# Kelly Butler’s cancer wig toss symbolises empowerment at Courage on the Catwalk event



The recent "Courage on the Catwalk" event held at P&J Live proved to be a spectacular evening of defiance, glamour, and community spirit, leaving a vibrant mark on the north-east. Nothing encapsulated the night more vividly than the poignant moment when Kelly Butler, a 34-year-old model from Countesswells, tossed her cancer wig into the audience. This unscripted act elicited thunderous cheers, transforming a symbol of struggle into one of empowerment and joy. As fellow model Jovi Fawcett expressed, the surprise element mirrored the very essence of Courage, showcasing how confronting cancer can be both liberating and uplifting.

This year, the event celebrated its class of 2025, featuring 23 women — each with their own battle against cancer — as they took to the runway, dazzling an audience of over 900 with a blend of style and choreography. Months of dedication in rehearsals nestled within the backdrop of personal trials bore fruit as these women not only revealed their resilience but also reshaped the narrative around their illness. Mhairi Anderson, one of the models and a 51-year-old diagnosed with stage 3 renal cancer, shared a heartfelt reflection on her experience, stating, "It’s been the best thing I’ve ever, ever done."

The evening culminated in an impressive fundraising total of £118,000, set to benefit cancer and haematology support services in the region, including the Friends of Anchor’s new Anchor Centre, anticipated to open next year at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. This financial success adds to the cumulative impact of previous events, with this year's efforts already raising nearly £300,000 when combined with earlier shows, underscoring the community's generosity and support.

The emotional breadth of the evening extended beyond finances. It was also a moment of collective remembrance as the audience paid tribute to Lynn Staite, a model who had tragically passed away before the event. Lynn's family reflected on her vibrant spirit and love for the arts, highlighting how events like this serve as powerful reminders of both the trials and triumphs that cancer patients face. Such sentiments were echoed by Friends of Anchor host Erica Banks, who noted the significance of Lynn's legacy carried forward by the models.

For many participants, the event wasn't merely a chance to raise funds; it was a transformative experience that offered renewed confidence and a sense of belonging. Lisa Wilke, a breast cancer survivor, described the adrenaline of the night as exhilarating, while her husband recognised the wig toss as a particularly memorable highlight. The camaraderie among the models, fuelled by shared journeys and mutual support, painted a fuller picture of resilience.

The narrative emerging from "Courage on the Catwalk" serves as a poignant raise of awareness not just for the challenges faced by those with cancer but also for the collective courage required to confront it. The forthcoming "Brave" event, aimed at male models, promises to continue this rich tradition of storytelling and empowerment within the community. Applications for next year's Courage and Brave events are now open, inviting more voices into this space of hope and resilience, ensuring that stories of courage continue to be celebrated by all.

As the community reflects on the achievements and emotional echoes from this year's shows, it's clear that events like "Courage on the Catwalk" are vital not just for their fundraising impact but for nurturing a supportive network that truly understands the journey through illness and back to the runway of life.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2. Paragraphs 2, 3, 4
3. Paragraph 2
4. Paragraphs 2, 3
5. Paragraph 3, 4, 5
6. Paragraph 5
7. Paragraph 2

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/6754236/courage-on-the-catwalk-brings-sass-shine-and-an-unforgettable-wig-toss-to-pj-live/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.aberdeenlive.news/news/aberdeen-news/aberdeen-charity-raises-nearly-300k-7076971> - Aberdeen Live reports that the 'Courage on the Catwalk' event raised £293,000 for the Friends of Anchor charity. The event featured cancer survivors from the north-east showcasing their style, marking the charity's first catwalk shows after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds will support cancer and haematology patients in the region.
3. <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/lifestyle/health-and-wellbeing/6474694/courage-on-the-catwalk-2024-pj-live/> - The Press and Journal details the 2024 'Courage on the Catwalk' event held at P&J Live, Aberdeen's largest venue. The show featured 24 models, all women from the north-east with personal experiences of cancer, performing in front of over 900 attendees. The event raised nearly £200,000, contributing to the Anchor appeal's goal of raising £2 million for the new Anchor Centre.
4. <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/aberdeen-aberdeenshire/5423161/friends-of-anchor-reveals-local-stars-for-courage-on-the-catwalk-2023/> - The Press and Journal introduces the 2023 'Courage on the Catwalk' models, a group of 24 women aged 19 to 77 from across the north-east. Each participant has faced a cancer or haematology diagnosis and aims to give back to Friends of Anchor. The event is set to take place at Aberdeen's Beach Ballroom in May 2023, with all funds raised supporting the Anchor appeal.
5. <https://www.grampianonline.co.uk/news/courage-on-the-catwalk-and-brave-fashion-shows-raise-360k-f-351453/> - Grampian Online reports that the 'Courage on the Catwalk' and 'Brave' fashion shows collectively raised £360,000 for the Friends of Anchor charity. The events, held at P&J Live, featured models from Aberdeenshire, Moray, Aberdeen, and Orkney, each sharing their personal stories of battling cancer. The funds will support cancer and haematology patients in the region.
6. <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/past-times/3130084/courage-on-the-catwalk-and-brave-aberdeen-events-highlight-real-people-fighting-cancer/> - The Press and Journal highlights the 'Courage on the Catwalk' and 'Brave' events in Aberdeen, emphasizing the real-life stories of individuals fighting cancer. The events, supported by the Balmoral Group and Friends of Anchor, have collectively raised over £1 million since their inception in 2013, with all funds directed to supporting cancer patients and their families.
7. <https://friendsofanchor.org/index.php/news/cotc-line-up-announced> - Friends of Anchor announces the 2023 'Courage on the Catwalk' line-up, featuring 24 women aged 19 to 77 from across the north-east. Each participant has faced a cancer or haematology diagnosis and aims to give back to Friends of Anchor. The event is set to take place at Aberdeen's Beach Ballroom in May 2023, with all funds raised supporting the Anchor appeal.