Manchester United's famous 'Big Lily' Flag centre stage at Old Trafford

Thursday 11 March, 2021

MANCHESTER United's famous 'Big Lily' flag will be centre stage at Old Trafford on the 21st anniversary of its creation.

The club has given over its famous stadium for a day of celebration to commemorate the historic flag, which was born out of the conflict in Northern Ireland.

Revered amongst United's 670 million worldwide supporters, Big Lily has become an iconic symbol representing all things positive relating to Manchester United, friendship and passion through football.

It was created in 1999 by best friends Keith Norris and the late Martin 'Faceman' Cleary - two friends from opposite sides of the religious divide in Northern Ireland - to create harmony in their local Manchester United Supporters Club - and has been taken across the world including Australia, Brazil Japan and Germany.

The flag has appeared at two Champions League finals, was bridesmaid at Norris's wedding in Kyoto, attended George Best's funeral in Belfast and was a special guest at the 60th Anniversary function of the Malta Manchester United Supporters Club.

The name 'Lily' derives from the Easter lily and Orange lily which are symbolic of the Catholic and Protestant traditions in Ireland.

In spite of coming from different religious backgrounds, the two creators of 'Big Lily' were best friends and devoted Manchester United supporters.

Ireland, North and South, is a hotbed for Manchester United with 45 official supporters' clubs. Irishmen Patrick O'Connell, Johnny Carey, Noel Cantwell and Roy Keane have captained the team. Club legends including George Best, Sammy McIlroy, Norman Whiteside, Denis Irwin, Tony Dunne and Liam Whelan all hail from the Emerald Isle.

John Peden was the first Irishman signed by Newton Heath, pre-curser of Manchester United, in 1893. 63 players have followed suit, crossing the Irish sea to wear the famous red shirt of Manchester United, the latest, current under 23 star, Ethan Galbraith.

The club received great acclaim for displaying the 'Busby Babes' tribute flags, commemorating those who died as a result of the Munich air disaster in 1958, when they were displayed in the Stretford End at the match against Everton on February 6th – the 63rd anniversary of the crash which claimed 23 lives.

Several hundred devoted United fans travel with the tribute flags to the crash site in Trudering, Munich each year where they hold a commemoration service organised by Manchester Munich Memorial Foundation, a charity dedicated to keeping the memory of the Busby Babes alive.

Known as 'The Global Flag of Friendship', the flag has many famous friends - from footballers including Gary Neville, Raul Gonzalez and Cristiano Ronaldo - to dignitaries such as Dieter Reiter, Lord Mayor of Munich, Mark Magowan, Premier of Western Australia and former Irish Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern.

Now for the first time ever, the famous supporters' flag, which measures 60ft by 40ft, is being flown at Old Trafford alongside 50 'Wee Lily' tribute flags dedicated to the memory and illustrious history of heroes, legends and fans of the club.

They will proudly fly together as part of a documentary about the flag, which sees a number of famous figures contribute to the film.

Big Lily attracted worldwide media coverage when a mural dedicated to her was unveiled on Belfast's world-famous International Peace Wall in 2019.

ENDS

Media:















QUOTES

Keith Norris said, " *There are now 254 Manchester United Supporters Clubs supporters clubs in 82 countries. All United supporters play a part in the global red family. Supporters groups such as TRA Red Army generate an amazing atmosphere at Old Trafford, MMMF work tirelessly preserving the memory of the Busby Babes, M.U.S.T. represent issues important to fans. Big Lily is all about friendship and a small part of the United family.* Everything Big Lily does to promote friendship is dedicated to the memory of Faceman.

Mayor Dieter Reiter, Munich *"Football is about friendship. Big Lily has many friends in football. It is the flag of a deep-rooted relationship. I am delighted to be a friend of Big Lily. She is always welcome here in Munich".*

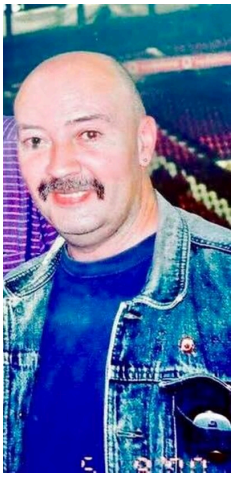
(The Late) Harry Gregg *"Big Lily is about the ordinary people, the flag that they worship, what it represents.*

Pedro Chueca Ramon (friend) Ex Real Madrid Physiotherapist Current Spanish National team physiotherapist *"United's Big Lily is not the flag of Manchester, it is the flag of football"*.

Premier Mark Magowan, Western Australia *"Big Lily promotes friendship and people of different backgrounds, countries, faiths and the like, getting on together which is an important part of the future of the planet. Big Lily helps promote peace and harmony and helps promote people coming to Western Australia then I'm happy with Big Lily. I'm pleased Big Lily played a prominent role in Perth".*

























Company Contact:

_

Keith Norris

T. +447889743917
E. trekeano1@aol.co.uk
W. https://www.facebook.com/utdsbiglily_

View Online

Additional Assets:
Busby Babes Tribute Flags at Old Trafford
Harry Gregg talks about Big Lily

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.unitedsbiglily.pressat.co.uk



Related Sectors:

Leisure & Hobbies :: Lifestyle & Relationships :: Media & Marketing :: Men's Interest :: Sport :: Travel & Tourism ::

Related Keywords:

Manchester United :: Flag :: Biglily :: Friendship :: St Patricks Day ::

Scan Me: