Cancer Survivor Marks 11 Years in Remission With Charity Trek to Machu Picchu

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A Greenock grandmother is preparing to take on the trek of a lifetime to celebrate 11 years in remission from breast cancer and she's doing it to raise money for amputees across Scotland.

Elizabeth MacKenzie, co-founder of Wet Wall Works and Bathroom Elegance, will soon head to Peru with her husband Alister and their son Stuart to walk the 26-mile Inca Trail to Machu Picchu. The family is taking on the four-day trek in support of *Finding Your Feet*, Scotland's leading charity supporting people affected by amputation or limb absence.

Liz was diagnosed with triple negative breast cancer in March 2014, a more aggressive form of the disease with fewer treatment options and a higher risk of recurrence. She says:

> *"It was a shock. I'm only here today because of my early diagnosis. I found a lump early and did something about it."*

She was 50 at the time, teaching at Clydeview Academy in Inverclyde, and underwent a mastectomy and six rounds of chemotherapy. The experience was life-changing, both physically and emotionally.

> *"It was gruelling. You also have the fear of the cancer coming back. Psychologically, trying to return to work was very difficult. I felt I couldn't cope physically. I had lost all my hair, and emotionally I lost all my confidence."*

Liz eventually decided to step away from teaching and, with her husband, launched Wet Wall Works alongside the family's existing business, Bathroom Elegance. Since then, her journey has become one of resilience, gratitude, and giving back.

Each year, Liz has hosted a garden party with other survivors, ringing a brass bell once for every year in remission. This year, she rang it 11 times — and decided to do something even bigger to mark the milestone.

> *"I never thought I would be doing this 10 years later. Surviving cancer changed my life. You become more grateful for what you have, and you become more aware of your own mortality."*

The trek will see Liz, Alister, and Stuart camp overnight, hike 10km a day, and reach altitudes of over 4,200m.

> *"It will be quite a challenge. The high altitude and the humidity will be the worst thing. We'll be camping out overnight and walking around 10km a day. We've got a Guiding and Scouting background, and we love the outdoors. I'm sure it will be fine."*

The family is proudly sponsoring the trek through their businesses so that **every penny raised goes directly to Finding Your Feet**.

Liz chose FYF after connecting with the charity's founder, quadruple amputee *Cor Hutton*, during a holiday in Dubrovnik. Cor, who lost both hands and feet after sepsis and later became the first person in the UK to receive a double hand transplant, created the charity to support others facing limb loss.

> *"You realise how precious life is. Just being here for my granddaughter Charley is so important. She is the apple of my eye."*

> *"I think the secret is having a positive mindset. That helped me get through my cancer treatment. Having a positive mindset is not just a cliché."*

Hundreds of people in Scotland lose a limb every year, often through cancer, diabetes, trauma, sepsis, vascular disease, accidents, addiction or meningitis. *Finding Your Feet* offers vital support through peer communities, emotional wellbeing support, fitness clubs, and opportunities for people to rebuild confidence and connection after amputation.

The trek is being self-funded so all donations go directly to support amputees across Scotland.

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