

Felix Fund News – Summer 2016

Supporting bomb disposal and search personnel and their families from all British Army Regiments
Royal Navy Clearance Divers, Royal Air Force and the UK Counter Terrorism Command

Hitting the Streets



Our team is ready and waiting for the London 10K on 10 July 2016 and thank you to all those who have signed up.

You can support the team with a donation through our Just Giving page:

<https://www.justgiving.com/felixfund/>

London Marathon

Staying with subject of running the streets of London. Chris Wilcock and Sam Arksey, both ran the London Marathon for Felix Fund back in April. Chris came in at a fantastic 3.3hrs while Sam (battling food poisoning and being rather ill during the run) came in at 5 hrs.

Congratulations and well done, they raised well over £3,000 for the charity between them.



Exercise GREEN HUCKER 2

Report from LCpl Tom Chrusciel.

This was the second annual Intelligence Corps Snowboarding Championships. As Intelligence Corps is my cap badge 11 EOD Regiment allowed me to attend the Exercise. The aim was to train up all levels of snowboarders with the intention of having a slopestyle and slalom competition over the last couple of days. We were split into our relevant groups based on ability and began tuition with local Austrian snowboard instructors. The instruction was fantastic; we were pushed but it was still enjoyable. The competition was a great chance to display the skills we had learnt and in line with the name of the trip 'huck' ourselves off jumps and try not land on our heads. On one particular attempt I was fortunate to protect my body from a harsh impact by landing directly on my face. Overall it was a great trip and I thank Felix Fund and 11 EOD Regiment for supporting me.



It was a lively evening of good food, plenty of wine and lots of laughs. Col Adam McRae, Felix Fund Trustee and Ken Falke, Chairman of the EOD Warrior Foundation reminded us in their speeches of why we were there - raising funds for the two charities.



We are thrilled to announce that the evening raised approx. £45K which will be split equally. Plans are already underway for a return fixture in Washington DC in 2018.



(Pictured above Lee McKenzie, MC for the evening, Mark Lancaster, MP and Patron of Felix Fund and The Hon Matthew Barzun, US Ambassador.)

Rollercoaster Ride

On an early Sunday morning, families eagerly gathered for what was to be an exciting trip to one of the UK's best known attractions, "Alton Towers". The trip was intended to create an opportunity for the families of both EOD Regiments based at Carver Barracks to enjoy a much needed boost to community cohesion and create lasting memories for families who still spend vast amounts of time away from loved ones. When we arrived all seemed to have unique agendas –adults and teenagers were looking forward to adrenaline pumping rides, whilst younger children were in awe of their surroundings. Due to the day being specifically for service personnel it was less busy than an average weekend. This, coupled with the beautiful sunshine, meant that the families were all having a day to remember! After 6 hours of fun the coach arrived to pick up the families and return to Carver Barracks. Upon returning everyone was appreciative of this community day trip. Furthermore, it was important that the families had been recognised for the sacrifice and commitment they make to the EOD community and the important role they play. The trip wouldn't have been possible without the help of the Felix Fund and both Regiments would like to extend their gratitude for understanding and creating a memorable occasion for all.



Felix Fund's New Website

In early May Felix Fund launched a new website. We hope that this gives a clearer picture of the type of help we give and who we are here to support. Scan the code below to visit www.felixfund.org.uk.



Make Your Donations go Further

Each year there are a large number of gift aid forms which cannot be used because they have been filled in incorrectly or are illegible.

Gift Aid increases a charitable donation by 25p for every £1 which can add up to £1,000's over the year for Felix Fund.

If you are a UK taxpayer we can claim Gift Aid on your donations but please complete your form with care.

Working with SSAFA

Felix Fund was very pleased to be able to work with SSAFA recently to help purchase a replacement stair lift for a former RE bomb disposal veteran.



Exercise FELIX EAGLE

Having supported 11 EOD Regt RFC since its revival in 2014, the Felix Fund was able to catch up with the team at a recent training session to find out how their sports tour to the USA went.

The newly erected rugby posts cast a shadow over the now official training ground for 11 EOD RFC. Kicking practice is being relished by a few of the backs but the majority of people are just milling around and catching up. It's been a couple months since Ex FELIX EAGLE; the deployment of the Regimental Rugby Team to the USA. Everybody looks just about recovered but a few injuries are still evident!

Major Eamon Heakin Bronze Star, QGM Bar, arrives and immediately the team start to form up for a brief. It's a gritty brief and gets straight down to the business of the team's future. It is clear that the team are now focusing on a summer of sevens and preparation for the 2016/17 season.

As the team break away to train, I manage to interrupt a few for a quick chat. First up is the team's youngest player at 21, LCpl Tim Styles. I jump right in with the key question, 'how was Ex FELIX EAGLE'.

Tim doesn't even have to ponder this question with a smile hitting his face instantly, 'Singularly the most incredible experience of my life. Getting out and about in America was a huge thing for me. It's a place I have always wanted to visit and the tour really made the most of our time there. We visited places like Alcatraz, which I would have never considered going to, and the rugby was second to none.'

The effort made by the American teams to welcome us, the quality of pitches and stadiums we played at was as good as any ground over here in the UK. It really was a once in a lifetime opportunity.'

'I hear that you got awarded man of the match out there.'

'I did which was a shock and an honour when the whole team was playing such strong rugby. The style of rugby out there is what made it so refreshing and enjoyable.'



'I note some of the players still carry injuries, is this a direct reflection?'

'Yes the Americans are big lads and they conduct less tactical kicking and more charging with their head down. Each match was tough fought from the onset with some huge hits going in.' Tim points to one of the guys on the side line. 'I saw LCpl Pyne take a knock to his head by a guy in San Francisco which left him seeing stars and a bit shaken up. He's still not quite recovered. This was just the style they played and the atmosphere on the pitch was as good as it gets.'

LCpl Roberts comes over for this thoughts. I pitch him a question from a different perspective, 'What did you get from this tour other than the challenges rugby naturally presents'.

'A lot more than I had expected. Rugby is an increasingly popular sport out there. They are currently running a kick start programme that takes the sport around the country, visiting schools in deprived areas to teach the benefits of the sport. Whilst we were in the area, we assisted in the session. Having a full team in livery and showing various set pieces before a little training session that was extremely well received by the kick start team and the schools. It's just embarrassing

when I fail to get my hands on the little critters in a game of touch. All in all, this part of the tour was really rewarding as we were helping bring sport to the local communities.'



It is clear this team has developed hugely since their first season in 2014/15. As the guys take a water break I grab the team captain Lee Ebsworth to get his take on the whole tour.

'Well firstly, it was a huge success. 11 EOD Regt is a busy unit and one of the few units currently conducting operations 24/7. Finding the time, will power from the team and unprecedented support from the chain of command is incredible. This factor is then amplified when you consider we managed to get 30 players to the states to play rugby. '

'What was the biggest challenge in getting the team out to the USA.'

'It was very simply the financial burden. The majority of the team is made up of junior soldiers so we had to source funding in order to make it attainable for them. The Army Sports Lottery, Felix Fund and the Regiment got us off to a great start but it was really the civilian companies support that unlocked not only the tour but the entirety of the season

for us. We had help from ISSEE, Thales, and our tour sponsor Kirintec.

'Ok and finally give us one standout moment.'

Word got around about us quite quickly as the rugby community out there is nothing less than enthusiastic. We were invited by international referee, Leah Berard to the first professional championship rugby match in San Francisco. At half time the whole team was called up onto the pitch for recognition for our service. I think it caught a lot of the younger lads off guard but definitely something that will stick with them.'



Leaving a Legacy to Felix

Many charitable services would not exist without money left in wills. Yet only 5% of people actually provide for them in this way. A legacy costs nothing now but can make the world of difference in the future.

The tragedy is that while the number of people making charitable wills remains low, the number of people relying on them continues to increase. The result is funds available from legacies are being split between ever more charities.

Making a Will not only helps your favoured causes but relieves family and friends of many of the legal difficulties that can be encountered without one.

Each October a scheme is run where people can make a Will free of charge. For more information about this visit www.freewillsmoonth.org.uk.

How to Include Felix Fund in your Will

Making or changing a Will does not have to be hard work or expensive. We have produced a rough guide on Making a Will to help which is available from our website or on request to Melanie Moughton at 07713 752901 or email melanie@felixfund.org.uk.

This is not comprehensive and Felix Fund strongly advises that professional legal advice is sought.

Waddie's One Man Challenge



(Pictured above tackling the Hadrian's Wall run)

For 2016 Waddie will be taking on a number of challenges to raise money for Felix Fund, some of which he has never taken part in before.

- 12 March, The Suffering near Kettering. 22-mile obstacle race.
- 7 May, Dirty Weekend, Stamford. 20 miles 200 obstacles. He completed it last year so he did it twice in one day this year. 40 miles 400 obstacles.
- 18 June, The Wall run 69 miles across Hadrian's wall.
- 1-3 July, The Crossing. Mountain bike 200miles across the north of England.
- 17 July, Bolton Ironman 2.4-mile (3.86 km) swim, a 112-mile (180.25 km) bicycle ride and a marathon 26.2-mile (42.2 km) run.
- 13 Aug, River Race London 10 km in water.
- 10-11, Sept Coast to Coast run, bike and kayak 105 miles across Scotland.
- and finally 3 Sept, Man v Mountain run 20 miles over Snowdon.

This is an amazing one-man challenge so please support him at

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Waddie-Challenge>.

Redwings Rugby Tour



Back in May a team from Carver Barracks, departed on a 10-day rugby tour to Florida. The tour consisted of 3 games against local teams, as well as Redwings supporting the Invictus Games in Orlando.

The team touched down in Miami and went straight into 24 hours of preparation for the first match against Boca Raton RFC. Suffering from jet-lag and adapting to the severe increase in temperatures and humidity, Redwing RFC's abilities were put to the test early on. The squad rotation and domination of the set piece saw Boca Raton reach a 31-19 win over Redwing RFC.

With the taste of defeat still in their mouths, Redwings went into 48hrs of recovery and training to prepare for the next game against Miami RFC. Redwings travelled to Miami, for a game that was to be played in the heat of the day! On arrival, as with most American local rugby clubs, the pitch was not even constructed, with players, posts and line markings appearing within minutes of each other. However, the illusion of amateurish rugby was short lived when the game kicked off. Miami came out strong, utilising their heavier pack to keep the game tight. A hearty effort by all Redwings ensured that a 32-17 win was secured in some very challenging conditions.

This victory saw the end of the Redwings stay in Miami and the team headed to Orlando to the Invictus Games. Arriving too late for the opening ceremony, the team ensured that

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they arrived early on the first day of competition to get behind team UK. The first day the team were privileged to support Mickey Yule in his gold medal winning 190Kg power lift, support the team at the indoor rowing and also have the honour of meeting HRH Prince Harry. The visible presence of British Armed Forces, quickly turned the Redwings towards the media spotlight, with the public and media outlets asking for pictures and interviews. This support continued into the second day, where the team got behind the UK swimming and the wheel-chair rugby.



The Redwings final match was against the University of Central Florida (UCF), again a match that was to be played in the heat of the day. From the outset this team was more matched to our own ability. Both teams came out very strong, playing a strong defensive game. However, with a much more even pack weight, the Redwings started to wear UCF down in the set piece. This momentum soon spread into the backline, with the pace and strength of the Redwings centres pushing over for converted tries. This momentum didn't fade and the Redwings pushed to hold the game to close at a 27-0 final whistle.

The tour had been a truly fantastic and challenging experience not just for the rugby but the opportunity to experience the Invictus Games 2016. The Redwings team would like to thank Felix Fund for their support towards this trip.

New Trustees and Patron

Felix Fund is very pleased to announce that Mark Lancaster; MP has come on board as the charity's first Patron. Having spent 28 years in the Royal Engineers including commanding a bomb disposal squadron Mark is deeply sympathetic to the cause.

We have also had a few changes on the Board of Trustees with Lt Col Brian Howard, CO of 11 Regt RLC joining us for the duration of his current posting. In addition to Brian WO1 (RSM) Paul Marconi, RE who is now RSM at DEMs Training Regiment has also joined the board. We know these new appointments will be hugely beneficial to the charity.



(Pictured Mark Lancaster, MP at the EOD Gala Dinner.)

sacrifice knew no bounds and fell conducting Explosive Ordnance Disposal on operations.



New EOD Memorial Unveiled

The EOD Memorial at the National Arboretum was dedicated in a moving ceremony on Friday 3rd June 2016 attended by family, friends and colleagues of those who had died. This memorial is in memory to a special and brave group of soldiers and officers all of whom were Ammunition Technicians or Ammunition Technical Officers of the RAOC and the RLC whose courage and

Time to Remember



In each quarterly newsletter we commemorate and sustain the memories of the sacrifices made by EOD personnel who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

This time we remember those who died during April, May and June:

- Capt Barry S Gritten who died on 21 June 1973 in Northern Ireland
- WO2 Michael O'Neill who died on 31 May 1981 in Northern Ireland
- Spr Jordan Rossi who died on 23 May 2009 in Afghanistan
- Cpl Jamie Kirkpatrick who died on 27 June 2010 in Afghanistan
- Capt Lisa Head who died on 19 April 2011 in Afghanistan

Gone but never forgotten.