

Spring 2020

Felix Fund Newsletter

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



Buy a Coffee for Felix

For just £2.89 a month you can buy a coffee for Felix and help support the men and women of the wider EOD and Search communities who keep us all safe.

Visit

www.felixfund.org.uk
to find out more



Gift Aid

Remember to use Gift Aid and increase your donation by 25p for every £1 you give

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Amazonsmile

When you shop on Amazon you can now choose to make a donation to Felix Fund.

Amazonsmile is a program that donates 0.5 % of your eligible purchases. Visit <https://smile.amazon.co.uk>

amazonsmile

Felix 5ive take on the Atlantic!

Well they did it - Julian, Teddy, Waddie, DJ and Ian – the Felix 5ive completed their epic row across the Atlantic in 41 days 12 hours and 55 mins arriving into Nelson's Dockyard, Antigua on Wednesday 22 January 2020.

These five novice oarsmen set off from San Sebastian in the Canary Islands back in December 2019 and whilst we all enjoyed our Christmas break, they continued rowing across the Atlantic for over 3,000 miles towards the Caribbean. Facing sores and blisters, sea sickness and other illnesses, brutal ocean conditions with storms and 50-foot waves, as well as sleep deprivation, weight loss and an enormous amount of physical and mental stress, they did it!

Before they set off, they said: "More people have travelled to space and climbed Everest than have rowed across an ocean. This is a huge challenge and a considerable undertaking that will test us physically and mentally as individuals and a team." During the team interview on arriving in Antigua, Julian Thomas, former Headmaster of Wellington college said "it has been life changing for us all."



I am sure they will have many stories to tell and some that are probably best left out there in the mid-Atlantic!

Please support their effort and consider a donation at:
<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/felixfive>

FELIX FUND
THE BOMB DISPOSAL CHARITY

Registered Charity No. 1142494

New Patron for Felix Fund

Felix Fund is thrilled to announce that we have a new patron in the form of Andy Torbet. After serving 10 years in the Armed Forces, including tours with 49 Sqn (EOD), part of 33 Engineer Regiment (EOD) supporting Airborne, Commando, SF and underwater operations, Andy retired to a life of adventure. Since then he has become a professional cave-diver and deep-diver working on a number of ground-breaking exploration projects, including mapping underwater cave systems, re-discovering flooded mines and finding lost shipwrecks. With a degree in Zoology, a Masters in Archaeology and membership of Mensa he tries to ensure his expeditions bring back more than just photo for Instagram. His multi-faceted professional life also includes work as a free-diver, professional mountain guide, kayaker and skydiver, competing for Team GB in Speed Skydiving.

As a TV presenter he has, to date, hosted 22 TV series for the BBC, CBBC, Discovery, History and Channel 5, including Coast, the multi-award-winning Operation Iceberg, his own serious Beyond Bionic and is also a regular one The One Show. Andy has also written over 250 articles and one book, and spent most of 2019 as part of the Stunt Team on the new Bond film.

Andy lives in the Wye Valley with his Jazz singer/song-writer wife, Becki Biggins, and their two young, feral, boys. Mark Lancaster, former Minister for the Armed Forces, also remains as a patron.



Dependents Wellness Weekend



DEMS Training Regt held a Dependents Wellness Weekend in their Officers Mess back in early January. A group of 10 ladies, all of whom have husbands currently stationed with DEMS attended to learn how to handle some of the stresses of being a military wife.

Felix Fund's Dashboard programme has gone from strength to strength helping serving personnel and veterans but we have struggled to come up with a format that suits the needs of their dependents, with child care and work issues to also be considered. DEMS Welfare Officer, Mel Walker and Lt Lee Beeching, RN put together a weekend programme, covering yoga for mindfulness, breathing techniques to aid meditation and giving the women a platform in which to share their experiences, both good and bad. Feedback was fantastic and everyone seemed to massively benefit from the weekend. We will now work on putting together a template that other regiments and units could use to run something similar.

Donate

You can make a one-off or regular donation to help those still serving, veterans and their dependants.

Donate online at <https://www.justgiving.com/felixfund/donate>



Give your time

Volunteers are vital to charities, but for one as small as Felix Fund they are even more important. Get in touch if you would like to volunteer to raise funds and awareness in your local area



Fundraise

You can raise money for Felix Fund in so many ways. From a raffle or jumble sale to a black tie dinner or even a personal challenge that you've wanted to do for ages ...

Every Penny Counts ☺



New Trustee joins the Board

In addition to a new Patron, Felix Fund also has a new trustee in the form of Mr David Hunkin OBE, former Navy Clearance Diver.

The Felix Fund does not just support Army personnel but also Royal Navy and police explosive officers. To grow its support to Naval clearance divers, David Hunkin OBE has recently joined the Board of Trustees. David spent 25 years as a Mine Clearance Diving Officer and Commando working extensively across Africa, the Middle East and Asia. He left the Service in 2012 for a commercial career and is currently the Head of New Markets for an aviation technology company.

On his appointment David said:

"It is a huge honour to be asked to join the Felix Fund, a cause very close to my heart. My brother in law was an operator in Northern Ireland in the 80's with the RAOC and had his challenges when he returned to the UK. I spent much of my military career working within the Joint EOD community and my time as an IEDD operator will always be a career highlight. The work that the Felix Fund does is vital. The dark, cold and lonely working environment of a maritime EOD operator places a unique strain on our divers. Working alongside Cdr Al Nekrews QGM, we will ensure that Felix is known in the maritime community and provides support where it is most needed".



Into the Blue

Message from Ben Lee.

"Hi, my name is Ben Lee former RE 58, 33 EOD. I was injured whilst on tour in 2011 when I was searching a tree line and hit by an IED. After a few years post injury, I found SCUBA as something I could do without any limitations and be almost like most able bodies under the water.



Recently, thanks to The Felix Fund, I made a trip to Djibouti, Africa with Diving With The Injured - a dive club/charity based out of Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham, formed up by majority of the military staff that dealt with us on our return to the UK after leaving Camp Bastion.

I'd like to take this time to thank The Felix Fund for making this trip happen but also everyone that helps support the charity with all your efforts to support our injured from the EOD & Search world, keep up the cracking efforts.

Many thanks, Ben"

Debden Cycle Ride

The annual Debden Cycle Ride is booked for Sunday 7th June 2020. Sadly the event had to be cancelled last year due to a lack of mars halls. If you are interested in either helping out or taking part in the ride itself, please visit

www.facebook.com/DedenCycle



Don't forget to visit the Felix Fund shop



Felix Fund Mug
£5.95

(Biscuits not included!)



Mens black polo shirt
£15.00 £10.00



Felix Fund Baseball Cap
£9.98



Wristband
£2.00 £1.00

Message from 35 Engr Regt (EOD&S)

Thanks to Felix Fund and Learn to Love Yoga we now offer weekly yoga sessions to all ranks at Carver Barracks. Helping to de-stress, restore and relax whilst optimising mental well-being and resilience. These have proved a perfect break to our OP SMART mental resilience training.



Support from the City

The Royal British Legion Lloyds & City Branch has recently confirmed support for Felix Fund by funding two Dashboard courses per year for three years.



We would like to express our thanks to the branch and in particular to Keith Broughton and Chris Holt who put forward the suggestion for support.

Ritchie Legacy

Felix Fund was honoured recently to receive a bequest from the estate of Mark and Patricia Ritchie.

Mark was a former Conductor RAOC Ammunition Technician, serving between 1957 and 1979. He was awarded a Queens Commendation for Brave Conduct in 1968 during EOD operations in Hong Kong.

Both Mark and Patricia sadly passed away in 2018 and 2019 respectively. Felix Fund will ensure that their bequest is used to help those across the EOD and Search communities.

Free Wills Month March 2020

Free Wills Month brings together a group of well-respected charities to offer members of the public aged 55 and over the opportunity to have their simple Wills written or updated free of charge by using participating solicitors in selected locations across England, Scotland and Wales.



For more information about this service, visit www.freewillsmth.org.uk



Felix Fund Dashboard Course

Residential training courses focusing on mindfulness and awareness

Places Available!

Felix Fund Dashboard Course Dates 2020

- 23rd – 27th March
- 20th – 24th April
- 18th - 22nd May
- 1st - 5th June
- 20th - 24th July
- 7th - 11th September
- 19th - 23rd October
- 23rd - 27th November

Felix Pin Badges

Collect the set!



Blue Pin Badge £2.50



Green Pin Badge £2.50



Navy Diver Pin Badge £2.50

New in!



A5 Soft Touch Notebook £7.99

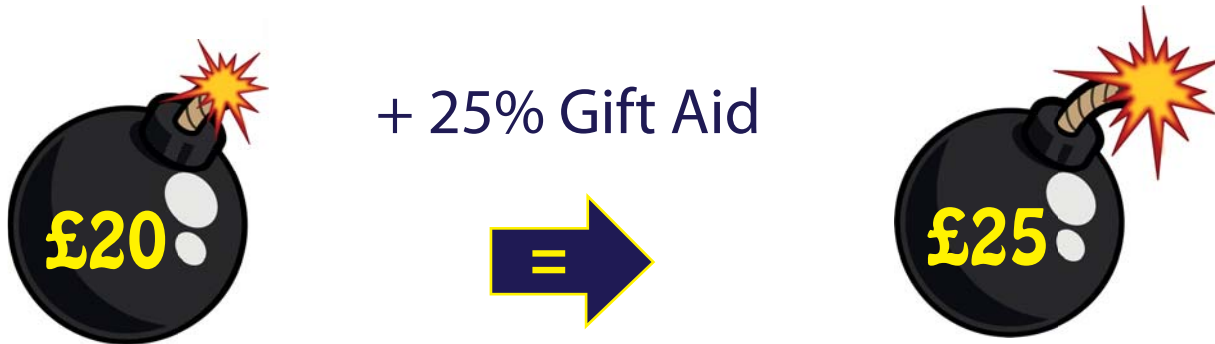
MAKE YOUR DONATIONS GO FURTHER!

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.

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 Fund Videos

Directly from the mouths of people we have helped, these two short films will help raise awareness of the work of Felix Fund

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KvDhA4ewoq4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9YksN26Dltc>



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Visit us at
felixfund.org.uk

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Are you interested in supporting Felix Fund? As with all charities we rely on the support and donations from all of you - large or small, the sums soon add up. There is almost no limit in the ways you can fundraise.

We always love to hear about what our supporters are doing, so get in touch on 07713 752901 or email enquiries@felixfund.org.uk



Keep it **SAFE** Keep it **LEGAL**

Keep it **FUN!**



Time to remember

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

This time we remember those who died during January, February and March.

- SSgt Christopher R Cracknell who died on 15 March 1972 in Northern Ireland
- Sgt Anthony Butcher who died on 15 March 1972 in Northern Ireland
- Maj Bernard C Calladene who died on 30 March 1972 in Northern Ireland
- SSgt Allan N Brammah who died on 18 February 1974 in Northern Ireland
- SSgt James G Crawshaw who died on 22 January 1975 in Great Britain
- Sgt Martin E Walsh who died on 9 January 1977 in Northern Ireland
- Cpl Barry Warburton who died on 19 March 1994 in Bosnia
- Spr Luke Allsopp who died on 23 March 2003 in Iraq
- SSgt Simon Cullingworth who died on 23 March 2003 in Iraq
- SSgt Christopher D Muir who died on 31 March 2003 in Iraq
- Capt Daniel Read who died on 11 January 2010 in Afghanistan
- WO2 David Markland who died on 8 February 2010 in Afghanistan
- Spr Guy Mellors who died on 15 February 2010 in Afghanistan

Gone but never forgotten

Thank you for your support

FELIX  **FUND**

THE BOMB DISPOSAL CHARITY

Registered Charity No. 1142494

What's On

February/March
Felix Fund Bangers &
Bacon Butties

23-27 March
Felix Fund
Dashboard Course

4-10 April
Marathon des Sables
(Keith Hammond)

20 April
London Marathon
(Victoria Phillips)

18-22 May
Felix Fund
Dashboard Course

18-22 May
Felix Fund
Dashboard Course

23/24 May
London to Brighton
Ultra Challenge
(Daniel Seager)
(Victoria Phillips)

4-5 July
Race to the Stones
(Matt Grove)

Thank you



from Felix