

They are both angels



WHEN Barbara Richardson's beloved pooch died, she got his name tattooed on her arm.

But after a lengthy wait at a tattoo studio, and being persuaded by people to go for something bigger, Barbara walked out with a tattoo that she hated.

The 52-year-old of Washington said: "I loved Kilo and wanted something to remember him by, so went for his name and a little paw print tattoo. But when I was sitting in the studio I got talking to some younger people who said I should get a larger tattoo. I walked out with a big flower, with Kilo's name in it, and a paw print beside it.

I hated it."

Barbara kept on telling herself that she would get used to her new marking, but after a few weeks she became self conscious and started covering it up.

"I knew I'd made a silly mistake. I don't regret getting the tattoo but I should never have got it on my arm, where the whole world can see it.

"I was embarrassed about it."

The final straw came when Barbara went into hospital last year for a knee replacement.

She said: "I felt really humiliated that I had my dog's



name on my arm. I was 51 with this horrible tattoo and everyone kept staring at it.

"I decided that enough was enough and I started having laser surgery to remove it."

Disappointed with the results, Barbara says that it wasn't until she saw an advert in the Echo about tattoo removal expert Barry Crake that she felt a glimmer of hope.

Barry, who runs Roker-based Bellissimo North East, offers free tattoo removals to people who are unemployed and can't find work because visible marks on their hands, neck and face.

His also helps people who have been left scarred through tattoo removal treatment, victims of domestic violence

who have a tattoo of their former partner's name and cancer patients left with a radiotherapy mark

"I read about Barry and the work he carried out but because my tattoo was on my arm, and I wasn't trying to get back into work, I didn't think he would entertain me. I was wrong.

"When I met with Barry he was amazing, and he explained that after a number of treatments my tattoo would be gone. I've never felt so good before."

Barbara is now looking forward to her second treatment with Barry this weekend.

She said: "What Barry and his wife, Michelle, do for the people of Sunderland is a god send. They are both angels.

"It's my nephew's christening in May and I can't wait to wear a nice blouse and not have to think about covering up my arm."

Barry, with his wife, has also launched free permanent eyebrows for people who are unemployed who have alopecia or who have lost hair due to chemotherapy.

Barry said: "Things are going absolutely fantastic and we've had loads of calls and emails from people. We want people to remember that we are here to help them, and our door is always open."

To find out more about Barry's offer ring free on 0800 0845 047. You can also email barry@bellissimo-ne.co.uk or visit www.bellissimo-ne.co.uk

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