

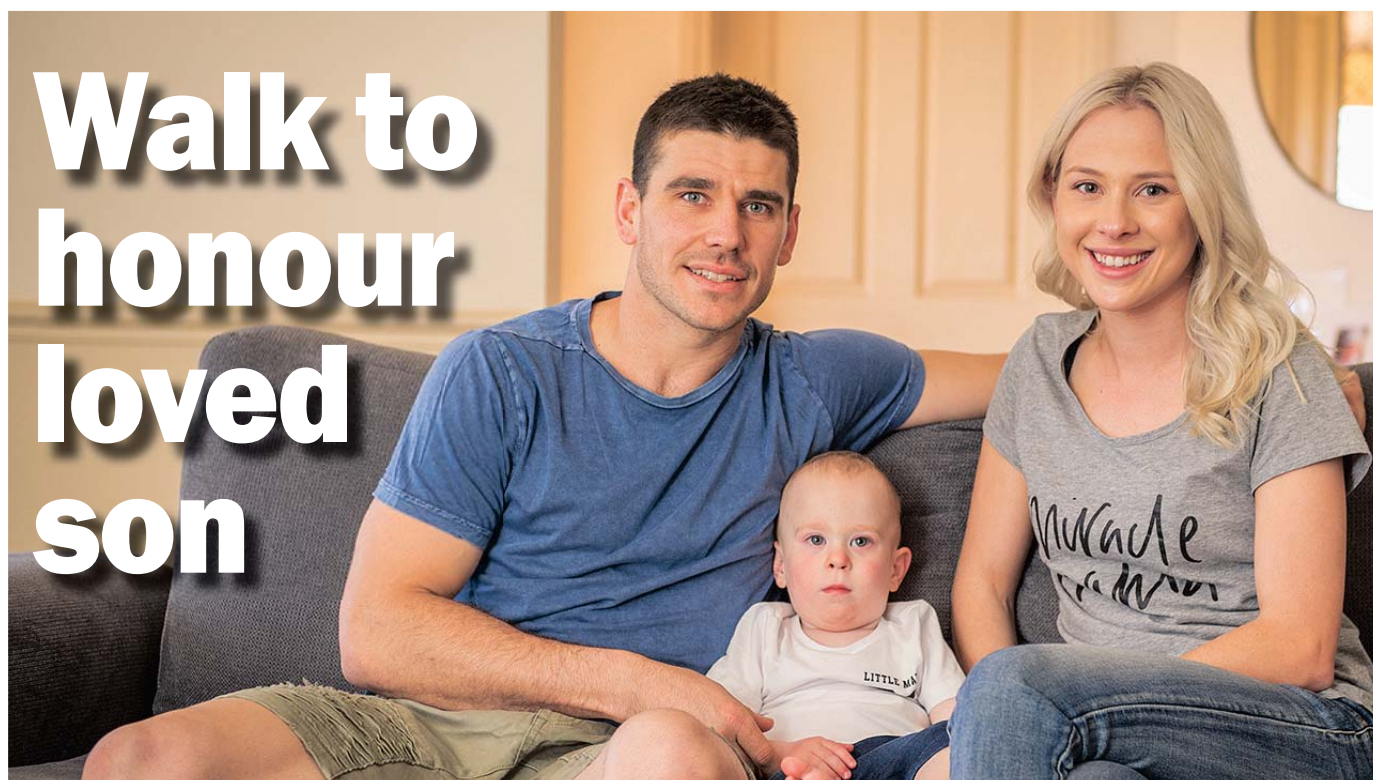


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Walk to honour loved son

Sunraysia Daily, Mildura

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Ben and Courtney Camilleri, who will take part in the 10th annual Walk for Prems, with young son Cohen.

By Danielle Meddemmen

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THE Camilleri family will walk side by side at the 10th annual Walk for Prems in Melbourne this October, in loving memory of their son Harrison.

Two years ago Courtney and Ben Camilleri were excited to be expecting twins, but their whole world was “turned upside down” when Courtney went into early labour at 22 weeks into her pregnancy.

An emergency transport service took Courtney into Melbourne the following afternoon, after she had held off her labour under advice from doctors.

“She held on and held on because she was at 22 weeks and seven days and life isn’t viable at that stage,” Ben said.

“So it was a case of having to hold on until the next day which she did”.

After arriving in Melbourne and being transported to the hospital, Courtney started giving birth to

their first son, Harrison.

“Pretty much as soon as she got into the hospital she gave birth to our first born Harrison, who passed away at four-days old,” Ben said.

Nine minutes later Cohen was born weighing in at 495 grams – he was incubated from birth, on a ventilator for five months, and it marked the beginning of their journey of caring for a premature baby.

After spending the first five months of his life in hospital, having 27 blood transfusions and being diagnosed with chronic lung disease, Ben and Courtney said Cohen’s journey could have been much worse.

“He is slightly delayed which is expected but for all the things that you could expect,” Ben said.

“We have had a few little issues along the way but nothing compared to what some of the families have to go through.”

Courtney describes the journey

as a ‘rollercoaster’ and one that wouldn’t be possible without the support of volunteers and charities like The Little Treasures Foundation.

“Especially when you’re first into that journey, they are really there to set you up, support you and prepare you for what is to

come,” she said. “You are given so much information; even booklets with definitions of all the medical terms you just didn’t even know were out there”.

Although the couple agree having a premature baby isn’t something anyone could be prepared for, Courtney says making the most of those foundations and resources is the best thing you can do.

“That is probably the biggest advice; you have to make use of that. You can’t shut the outside world off; you have to use those resources,” she said.

The family’s participation in the Walk for Prems this year is about



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giving back after all of the support they had received.

“Without the support everyone

gave us, we wouldn't have gotten what we went through,” Ben said.

“If we can raise a little bit of money and help the next family out who goes through what we went through, that would be the main goal.”

The 5km Walk for Prems will be on October 27 in Melbourne, and the Camilleri family has been overwhelmed with the support they have already received.

If you would like to donate towards the Camilleri family and help The Little Treasure Foundations, visit the website: <https://secure.lifesslittletreasuresfundraising.com.au/registrant/TeamFundraisingPage.aspx?teamID=115455#&panel1-2>