

Felix Fund News – Winter 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



The Trustees and I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a big thank you for your support for Felix Fund during 2016.

It has been an interesting year and we have gained support and awareness in several new areas.

The charity sector, as a whole has seen a dramatic decrease in donations, and Felix Fund is no exception. However, the job continues and we must continue to work hard raising funds and awareness and ride out these difficult times.

On a positive note the Dashboard Mindfulness courses have gone from strength to strength and we plan to run 10 courses during 2017.

In addition to funding the courses we have paid out over £41K in grants; some of which include funding towards:

- Hydrotherapy equipment for a soldier with severe PTSD.
- A medical cap for the baby son of a soldier.
- Portable medical testing equipment for a serving soldier.

- A stair lift for a bomb disposal veteran.
- A kayak and equipment for an ex-soldier suffering from PTSD and recovering from cancer.

This is just a small sample of how Felix Fund has helped this year.

Taking on the US Marines

Ten members of 11 EOD Regt RLC and one veteran from 33 EOD Regt RE travelled to Washington DC, USA, to take part in the US Marine Corps Marathon.

The Team comprised: Clive Smith, Capt Carley, Capt Easthill, Capt Wadsworth, SSgt MacNeill, Sgt Fitzsimon, LCpl Hansmeyer, LCpl Mobsby, LCp McGuigan, Spr Pendlebury, Spr Trotman.



Planning began in Feb 2016, with grant support to the team coming from the Felix Fund, Regimental PRI Fund and the Army Sports Lottery Fund.

Logistic and accommodation support was provided by the Allied Forces Foundation. A British-American foundation that works to raise awareness and funding for wounded service personnel, veterans and their

families, particularly those affected by the conflicts of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Accommodation was in US Marine Corps transit facilities which was as basic as UK range transit but was never seen in daylight because of the busy schedule which included:

A visit to the FBI HQ in Quantico, Arlington Cemetery, Capital Buildings and the Pentagon. In between the AFF fed the team at the Cheese Cake Factory, with a pasta party and America Legion BBQ.

The whole team completed the run and all in personal bests for their first entry into the race. It was a hot day at 27C and even the down hills were actually steep upwards gradients. The most impressive performance came from Clive with his hand bike smashing his predicted time.



The event is billed as the largest marathon in the world without prize money. The city takes the event to its heart and it is supported by over 2,000 serving US Marines handing out water. There is an extraordinary atmosphere to the whole weekend – until you experience it, it is hard to appreciate how much the US appreciates the military.

Massive thank you to the Felix Fund particularly for the flexibility.

Felix Fund join forces with RBL for Poppy Launch



Felix Fund and 11 Regt RLC joined forces with the Oxfordshire branch of the Royal British Legion to launch the 2016 Poppy Appeal in the county.

The media got a short demonstration of what the regiment do and learnt about the work of Felix Fund and RBL.

Deputy Lord Lt, John Harwood was on hand to receive the first poppy which was followed by a small explosion of poppy petals, formally starting the appeal.



Felix may have got in on the act too!!



£25,000 donation to the Holly Angharad Davies Contingency Fund

Felix Fund has donated a collection of historic eyewitness accounts of the Battle of the Somme to the Imperial War Museum where, for the first time, they will become publicly-available. 2016 is the centenary of the 3 ½ month WWI Somme battle, which officially ended on 18 Nov 1916. There are some 800 eyewitness accounts, half telling of what men saw on the first day of the infantry assault on the Somme, 1 July 1916. The rest deal with the first day, 21 March 1918, of the German offensive that led to fighting on the old Somme battlefields all over again.

The family of Holly Davies BEM gifted the Somme eyewitness accounts to Felix Fund's Holly Davies Angharad Contingency Fund. The gift was part of a fund-raising exercise in memory of Holly, CEO of Felix Fund until her death in 2014. Holly's family requested that the eyewitness accounts go to IWM, which welcomes members of the public as well as students and relatives of the men of the Somme to see the collection.

The Holly Davies Angharad Contingency Fund will benefit to the tune of £25,000 given by Felix Fund supporters who wish to remain anonymous.

The Somme papers were officially handed over to IWM on Armistice Day, and will figure in forthcoming IWM publicity. The accounts, many unpublished, were originally gathered for two classic books by Martin Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme* (1971) and *The Kaiser's Battle* (1978).

To see these papers, contact the IWM Research Room, quoting IWM Documents.26137 at <http://www.iwm.org.uk/research/research-facilities>.

Page 3

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Exercise Warrior Dive

On the Sunday 4 Sept DEMS Trg Regt sent six of its trainers to the Joint Service Adventure Training Wing Cyprus to participate in a Sub Aqua Diving Expedition. This multi-cap badge team consisted of 1 Paratrooper, 1 RAF Regiment and 4 RE.

The team itself had spent three months getting ready for the trip. Lots of miles were covered travelling to and from RAF Brize Norton to carry out theory and pool training.

The main effort for the expedition was to ensure that the four new divers from the RE would return from Cyprus qualified to the level of BSAC Sports Diver, having the skills required to achieve depth progression down to 35m. This would be achieved by diving the world-famous dive site, MVS Zenobia.

The first hurdle would be to qualify all divers to BSAC Ocean Diver before arriving in Cyprus. This would speed up and make the Sports Diver training a lot easier. This also meant the team would require a weekend away to Cornwall to qualify as Ocean Divers.

This was a successful weekend with everyone completing the BSAC Ocean Diver; making them ready for diver training in Cyprus.

Over the next two weeks the team conducted two dives per day, sometimes three, including a night dive at Green Bay and with some overhead cover diving at tunnels and caves. We also spent total of five days on the MVS Zenobia, a very large cargo ferry ship that sunk in the 1980s.



Overall this exped was a great success BSAC Sports Diver was achieved by everyone. Excellent training and great diving made this possible. More importantly young JNCO's getting away from the work place to enjoy safe but challenging adventure training is key to any successful unit. It is at this point a thank you must go to Felix Fund who helped support and fund this exped.

British Asian Business Professionals Association support Felix Fund

The British Asian Business Professional Association in Leamington Spa had chosen Felix Fund as its charity for 2016.

Various fundraising took place through the year, from a dinner night in Leamington Spa to a Casino Night at Marlborough Barracks, Kineton.

CEO, Melanie Moughton was invited to the annual Diwali celebrations in early November to receive a cheque for £2,500.

It was a very colourful and loud afternoon of entertainment and we raised an additional £355 from a bucket collection.

Many thanks to BABPA for their support.



Afternoon Tea

The wonderful Georgina Smith and Anne Linley (sister and mother of Brett Linley) continue with their support for Felix Fund

and organised a tea party one Sunday afternoon in October.

Raising £800 for the charity, this was another successful event and a big thank you them both.



Helping a Family

Felix Fund recently helped a serving soldier and his family purchase a specialist medical cap for their baby son who had been born with a disorder which prevented his skull from developing properly.

The cap is not available on the NHS and the family were looking at a bill of £2,000. Felix Fund was thrilled to help and can report that the condition is improving and, as he grows up Leo will be able to wear normal safety helmets as he learns to ride a bike etc.



Exercise Market Star



Three members of 33 Engineer Regiment (EOD) and one from 101 City of London Engineer Regiment (EOD) took part in Exercise MARKET STAR recently. The exercise was an adventure training expedition to California where troops learned to skydive or progressed in the sport. Both Sgt Gardiner and Cpl Bernard of 821 EOD&S Sqn completed 18 jumps and achieved their A Licences qualifying them as skydivers. A big achievement for both and now allows them to jump with the Royal Engineers Sports Parachute Association.

Lt Smith 58 Fd Sqn (EOD) achieved his tracking qualification qualifying him to partake in directional flying jumps and put in 54 jumps over the course of the expedition. LCpl Clint MacKenzie achieved his Free Style skydiving qualification and 55 jumps!

A huge thank you needs to go out to the Felix Fund for the additional contribution made to enable them to achieve their goals.

Heroes Golf Day

The annual golf day held at Cleeve Hill golf club near Cheltenham took place back in June.

Despite a drop in numbers taking part £500 was donated to Felix Fund from the event.

A big thank you must go to Rob Howells for putting this together each year for Felix Fund, Help 4 Heroes and Scotties Little Soldiers.



Exercise Algarve Watch



Back in Sept a small group from 421 EOD & Search Sqn took part in an offshore sailing course in the Algarve.

Report from Sam Phillips:

The experience was invaluable as it taught us the fundamentals of how to sail, which lines were needed to control both sails as well as knowing how to control the sails when sailing into the wind.

We all got to experience steering the boat trying to keep the wind coming onto the boat from a set angle to try and reach and maintain optimal speeds, different for both sailing with and against the wind.

We also learnt how to moor up and secure the boat to the jetty, attaching fenders to

protect the vessel and pulling in the slack correctly to ensure the boat didn't crash into other vessels while docked.

By the end of the week we could control the boat to our selected destinations with only minimal assistance from the skipper.

We would like to thank Felix Fund, as without your support this opportunity would not have been possible.

Carlton Club Dinner



Members of SO15, the Met Police Counter Terror Unit, attended the Carlton Club in London, luckily this time not to deal with a suspect device, as they had done back in the 1990's! They were attending the Felix Fund Remembrance Dinner to raise money for charity.

Although it was a smaller event compared to others previously held, it was still a lovely evening. Guests were entertained by Chris Moon MBE, who spoke about his experiences of being blown up while clearing mines with the Halo Trust, as well as being kidnapped by the Khmer Rouge.



A big thank you goes to everyone who attended and the Carlton Club staff who were fantastic. The evening raised over £3,000.

Special Occasions

Special occasion giving is an increasingly popular way to donate to charity.

Why not mark a special birthday, anniversary or other milestone by making a donation to Felix Fund?



We can provide you with materials for your party and all money raised will go towards helping those in need within the bomb disposal community.

For more information, contact enquiries@felixfund.org.uk.

Grabbing a Bargain

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. Keep an eye out for the special offers we run each month.

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

Gone but never forgotten.