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Blind CRC student Billy Baxter dresses in drag for Children in Need

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Cambridge Regional College adult student Billy Baxter caused a sensation when he turned up for lessons in full drag – but it was all in the best possible cause.

Former army staff sergeant Billy, who is blind, donned pink false eyelashes and stilettos to transform himself into Miss Belinda Bat to help raise money for Children in Need during a day of fundraising at the College, which included students and staff entering the Cambridge Fun Run and others boosting funds with cake stalls.

Helping him in the transformation was media make-up student Penny Green, 17, who adorned the burly ex-soldier with gem-encrusted eyebrows and purple eye shadow.

Forty-five year-old Billy, who is studying performing arts at the College, is a seasoned entertainer who plays in burlesque and does a stand-up routine – which he describes as scarier than anything he ever encountered in the army.

A self-confessed adrenaline junkie, he lost his sight nine years ago after a rare virus destroyed the optic nerves in both eyes. But he refused to let it conquer him.

“I wanted to use my disability for good,” said Billy, who lives in Ely. “I’m part of a blind theatre group and I do burlesque and stand-up, I’m an after-dinner speaker and raise money for charity. I love it.”

It's not all he's done: he's driven a motorbike at over 160 miles an hour, starred on TV's "Top Gear", worked as a stuntman and run marathons – all since becoming blind!

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MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

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