

Nigel and b-airs go up in my estimation

I'VE heard of some wonderful ideas to raise money for charity in my time but none quite as hair-raising - or should I say bear-raising - as the one by Nigel Willson.

Big-hearted Nigel decided he was going to take nearly 50 teddy bears up in a light aircraft with each one sponsored for the Ipswich Children's Hospice Appeal.

Nct so much Dambusters, more Prambusters you might say.

Aryway I've discovered this highly-original concept has led to the children and adults of Burlington Baptist Church, London Road, Ipswich, collecting an amazing £750.

They took off from Crowfield Airfield with the bear-devils, sorry, dare-devils, sitting tight as Nigel, of Bullen Lane, Bramford, performed his acrobatics over Suffolk.

The teddies' owners remained on the ground enjoying a church picnic at Vauxhall Farm, near Chattisham, while watching the Ted Arrows looping the loop overhead.

For some the tension was almost too much to bear, although eventually all the teddies returned safe and sound.

The idea came after Nigel - a manager with BT - heard of another charity event a few weeks earlier.

"About a month ago there were some teddies doing parachute jumps off a church tower somewhere and it was a natural progression from that," explained the 35-year-old.



IT'S LORD TED-DER! Well it's Nigel and his furry aviators, really Picture: CP

"The flight went down very well. There were some fairly ancient teddies aboard, but none of them were sick!"

With their mission complete the intrepid teddies each received a certificate for the Burlington Extrovert Aerobatic Reserves (BEAR) Society, before going off for a well-earned rest.

Top man that Nigel Willson, if you ask me.

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If you've got an off-beat story for me, write to: Matthew Tacket, Evening Star, 30 Lower Brook St, Ipswich. IP4 1AN or call me on (01473) 282257

