have enough energy for the downward journey. I carried on with the remaining members of the team to complete the mission.

"The final 262m was very tiring and took three hours to climb. I was relieved and happy to reach the summit."

Lynne added, "Raymond owes his life to a bone marrow transplant and more than 50 blood transfusions from 2006 to 2008 in his long battle with acute myeloid leukaemia. During his illness, he and Jayson would talk about one day climbing a mountain together. We had to wait five years but it was worth it."

Jayson said, "I started climbing about nine months ago when my dad invited me to join him on this massive adventure. His intention was to climb the highest peak in each continent.

"In July last year, we climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, which is also the highest peak in Africa and we reached its summit."

The father and son team will travel to Russia to climb Mount Elbrus the highest peak in Europe, in July.



The team that made it to the top.  
Inset: Jayson Funnell with King Edward school flag at summit of Aconcagua.