

## **ANTHONY TREKS TO LOST INCA CITY FOR CHARITY**

**In September 2017, NARPO member Anthony Mattick (Rtd. DS195) embarked on a trip of a lifetime by trekking the famous Inca trail to Machu Picchu in Peru to raise money for the Velindre Cancer Centre.**



*Anthony with Machu Picchu in the background*

This was no ordinary feat, as Anthony first had to regain fitness following a serious road collision in June 2012, when he was knocked from his bike whilst cycling to his home in Saundersfoot from work at FHQ, Carmarthen. He sustained multiple fractures and internal bleeding which led to him being airlifted to Cardiff by Wales Air Ambulance for life saving treatment.

Whilst recuperating at the Heath Hospital he received many visitors, one of them being life-long friend, comedian & TV / Radio Presenter, Rhod Gilbert. Anthony and Rhod grew up together in Carmarthen until the late 1980's when Anthony joined Dyfed-Powys Police and was posted to Pembrokeshire.

It's at his hospital bedside that Rhod first made a pact that the two of them would go on a sponsored walk together - Anthony, had previously been involved with several fundraising events that raised over £75,000.

Rhod has been a patron for the Velindre Cancer Hospital in Cardiff since 2012 and undertaken several treks world-wide to raise funds. Unfortunately, due to his injuries, Anthony retired from Dyfed-Powys Police in 2013 on health grounds and was unable to accompany Rhod on his adventures as he hadn't returned to full fitness.

During their annual school friends reunion held on Christmas Eve 2016, Rhod told Anthony in no uncertain terms that he was getting fed up with him failing to keep his side of the agreement and wouldn't take no for an answer! So, they agreed to take part in the 2017, Velindre Cancer Centre Fundraising trek to Machu Picchu.



*Rhod Gilbert (centre) flanked by Diego Fabra and Anthony (right)*

As part of the fundraising for the trek, Anthony assisted Rhod with a live performance at The Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff. 2,000 tickets went on sale and quickly sold out - over £80,000 was raised from the evening.

In addition, the week before departing for Pachuu Picchu, Rhod travelled to Saundersfoot where a charity quiz night was held in the village hall and a further £7,000 was raised.

The arduous trek at altitude was a chance in a life time experience for Anthony who had been unable to carry out extensive pre-training routines owing to on-going physical issues. Almost 50 people took part in the trek, the majority of which had been impacted in some form or another by cancer. Following the group's fund raising efforts the magnificent sum of £420,000 was raised for the centre.

The trek started in the heart of the Urubamba Valley and followed in the footsteps of the Incas, passing snow capped mountains and glacial peaks. The trek ended at the lost city of Machu Picchu, Peru's most famous Inca ruin, which had been abandoned to the forest for over 500 years.

Needless to say the trek was extremely challenging and even though he managed to complete the trek, several weeks later Anthony still feels like an octogenarian!

After retiring from the Police with 25 years service, Anthony has taken a change in career and now works at Ysgol Greenhill School, Tenby where he is the Behavioural & Pastoral Care Manager. He thoroughly enjoys the new challenge - working with young people from the Tenby and Saundersfoot communities.

Anthony is also involved in local politics and is the current Chairman of Saundersfoot Community Council.