

# FELIX FUND NEWS – WINTER 2017

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.

## CHEERS!

We still have a few bottles of Felix Fund limited edition single malt whisky left. Place your orders through our online shop:  
<http://www.felixfund.org.uk/shop-page>



## UK / US GALA DINNER 2018

Following the success of the UK / US Joint Gala Dinner held in London back in 2016 a return event is being organised on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2018, near Washington DC.

An evening to celebrate and support the men and women of the wider EOD and Search community at the Lansdowne Resort in Leesburg, VA. This joint fundraiser will raise money for Felix Fund and the EOD Warrior Foundation; helping personnel on both sides of the Atlantic.

This special event is not to be missed so for ticket information and sponsorship options please contact [melanie@felixfund.org.uk](mailto:melanie@felixfund.org.uk) or call 07713 752901.



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*An event you won't want to miss!*

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## EXERCISE WIMBISH DIVER`

Ex Wimbish Diver deployed for a 10-day diving trip to Cyprus. The aim was to qualify the five individuals that were completely new to the sport as BSAC Ocean Divers as well as qualifying three more experienced divers as BSAC Sports Divers. The training received from all the instructors on the exercises was excellent, developing individual's basic understanding of diving principles alongside progressive dive training that took Ocean divers from a timid 3 metre shore dive, down to a 20-m dive of the Zenobia Wreck 1.5 miles off the coast of Larnaca. Diving twice a day in the warm and crystal-clear waters was the perfect environment to learn new skills and develop an instant love of the sport.

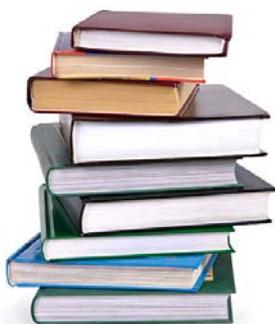
*Report from Lt Clayton, Group Support Unit 29 EOD&SGP*

Myself and Spr Burnside were fortunate enough to complete our diver training earlier in the year, where we were taught the basic skills and achieved our qualification of Ocean Diver. This allowed us to attend Ex Wimbish Diver as Ocean Divers and to start training towards our Sports Diver qualification. The sports divers' syllabus was a lot more in-depth and gave us a greater understanding of diving and our capabilities. During the expedition to Cyprus we managed to expand our diving experiences and had an opportunity to dive in different conditions. We successfully completed the qualification and now look forward to putting into use our new skills. *Report from Spr*

*Johnston, Group Support Unit 29 EOD&SGP*



## BOOKS GALORE



A big thank you to Jane Harvey Berrick and Sheena Lumsden for their recent online book auction, which raised £2024 for Felix Fund.

This is the second such auction opening the charity to a whole new audience.

Thank you to everyone who supported.



## VETERANS GATEWAY

Felix Fund is proud to be part of the new Veterans' Gateway service, which promises to be the first point of contact for veterans and their families seeking support.

Independent research commissioned by Veterans' Gateway shows the military charity sector currently leaves two thirds (64 per cent) of veterans 'confused', while one fifth (20 per cent) of veterans having been referred to between three and 10 charities before eventually finding support.

*Felix Fund is a partner charity of Veterans Gateway.*

Veterans' Gateway aims to make this process easier by assessing needs at the first point of contact and connecting people with the right help when they need it, wherever they are.

The service has a network of over 30 expert partners, including Felix Fund, coming from across the military and non-military not for profit sector. With more partners being added, the service can help on several areas, including:

- Housing
- Employment
- Finances
- Living independently
- Mental wellbeing
- Physical health
- Families and communities

### **Who is part of Veterans' Gateway?**

Veterans' Gateway is made up of a consortium of organisations and Armed Forces charities, including The Royal British Legion, SSAFA – the Armed Forces charity, Poppy Scotland, Combat Stress and service provider Connect Assist.

Funded by The Armed Forces Covenant, this is the first time a group of this kind has come together formally to deliver a service to help the Armed Forces community.

Charles Byrne, Director General of The Royal British Legion, on behalf of the Veterans' Gateway consortium said:

*Every charity only exists to help, but Lord Ashcroft revealed the uncomfortable truth that a proliferation of providers in our sector can cause confusion about where to turn. The consortium's research found that the Armed Forces community – overwhelmingly – supports the Veterans' Gateway, with 83 per cent welcoming the creation of a first point of contact. Veterans' Gateway will make it easier for them to get the support they need, from whoever is best able to provide it. No matter how complex their needs, working together we can do more."*

Melanie Moughton, CEO of Felix Fund said:

*It is important for all military charities to work together, at the end of the day our goal is the same; helping those who have served our country. The Veterans Gateway will surely enable more veterans to seek the help they need, and Felix Fund is proud to be part of this.”*

### **Five ways to access Veterans’ Gateway**

There are five main ways to contact Veterans’ Gateway, with advisors available 24 hours a day, seven days a week – many of whom are veterans themselves.

Call the helpline around the clock on [0800 802 1212](tel:08008021212)

Visit the website [veteransgateway.org.uk](http://veteransgateway.org.uk) for a host of self-help information and partner information.

Text them on 81212

Live chat with an advisor online – you’ll find this on the website

Submit a query using the online form

Craig Slicker, 43-year-old former Lance Corporal in the Army:

*When I was told I was leaving, I was given six weeks to find a job and after being in the Army so long, it was a shock to the system. I didn’t know what I could do or what I wanted to do, or where I could turn for advice. A service like Veterans’ Gateway would have been hugely helpful because I had no idea how to find out what support was available to me. I will definitely use it because I’m still struggling financially, just getting used to being paid weekly is a challenge and trying to balance the bills, and I’m still looking for a job that suits my skills.”*

## **CAROLS AT CHRISTMAS**



Felix Fund held its first carol service at All Saints Church, Didcot on the 12<sup>th</sup> December.

Despite some ‘festive’ weather there was a good turn out and we raised over £400 for the charity.

A big thank you to Padre Kevin Jones and Revd Karen Beck for organising and hosting the evening.

It was a lovely way to end the year.

## THE MILLIES



Felix Fund was thrilled to be nominated for a Millie Award, The Sun newspaper's annual military awards, this year. Nominated for Support to the Armed Forces, CEO Melanie Moughton attended the event with former Sapper Clive Smith and Capt James Wadsworth, flying the flag for both RE and RLC.

Sadly, we were pipped to the post by Dogs for Veterans, but it was a fantastic day and evening, including a reception at No 10 Downing Street in the morning and some of us might have sneakily been taken into the Cabinet Room! A massive boost for Felix Fund and some great publicity.

## MAKE YOUR DONATIONS GO FURTHER

Each year many gift aid forms cannot be used because they have been filled in incorrectly or are illegible.

To help your donation go even further we do need your house number and full postcode otherwise we cannot make a claim. 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.

*giftaid it*

If you are a UK taxpayer we can claim Gift Aid on your donations but please complete your form with care. All information will only be used for gift aid purposes. Forms can be downloaded at <http://www.felixfund.org.uk/support-us/make-a-donation/>

## FELIX SHOP

The Felix Fund on-line shop continues to generate a good level of income for the charity, but of course we want to increase this!

Check out our shop at:

<http://www.felixfund.org.uk/shop-page/> and grab yourself a Felix branded item. Also keep an eye out for the special offers in the New Year.



## MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR



All staff and trustees at Felix Fund would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Thank you for all the support and hard work during 2017 it is very much appreciated.

We look forward to some exciting events in 2018.

## 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  
October, November and December:**

- WO2 Colin J L Davies who died on 24 November 1971 in Northern Ireland
- Sgt Roy E Hills who died on 5 December 1972 in Northern Ireland
- SSgt Vernon I Rose who died on 7 November 1974 in Northern Ireland
- WO2 John A Maddocks who died on 2 December 1974 in Northern Ireland
- Kenneth R Howorth GM who died on 26 October 1981 in London
- Cpl James Oakland who died on 22 October 2009 in Afghanistan
- SSgt Olaf Schmid GC who died on 31 October 2009 in Afghanistan
- Cpl Loren Marlton-Thomas who died on 16 November 2009 in Afghanistan
- Spr David Watson who died on 31 December 2009 in Afghanistan
- Cpl David Barnsdale who died on 19 October 2010 in Afghanistan
- Spr William Blanchard who died on 30 October 2010 in Afghanistan
- WO2 Charles Wood who died on 28 December 2010 in Afghanistan

**Gone but never forgotten.**