Holiday Plans In Full Swing

It’s nearly time for The Gurney Fund holidays again!

Each year The Gurney Fund takes two groups of youngsters away for very special holidays. The younger children enjoy plenty of thrills and adventures on a PGL camp break, while the older children take to the high seas on a fabulous sailing break around The Solent.

Gurney Fund Trustee John Apter accompanies the children on the PGL holiday and he says they will be kept very busy this year.

He said: “I’m really looking forward to this year’s activity holiday, there are 28 children all ready to go and we have a good mix of activities waiting for them.

“From raft building, braving the zip wire and chatting around the campfire. We shouldn’t underestimate how important this trip is for these children. They have gone through so much in their short lives they deserve to have some quality time with other children who have gone through similar difficulties.

“I know they will make lifelong friends during the trip, it’s a privilege to make this happen for them.”

John also says he has no plans to change the normal Gurney Fund holiday morning routine.

“I would warn the children I’ve been practising my singing and have increased my ABBA collection!” he said.

“I will be singing to them every morning as I have done for the past 10 years – it’s better than an alarm clock!”

And sailing holiday leader Kerry Murray said the older kids are in for a treat.

She said: “We have our fingers crossed for fair winds and decent weather. The boats are booked, the marinas are waiting and Port Solent staff might even be filling the water bombs as I speak!

“We are all looking forward to seeing the happy smiling faces of those returning to the holiday and the slightly apprehensive faces of new people.

“We promise to look after you and make you feel at home on the water.”

“We shouldn’t underestimate how important this trip is for these children”
At their May meeting, The Gurney Fund Trustees awarded just over £19,000 towards higher education grants, laptops, swimming lessons, school uniform, music tuition, driving lessons and school trips to India, Peru, Canada and Iceland.

Our New Gurney Trustee

“Life is full of unexpected events. When the worst-case scenario happens, I know that for those children and families affected, The Gurney Fund is a heroic charity patiently waiting in the wings to help those in crisis.”

Meet our new Gurney Fund Trustee, Detective Chief Superintendent Martin Brunning.

Martin joined policing back in 1993 and has been a detective in every rank since 2001. He’s worked across several investigative arenas and is now a member of the Force Executive in a senior leadership role.

He says he had ‘no hesitation’ in joining The Gurney Fund Board.

Martin said: “The policing family is my second family and over the years many friends and colleagues have left the service through ill health or died prematurely.

“The Gurney Fund epitomises the family aspect and to be able to offer my time to support the many children who are affected by such circumstances is simply the right thing to do. They are all our family in policing, and we must do all we can to help, support and nurture their development.

“As the lead in my force for Health and Wellbeing I know how important it is to create an environment where people can thrive at work amid a complex and difficult policing period.

“My families are so important to enable that too. In those tragic cases where our police colleagues can’t do the job they love through illness, or pass away unexpectedly, I wanted to continue in a different way to help to create an environment for those people who need support to cope and thrive despite the difficulties of the circumstances. “I have had the privilege now of attending two board meetings and my drive home after each meeting is around three hours.

“During that trip home I have a sense of huge pride having done something so vitally fulfilling.

“There is no greater way to give something back to our wider policing family. “Life is full of unexpected events. When the worst-case scenario happens, I know that for those children and families affected, The Gurney Fund is a heroic charity patiently waiting in the wings to help those in crisis. It is singly the most rewarding aspect of my policing career to be part of this wonderful charity.”

“To be able to offer my time to help support the many children who are affected by such circumstances is simply the right thing to do”
Q. How did you get involved with The Gurney Fund?
A. Since an early age, I always wanted to be a police officer but unfortunately, I wasn’t tall enough so in 1994 I volunteered as a civilian assistant at my local police station. This was a first for Hampshire Constabulary and I received an award from the then Home Secretary Michael Howard. It was a proud moment. I then became a Special Constable for seven years.

My husband Keith was a police officer and a volunteer skipper for The Gurney Fund sailing holiday, and so in 2006 I joined him as crew, and I haven’t stopped volunteering since.

In 2012, I did both the sailing and the activity holiday for the younger children and due to suffering from sea sickness decided that the latter holiday was for me. I have met the most incredible, inspirational caring children and young adults through The Gurney Fund.

Q. Do you have to take time out from your career to help with The Gurney Fund?
A. Yes, I do. I make sure that my time is planned around the Gurney Fund trip as it is one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever had. It’s a privilege to be part of. I really feel I’ve made a difference being there and helping where I can.

You find the time when you have a passion for something so special. It is an easy thing for me as I prioritise and make sure I have the time, especially for The Gurney Fund beneficiaries.

Q. Why should people support The Gurney Fund?
A. I have had the experience of spending time with these amazing children who have been touched by the unimaginable.

Many people don’t know what they go through and I think the trips away bring everyone together and they can share the experiences as they are not alone.

The children seem so happy on the trip, but also there are tears and laughter. They need all the support they can get together with their families.

The children benefit enormously from The Gurney Fund. The first thing is the realisation that they are not alone in their situation, that other children are experiencing the same problems and issues through similar circumstances. This leads to them supporting each other both mentally and physically throughout the holidays but extending beyond this to their home lives. They become friends forever.

The activities encourage personal achievement, something I notice that the children sometimes lack due to low self-esteem. Over the week I see the children become more confident and express themselves more openly – it gives them a real sense of well-being.

Q. What are The Gurney Fund holidays like?
A. The activity holiday is for Gurney Fund beneficiaries of 11-15 years of age.

For the past few years, we have been to a residential activity centre in Wiltshire, there are four adult volunteers and around 28 children. We split into three teams, with each adult overseeing a team.
New Money Raising Platform

The Gurney Fund has a new fundraising platform, Virgin Money Giving, which has lots of donation and fundraising facilities and ideas. Allowances and grants from the Fund for the last financial year totalled £614,753.

If you would like to help us sustain this level of assistance please visit www.gurneyfund.org and click on Donate.

Brave Bobbies Box For Gurney

Hampshire’s Honour and Pride Police Charity Boxing is raising money for The Gurney Fund.

The Honour and Pride Police Charity Boxing event will see 24 brave volunteers from the Hampshire Police Family give up their free time to learn how to box and put on an amazing show.

All while raising money for The Gurney Fund.

Sergeant Spencer Wragg is one of the officers who’s set to get in the ring later this year.

He said: “At 46 years old and having never stepped in to the ring before the challenge of taking part in a charity boxing bout is going to both a physical and mental one. “The training is going well but the fitness is insane and at a level I have never experienced before.

“Having met some of the children who benefit from the assistance of The Gurney Fund and seen the impact that assistance has had is more than enough motivation for me to (hopefully) survive three rounds!”

If you would like to lend your support to the 24 trainee boxers, go to: http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/HampshirePolice-Boxing

Fantastic Fundraiser

Wonderful #GurneyParent Jo Keeling has been doing some fundraising for us through the sale of her book Izzy and Ollie.

We are incredibly pleased to say Jo has donated £104 to The Gurney Fund so far – a big thank you!

Jo created the information book ‘Izzy and Ollie’ to teach children about the importance of calling 999, something which teaching her own children has saved Jo’s life in the past.

You can buy her book from www.izzyandollie.com/

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