

*The Queen's
Gurkha Engineers*



2019

The Queen's Gurkha Engineers

Affiliated Colonel in Chief:

Her Majesty the Queen

Colonel of the Regiment:

Major General R Wardlaw OBE

Regimental Headquarters

Lt Col MS Jones MBE RE
MJ Purnasingh Tamang
Maj G Drysdale RE
Capt J Oliver RE
Capt Ashokkumar Gurung

Commandant
Gurkha Major
Deputy Commandant
Adjutant
GRCMO

Field Officers

Maj J Walker RE
Maj I Pilbeam RE
Maj Buddhibahadur Bhandari MVO QGE

OC 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn
OC 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn
SO2 G1 Welfare/SSO HQ Brunei Garrison

Captains

Capt S Piper RE
Capt C Marris RE
Capt Meenjang Gurung QGE
Capt Dirgha KC QGE
Capt Ganeshprasad Gurung QGE
Capt Bishwabahadur Rai
A/Maj Kamalbahadur Khapung Limbu QGE
Capt Khadkabahadur Gurung
Capt Govindabahadur Rana
Capt Krishnakumar Pun
Capt Naresh Limbu QGE
Capt Narendradhoj Gurung QGE
Capt Khelebrabhadur Gurung QGE
Capt M Paul RE
Capt G Forsey RE

2IC 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn
2IC 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn
QM British Gurkhas Pokhara
Wing Comd, Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick
QM (Technical), HQ ARRC Sp Bn
Sp Tp Comd 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn
Trg Maj/QM 131 Cdo Sqn RE
Ops Offr, 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn
Ops Offrr, 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn
Sp Tp Comd , 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn
Perie Tp Comd, 1 RSME Regt
Plt Comd Gurkha Coy, ITC, Catterick
Curragh Tp Comd, 3 RSME Regt
Ech Comd, 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn
Ech Comd, 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn

Subalterns

Lt C Collins RE
Lt P Burford RE
Lt K Alexander RE
Lt Z Tarrant Taylor RE
Lt O Maynard RE
Lt A Smith RE
2Lt S Taylor RE
2Lt L Trup RE

J Tp Comd 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn
J Tp Comd 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn (WEF 4 Apr 19)
Sp Tp Comd 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn
I Tp Comd 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn
K Tp Comd 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn
H Tp Comd 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn
L Tp Comd 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn
G Tp Comd 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn

RSM

WO1 (RSM) G Masters



Affiliated Corps

The Corps of Royal Engineers

Regimental Marches

Pipes
Band

Far o'er the Sea
Wings

Editorial

Andy Gooch



Bill Wiggett starts off in his piece for the Family News Section with the line “an eventful year” and I would argue this is absolutely true of QGE and the wider QGEA family as well. The news that

the Regiment will finally realise that long yearned for 3rd Sqn was announced at the start of the year to much celebration and while this is still some way off, the start is there and this year saw an increase in the number of QGE recruits which is likely to double in 19/20.

It goes without saying that the Regiment itself has been as busy as ever and reading all the achievements in the first part of the magazine makes you first quite envious of all the opportunities that are out there and then a bit later probably slightly relieved that you are not as busy as they are!

If it was busy for the serving Regiment it was equally so the retired community be that in the UK or Nepal, and of course the highlight for all communities had to be the fantastic 70th celebrations in Pokhara in late November. It was a real joy to catch up with old friends and make many new ones and put faces to names. I know the Association often asks itself what is its purpose these days and how should it encourage greater participation from officers and ORs. However, when you see the strength of the friendships and absolute inclusivity of all at an event like the 70th you understand the power of the bond between those who have served and the Association is there to help maintain this in whatever way it can. Lt Katie Alexander’s article on Page 13 sums up very eloquently what it is to be a part of QGE and the wider QGE family and all should read it:

It was 20 years ago since I first visited Nepal and going back to Pokhara over the years it is amazing to see how it, and the rest of the country has grown. The photo opposite was taken

from the roof of a hotel in the centre of the Lakeside strip not far from where the restaurant Once Upon a Time used to be, and opposite the entrance to the Lakeside favourite Busy Bees.



As well as the main 70th event, Rob Oakes has worked tirelessly to organise more low key social events as well as drum up support for attendance at the more formal GBA events and I would encourage people to attend these where possible over the coming year.

If it was an eventful year for the Regiment and the Association it has also been an eventual one for Charlie and I. This October I will leave the Army after 20 years to pursue a 2nd career in the civilian sector. We have settled in a village called Lamberhurst in Kent, not far from Tunbridge Wells and Bewl Water, and about 25min from Invicta Park. I intend to remain in close contact with the Regiment so hope to see many of you at one of the social events over the coming year. I also intend to continue to edit this Journal for as long as the Association wish me to and want to take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped in one way or another with the production over the past 11 years, and not least Charlie and my family for allowing me to get engrossed with this when I should be doing family things!

Finally, as I have said before, this magazine is the members’ magazine so please if you want me to do something differently or you have an idea for an article just drop me a line, and once again to all, thank you. Jai QGE.

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MESSAGE FROM THE COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT

Major General R Wardlaw OBE



I am delighted to report that The Regiment's 70th year has been representative of its exceptional history, fulfilling a range of diverse and demanding commitments both here in the UK and across the globe.

Amongst the key highlights has been the provision of dismounted close support to the 1 RIFLES battlegroup on Exercise ASKARI STORM in Kenya, technical construction tasks on Project ANEMOI in the Falkland Islands and expeditionary construction support to the United Nations' Mission in South Sudan on Operation TRENTON 5. Such commitments speak to the extraordinary professionalism and adaptability which are the hallmarks of the Gurkha Sapper, so it is perhaps no surprise that whilst deployed in the Falkland Islands, QGE personnel also found time to construct two War Memorials for both QGE and 7GR to commemorate those extraordinary comrades who lost their lives during and after the Falklands War.

As you will read, life back in the UK has been no less demanding. Both 69 and 70 Gurkha Field Squadrons have converted to new vehicle platforms and deployed on exercises in their new configurations. A particular highlight in our 70th year has been the commitment of the Regiment to Public Duties for both Windsor and London. You will not be surprised to hear that the 87 strong contingent drew considerable praise from all quarters for the quality of turn-out and standard of drill; such flawless achievement off the line of march owes much to the time and energy invested in preparation. Shybas!

The celebration of our 70th Anniversary was marked in style in Maidstone and in Nepal. Both events saw a significant

turn-out of veterans and a wonderful celebration of the QGE family. The official Birthday in Maidstone brought together both QGE families and their UK counterparts, providing a wonderful celebration of community integration and the strength we gain through diversity. The QGE RAN deserve particular credit for the most spectacular weekend of events in Pokhara, drawing together in excess of 600 veterans and their families from both the UK and Nepal.

Looking forward, the recent announcement of growth in the Brigade of Gurkhas, including a third QGE squadron, is the most splendid news for QGE, placing our overall establishment on a more sustainable footing for the longer term. QGE will also fill a number of posts in the new RGR Specialised Infantry Battalion. Taken together these uplifts will provide a greater range of employment and promotion opportunities as well as increased chances to serve a full 24-year Army career within QGE.

Against this backdrop of growth, the pace of life in the year ahead shows no sign of easing with further substantial exercise commitments in support of the Field Army, support to the NATO Very High Readiness Task Force and on current plans, a return to South Sudan on Op TRENTON 8 in early 2020.

The celebration of our past, the recent achievements of the last year, and the commitments in the year ahead underline the extent to which the Regiment continues to be the perfect ambassador for The Brigade of Gurkhas, central to the outputs of the Corps of Royal Engineers and pivotal to the operational effectiveness of the Field Army.

Jai QGE!



REGIMENTAL NEWS

THE COMMANDANT'S REPORT

Lieutenant Colonel MS Jones RE MBE



I took command of 36 Engineer Regiment and the appointment of Commandant of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers in April 2018 and I am honoured to be writing for the QGE Magazine for the first time. On behalf of all members of QGE, I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to Lt Col Jim Hawkins. His efforts on the QGE Growth Plan over his tenure

as Commandant, in conjunction with the HQ Brigade of Gurkhas, secured the future of QGE in the short to medium term. This growth in QGE will begin to provide a greater range of employment and promotion opportunities as well as increased chances to serve a full 24-year Army career within QGE. I wish Jim, Kate, Eva and James all the best for 2019, and Jim the best of luck in his new role as Deputy Commander of 12 (Force Support) Engineer Group.

My first months as Commandant QGE were spent committed to Operation TRENTON 5 and I deployed to South Sudan for six months as Commander of the UK Task Force in July 2018. The new QGE Gurkha Major, Major Purnasingh Tamang, and the Deputy Commandant QGE, Major George Drysdale, deputised superbly in my absence; but I am now looking forward in 2019 to focusing on supporting Army HQ, HQ Brigade of Gurkhas and RHQ RE in the planning of further QGE growth. I was incredibly lucky to spend my two weeks of rest and recuperation from Operation TRENTON 5 in Nepal for the QGE's 70th Birthday. Meeting and sharing this experience with so many generations of QGE soldiers and officers was awe inspiring, and for me is what makes the Brigade of Gurkhas so unique. The feeling of family and belonging is clear across all, regardless of rank, age or nationality. I am equally proud of our QGE families in how they have continued to integrate with their UK counterparts. They contribute a huge amount to Regimental life in Maidstone and are key in facilitating community integration, supporting locals and organising charity events.

The versatility and professionalism of QGE was in high demand in 2018. This began in January when 69 Gurkha Field Squadron supported the 1 RIFLES battlegroup on Exercise ASKARI STORM in Kenya. This exercise required the Squadron to operate as sections supporting Company Groups and was therefore an excellent opportunity to develop commanders at the lower level. It also showcased QGE to an infantry battalion not routinely used to operating with Gurkha soldiers. On Operation TRENTON 5, the small contingent

of circa 25 QGE soldiers that was part of the 300-strong UK Task Force had a disproportionately positive impact on the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS): not only was the engineering output for UNMISS of the exceptionally high standard that has become the assumed norm, the cultural diversity that they brought to the UK Task Force was lauded by the UN staff and made the influence effect sought on Operation TRENTON so much easier to achieve. Hosting Dashain for 550 UN personnel in Malakal was a particular highlight; but the QGE 70th anniversary and Tihar were also opportunities that were exploited to the full in South Sudan. The technical construction and engineer logistic achievements in the Falkland Islands on Project ANEMOI in the Autumn of 2018, as well as the construction of the two War Memorials (for 7GR and QGE) by QGE personnel in their spare time, are equally as impressive. Beyond QGE in Maidstone, as I meet the officers and soldiers employed outside of the Regiment on ERE, they continue to be excellent ambassadors for QGE and I look forward to meeting those who I haven't met yet at some point during 2019.

Despite the high operational demand, QGE personnel have seized every opportunity across career courses, adventurous training and sporting events. Unsurprisingly, QGE have seen some significant individual and collective successes over the past year. We are immensely proud of these individual achievements. Most notably, Sapper Rajan Rana won **The Archibald Award** for Best Tradesman across all Royal School of Military Engineering courses, and Corporal Anil Rai won **The Vailly Award 2018** for Best JNCO completing Junior Command Training Course (JCC)). The Regiment remains the Corps Champion for the FTC shooting competition, and Sapper Amit Gurung was awarded Top Shot. In addition to this, the Regiment's team secured a highly reputable Silver Medal award from Cambrian Patrol this year.

Looking forward to 2019, the tempo of 2018 will continue. 70 Gurkha Field Squadron, supported by approximately 30 personnel from 69 Gurkha Field Squadron will conduct Public Duties at Buckingham Palace, St James' Palace, the Tower of London and Windsor Castle between February and April. After Public Duties, the Squadron will continue to develop its competency on HUSKY armoured vehicle wheeled platforms by conducting a CT2 exercise in preparation for deploying on Exercise WESSEX STORM in August 2019 and then being held at readiness as part of the 3 SCOTS battlegroup as the UK's contribution to the NATO Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (Land) (VJTF(L)). From summer 2019, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron will begin pre-deployment training for Operation TRENTON 8, which on current orders will see the Squadron deploy in January 2020 to South Sudan, with other elements of 36 Engineer Regiment, in support of the UNMISS.

As ever, The Queen's Gurkha Engineers continues to excel, and I feel extremely proud and privileged to be the new Commandant.



THE GURKHA MAJOR'S REPORT

Major Purnasingh Tamang



I feel humble and honoured to have been given the opportunity to serve as the 25th Gurkha Major of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers. It is my great privilege to write this note and I would like to start with thanks to Maj Buddhibahadur Bhandari MVO saheb for his contribution and handing over the

Regiment in a good form. It is a wonderful opportunity to play a key role in helping to shape the Regiment during a time of great change under the future Squadron growth plan and creating a sustainable structure and liability. This will certainly serve QGE better in the future and help to address the current issue of soldiers transferring out of QGE; the future for QGE is definitely bright.

No different to last year, the Regiment has been extremely busy both on demanding and complex deployments, as well as maintaining high readiness commitments and undertaking high-profile training exercises. Other than Operation TRENTON 5 in South Sudan, Project ANEMOI in Falkland Islands and Public Duty Reinforcement Company, individuals from the Regiment have also deployed worldwide to places such as Kenya, Belize, Poland, Hungary and Cyprus to meet the demand of the modern-day British Army and wider Defence.

Due to the limited career opportunities and fragile promotion structure within QGE, RHQ has continued to engage with its key stakeholders; HQ Brigade of Gurkhas (HQBG), HQ Royal Engineers (RHQ RE), the RE E1 Manning Brick in Army HQ and the Army Personnel Centre (APC) to address the sustainability of QGE manning and to enhance career prospects and many of these issues have been resolved. This year has seen a 100% VEng (Full) offer to all eligible QGE personnel and many additional ERE PiDs announced as well as the 3rd QGE Sqn. Many of these initiatives will not be realised in or until after 2021 and in the meantime RHQ QGE will continue to identify potential future issues and engage with those key stakeholders as required.

QGE continues to excel on every front, be that on operations, in training or any other task they turn their hand to. Those results do not happen without sheer dedication and hard work by our people and the persistent strengthening of the Regimental ethos, Kaida and morale. The emphasis has been on continued professional development as well as personal development for QGE personnel, particularly in enhancing the communication skills of our soldiers to meet

the modern demands of the British Army; numerous QGE soldiers already have acquired academic GCSE and degree level qualifications.

Beside the operational delivery, RHQ QGE is continuing to create the environment to grown interest in QGE Regimental heritage, Kaida and traditions of the Brigade of Gurkhas. Despite operational and overseas deployments, this year has been a milestone for QGE, with serving and retired personnel across the World celebrating it's 70th Anniversary in locations ranging from the UK, South Sudan, the Falkland Islands and Nepal. RHQ QGE would like to take this opportunity to offer our sincere gratitude to the QGE Regimental Association Nepal and Organising Committee for their tireless work in making the main 70th Anniversary event extremely successful.

Cultural integration within the Regiment has been continuously improving with effort at every level being made to enhance the cultural integration within our diverse regiment. QGE families have been at the forefront in leading many cultural, social and religious events as well as fundraising initiatives for many charities. QGE serving personnel and their families donated £1740.55 to the QGE 70th Anniversary event in Nepal and £900 to the Invicta Park Playgroup. The Regiment will continue to support the Pahar Trust and Gurkha Museum in future. Recently, RHQ conducted a QGE history study day aiming to collect information and archive it's modern history post 1996. The event went very well and we believe this will assist Lt Col Stu Brown RE Saheb in the writing of the 3rd edition of the Regimental History in the very near future.

Looking forward to 2019/20, with the new Command team, the theme and focus will remain the same; operational excellence, our people and our families. Jai QGE.



RHQ QGE NEWS

Captain Ashokkumar Gurung (GRCMO)



In my first year as the Gurkha RCMO, most of my work has been focussed on the legacy projects initiated by my predecessors, most notably Maj Purnasingh Tamang, now GM QGE. There is no doubt that since the last update the Regiment has been fully committed to major operations and exercises in support of both 12 (Force Support) Engineer

Group, 8 Engineer Bde and the Brigade of Gurkhas. QGE soldiers and officers take every single opportunity to push themselves and challenge everyone's view of their capacity.

In order to man the Regiment properly RHQ QGE is working hard to ensure it's soldiers have the best opportunities to advance and also get the best career advice. To achieve this QGE must have a sustainable career structure and any future growth has to be supported by the inflow. As part of this QGE has taken on a number of positions across the Army as part of a 3 phase growth programme. The expansion work following the announcement of the 3rd QGE Sqn has already begun and planning is ongoing with high level discussions and meetings with the RE Manning Cell in Army HQ, HQ Brigade of Gurkhas, 8 Engineer Brigade and RHQ RE.

Since the last edition, a number of personalities in the Regiment have changed as QGE bade farewell to the Commanding Officer and Gurkha Major, Lt Col J W Hawkins RE and Maj Buddhibahadur Bhandari MVO Sahibs respectively. Meanwhile, the Regiment welcomed the new Commanding Officer, Lt Col M Jones MBE RE and new Gurkha Major, Maj Purnasingh Tamang. Likewise, Major R Grant RE (OC 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn) left QGE for his new role as SO2 Engineer Training in BATUS, Kenya. He was replaced by Maj I Pilbeam RE. During 2018, QGE also bade farewell to Maj Devkumar Gurung MVO and SSgt Ramesh Rana on retirement after full careers and LCpl Adip Lungeli who has left the Army for a new job

Transfer. Transfer from QGE to the wider Field Army is one of the challenges QGE is currently facing and is believed to be caused by a lack of promotion opportunities, ("bottle necks" in certain trade groups and ranks) and long term career prospects; this will be addressed with the new QGE structure. In 2018 x11 QGE soldiers transferred to the Field Army (4 x REME, 4 x RE, 2 x R Sig and 1 x QARANC) and a further 5 are currently undergoing training to be Clerk of Works. The current Brigade of Gurkhas Transfer Policy is a soldier must serve a minimum of 5 years in BG unit before transferring but this has been increased to 7 years and will apply to all those in Recruit Intake 2019 onwards.

QGE G1 Manning

Total Liability:	329
Current Strength:	284
Total Undermanning:	48

QGE Footprint. QGE personnel are currently employed in Brunei, Nepal, ITC Catterick, 3 RSME, 1 RSME, HQ ARRC, SWS Warminster and IBS Brecon. In addition, there are two singleton posts as the Reconnaissance Sgt (Sgt Sandesh Rai) in the Queen's Dragoons Guards and as Quartermaster/ Training Major (A/Maj Kamal Khapung) in 131 Commando Reserve Squadron RE.

QGE 72 Training Party. 32 x new Sappers from RI Intake 18, known as 72 Training Party joined the Regiment in November 2018 and following their Combat Engineer Class 3 course their Attestation (Kasam Khane) Parade was held on 21 March 2019 in Invicta Park Barracks. Since this date they have started trade courses at 1 Royal School of Military Engineering in Chatham.

Versatile Engagement (VEng). VEng (Short) Terms of Service (ToS) provides 12 yrs of service and VEng (Full) ToS provide 24 yrs of service. In 2018 a total of 21 soldiers from Intakes 2010 and 2011 on the VEng (Short) contract converted to VEng (Full); 100% of those eligible.

QGE Structural Review. Since the recent announcement of the new QGE Sqn along with wider pan BG growth, QGE structures will no doubt change again as the wider Army 2020 ORBAT is refined and importantly will provide more career and promotion opportunities.

HONOURS, AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The DIO 2018 Sanctuary Awards 2018 for Sustainability:
36 Engr Regt and QGE for work on Op MARMAT.

Bowring Trophy 2018

Winner.	21171666 LCpl Sureen Thapa
Runner Up.	30141942 LCpl Rajendra Rai

72 Training Party Combat Engineer Class 3

Top Student.	30293675Spr Jesh Magar
Top Academic Student	30293221 Spr Nagendra Sarad Malla

Field Section Commanders' Course Top Student

30120258 Cpl Balkumar Budha Magar

Junior Commanders' Course Top Student

30085132 Cpl Dhanprasad Ghale

Junior Commanders' Course Award of the Year (Vailly Award)

30048427 Cpl Anil Rai

Tradesman of the Year - (The Archibald Award

30252497 Spr Rajan Rana on ME Surveyor 0-2 course.

Top 1st year CoW(M) student - The Bog Snuggs Award

21171718 Sgt Ramkaji Thapa





RHQ QGE

Standing: Pandit Prem Prasad Gaire. GRCMO, Capt Ashokkumar Gurung. SSgt Indra Sunuwar GSA.

Seated: Dept Comd, Maj G Drysdale RE. RSM, WO(RSM) G Masters. Comdt, Lt Col MS Jones MBE RE. GM, Maj Purnasingh Tamang

IMechE– Best academic performance on CoW(M) Course

21171751 SSgt Dinesh Gurung

Inst RE Fowkes Medal for Top Student on CoW(E) Course

2171617 SSgt Bobin Gurung

ME Design Draughtsman 2-1 Course Top Student

30188404 Spr Santosh Tamang

RE Cross Country Association - Full Corps Colour 2018

30207842 Spr Himan Prasad Limbu

Runner Up European Power Lifting Championship

30142389 Spr Soman Gurung

General Officer Commandings' Commendation

21172020 LCp Manoj Gurung

Chief Royal Engineers' Commendation

21170630 SSgt Ekabhadur Rai

APPOINTMENTS

Queen's Gurkha Orderley Officer

21168756 Captain Kamalbahadur Khapung Limbu

Selected for Regular Commission (LE)

21168762 Major Purnasingh Tamang

Selected for Intermediate Regular Commission (LE)

21169283 Captain Govindabhadur Rana

21169347 Captain Krishnakumar Pun

PROMOTIONS

Selected for Promotion to Major

21168202 Captain Ashokkumar Gurung

21168756 Captain Kamalbahadur Khapung Limbu

Promotion to Late Entry Officer Captain

21169677 WO2 (SSM) Ashokkumar Gurung

21169976 WO2 (SSM) Prithibahadur Chhantyal



Promotion to WO2

21170376 SSgt Prem Jabegu Limbu
21170630 SSgt Ekabahadur Rai
21169990 SSgt Lalbahadur Rana
21169982 SSgt Bikash Shrestha

Promotion to SSgt

21170030 Sgt Chandrabahadur Budha Magar
21170589 Sgt Tilak Pun
21170536 Sgt Furtenji Sherpa
21171246 Sgt Akash Tamang

Promotion to Sgt

21171750 Cpl Seesan Gurung
21171158 Cpl Sandesh Rai
21170686 Cpl Premjung Thapa
21170545 Cpl Bikram Gurung

Promotion to Cpl

30085140 LCpl Sundar Adhikari
21171859 LCpl Arpan Gurung
30120260 LCpl Pawan Gurung
21171810 LCpl Sangum Khapangi Magar
21171990 LCpl Amber Mangmu
30048323 LCpl Suryahang Rai
21171959 LCpl Umesh Rai
30047635 LCpl Kulbir Sapkota Pariyar
30120653 LCpl Gyanendra Thapa Magar
30085132 LCpl Dhanprasad Ghale

Promotion to LCpl

30188416 Spr Himan Limbu Angbuhang
30188642 Spr Nayan Mabo Limbu
30208400 Spr Padmaraj Ghale
30166255 Spr Shiv Gurung
21172032 Spr Nepalsingh Rai
30207788 Spr Raj Limbu
30166826 Spr Dikendra Limbu
30120281 Spr Bibek Gurung
30142406 Spr Kismat Gurung
30189111 Spr Indraman Gurung
30166829 Spr Jagdish Gurung
30141893 Spr Sujan Rai
30166832 Spr Anup Rai
30208391 Spr Arun Thapa
30188392 Spr Angsihang Thopra Limbu
30166244 Spr Dakumar Tiliya Pun
30229173 Spr Amit Gurung
30166274 Spr Krishna Tiliya Pun

TRANSFEREES

30047723 Spr Ashish Thapa	RSigs
30142352 Spr Chham Bahadur Thapa	RE
30141923 Spr Anjanikumar Rai	REME
30084914 LCpl Naveen Gurung	RE
30120637 Spr Kheshe Hang Jabegu	REME
30120290 Spr Durgabahadur Ale	REME
30047685 LCpl Suman Gurung	RSigs
30085140 LCpl Sundar Adhikari	QARANC
30084927 LCpl Saurabh Hirachan	RE
30048348 LCpl Dipendra Rai	REME
30142389 Spr Soman Gurung	RE

69 GURKHA FIELD SQUADRON

OC's SUMMARY

Major James Walker RE BSc Hons Pscj (Ge) MInstRE

Since the last edition of this magazine, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron has been typically, fully engaged all over the world. Not only have we supported the United Nations Mission in South Sudan on Op TRENTON and Project ANEMOI in the Falkland Islands, we have also deployed individuals to Australia (Lt Ed Moore on exercise as the BGE for 1 RIFLES), Estonia (Sgt Basanta as the Engineer Recce Sgt for the Queen's Dragoon Guards Battlegroup), Spain (some 30 pax on AT), Romania (Close Support Section supporting 1 RIFLES) and Cyprus (individual augmentees on Op TOSCA). As I write, 36 Engineer Regiment has just won the coveted Force Troops Command Operational Shooting Competition Falling Plate Trophy and 69 Squadron has the second best shot in the whole Division in Cpl Kumar Pun. The Regimental shooting team is the best in the Corps and, as you would suppose, is mostly from QGE.

It has been a testing year in terms of command and control. Having been seconded as Chief of Staff for Op TRENTON from Jun 18 to Jan 19, I left the Squadron in the capable hands of my 2IC, Capt Sophie Piper RE, who admirably shouldered the extra responsibility of being acting OC for some 8 months during my absence. With the Squadron Quartermaster, Capt Mark Paul RE deployed in the Falklands, Capts Piper, Krishna Pun and Govinda Rana felt the pinch caused by a lack of manpower but kept the Squadron running brilliantly under exceptionally challenging manning conditions. Capt Govinda moves on to be Quartermaster in Pokhara and I wish him well. Capt Krishna has now moved from Support Troop to be my Operations Officer, where he has made a blistering start by organising an inter-section competition which we will run at the end of June, following a month of construction projects.

The start of June also sees 36 Engineer Regiment and The Queen's Gurkha Engineers assume the responsibility as one of three UK Standby Units ready to deploy anywhere in mainland UK in support of the civil authorities in case of a terrorist attack or other major incident. Most of the Squadron will be at extremely high readiness to move throughout the Summer and has been training hard to meet the required standards of readiness. Flood barrier training, working with armed police and dealing with inquisitive members of the public have all been part of the training.

My focus now is on re-establishing Squadron coherence and allowing the Troop Commanders and Troop Staff Sergeants time in the busy Squadron training programme to build together as effective operating teams once again. This should set the conditions for the next Officer Commanding (Major Mike Gledhill RE) to take over from me in good order on 1 July 2019 and progress the training in preparation for the next 12 months, which will include a further deployment on Op TRENTON 8 in South Sudan.





Troops sit under a tree during an Orders Group with a stunning Kenyan backdrop

and professional development and I know we will face every challenge with the Gurkha ethos underpinning all that we do.

Jai QGE!

Ex ASKARI STORM 18

Sgt Bhimkumar Parangden

Ex ASKARI STORM 18 was a collective training level 4 exercise to confirm 1 RIFLES' collective competence to take over the NATO Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (Land) Spearhead Battlegroup role. 69 Gurkha Field Squadron was deployed to provide combat engineer support to the Battlegroup before redeploying back to the UK to maintain readiness commitments alongside them in accordance with the Army Readiness Order.



A cuplock tower being erected as a part of a BG Water Point

Ex PUL NIRMAN

Cpl Rusal Thapa

Ex PUL NIRMAN focused on developing and refreshing our core engineering skills; mobility, counter-mobility and survivability. This involved a variety of training serials in gap crossing, demolitions, field fortifications and water supply.

During the mobility phase we laid bridges in teams from section to troop strength, including the Infantry Assault Bridge, Medium Girder Bridge and the Air Portable Ferry Bridge. Additionally, we constructed an aerial ropeway across the fast flowing water of the Fleet to Chisel Beach. We next concentrated on counter-mobility, refreshing our knowledge on how to handle explosives as well as practicing bridge demolitions and different methods of explosive entry into buildings. The survivability phase focused on purifying contaminated water to supply fresh, drinkable water to troops and civilians. In conclusion, this exercise helped us refresh and practice our basic but vital combat engineering skills. Everyone gained a lot from the exercise and it reaffirmed the importance of these skills.

Aside from the operational commitments at home and overseas, 69 Squadron personnel continue to devote considerable time to traditional Brigade of Gurkha activities including Exercise Trailwalker and the Nepal Cup football tournament and we actively support Regimental, Brigade and GWT events.

All over the Army, the operational tempo remains fiercely high and it is a struggle to balance the welfare of the soldier against operational output, but it is testament as ever to the Gurkha soldiers of 69 Gurkha Field Squadron that they continue deliver unwavering operational effect wherever they go. 2019/20 provides 69 Squadron with a myriad opportunities for excitement, fun and personal



Assembling a tripod to provide an aerial ropeway to transport soldiers and equipment across the gap



Ex SMOOTH MANOEUVRE

Cpl Bhupendra Rai

Ex SMOOTH MANOEUVRE (Ex SM) was a Squadron level exercise to ensure all the Squadron drivers, both vocational and non-vocational were current and competent on the platforms they are trained to drive. The exercise took place in July 2018 on the Salisbury Plain Cross-Country Driving Area and included various driving scenarios including convoy driving, cross country driving and night driving. Overall Ex SM 18 was a very successful exercise and gave the Squadron drivers a good opportunity to refresh their knowledge and enhance their driving skills thus meaning they current, competent and prepared for any future deployments.

The Queen's Gurkha Engineers' 70th Birthday Celebrations

LCpl Sureen Thapa

The Regimental Birthday upholds our traditions, our Kaida and is an opportunity to unite serving and retired QGE soldiers and their families.

This year The Queen's Gurkha Engineers celebrated its 70th birthday on 29th September at our home, 36 Engineer Regiment, Invicta Park Barracks. Lieutenant Edmund Moore led the event with the help of Staff Sergeant Bishnu Prasad Gurung. Despite many people being absent on deployments, everyone pulled together and the venue looked immaculate for the big day, taking only one week to transform a hangar into a stunning venue. As is now tradition, the week before the birthday celebrations the Kaliparsad Football Cup (Inter-Rank Football), the Chelo competition (stone throwing) and the Ladies Volleyball Tournament took place. Following the Gurkha motto of "It is better to die than to be a coward", all participants performed fiercely but it was QGE spirit and unity that won the day.



Major General R Wardlaw OBE, Sir Hugh Robertson, Major P Tamang and Major G Drysdale during the cake cutting ceremony



Major General R Wardlaw OBE, Major P Tamang and Major G Drysdale presenting Lance Corporal Sureen Thapa with the Bowring Trophy

The morning started with the arrival of the Chief Guest, Major General R Wardlaw OBE, and a gathering of honoured guests. The event was very well attended by QGE Sappers, both serving and retired and their families. It was a privilege to meet the retired Sappers that continue to support QGE at our Regimental Birthday. Their commitment and pride remind us of the importance of the day and informs us about where we came from. The Brigade of Gurkhas Band provided excellent entertainment for spectators as they put on a stunning display on the parade square and their performance was as flawless as ever. The day was also an opportunity to recognise the Commissioning of Captain Khelendrabahadur Gurung and to present the Bowring Trophy which this year went to LCpl Sureen Thapa (69 Gurkha Field Squadron) with LCpl Rajendra Rai (Allied Rapid Reaction Corps) coming second

After the presentations and the cake cutting ceremony, the Colonel of the Regiment delivered his address, praising the outstanding performance from the Regiment over the past year and for the success of the day. A traditional Gurkha curry was then served followed by some entertaining performances from our Sappers and our Gurkha children.

Overall, it was a fantastic day, and everyone in The Queen's Gurkha Engineers extends a warm welcome to come and join the celebrations again next year.

The Corps of Royal Engineers Awards for Engineering Excellence 2018

Spr Rajan Rana

The Corps of Royal Engineers Awards for Engineering Excellence 2018 was organised at the Institute of Civil Engineers in London. With the aim of recognising and rewarding the Corps' contribution to engineering.

Awards were made for individual endeavour, trade skills, academic achievement, support to operations and for outstanding work or support to the Corps and for QGE it was a grand occasion as two of its members were the recipients of these prestigious awards. First, Corporal Anil Rai received



“The Vailly Award” for being the best JNCO who had completed the Junior Command Course¹ that year. Second, Sapper Rajan Rana was awarded the “The Archibald Award” for being the best tradesman across all Royal School of Military Engineering delivered trade courses. Put into perspective this means over 1000 students on more than 40 different types of course.



The Corps of Royal Engineers Awards for Engineering Excellence 2018. Members of QGE with the two award winners on the evening

The event offered a glimpse into the depth of the talent and dedication amongst all members in the Corps and indeed the QGE and provided a grand platform to demonstrate engineering expertise, academic excellence, individual endeavour, trade craft and operational success across the Corps of Royal Engineers.

Ex TIGER GRANADA KHUKURI

LCpl Om Raj Gurung

Thirty-one members of the Squadron managed to escape to Spain for a great week of adventure training on Ex TIGER GRANADA KHUKURI; run in the Sierra Nevada National Park in southern Spain. Under the guidance of Operations Officer, Captain Govinda Rana who is also the Unit Adventure Training Officer (UATO), the Expedition Leader, Prakash Gurung pulled together a week-long package that covered the four disciplines of mountaineering, rock climbing, mountain biking and multi activities.

Ex ALPINE SAPPER 18

Spr Bijay Lama

Ex ALPINE SAPPER is the Royal Engineers annual ski training camp and Corps Championships where sappers compete as individuals and in Regimental Teams. This exercise is designed for all abilities, from novice to advanced skier and culminates in a week of ski racing in both the Slalom and Giant Slalom disciplines. During the exercise, soldiers, no matter how experienced were pushed out of their comfort zones by the instructors to make them safer, technically better and faster skiers.

Our base for the duration of the camp was Fulpmes, Austria

¹ The Junior Command Course is attended by all LCpls on selection to promotion to Cpl. Each capbadge runs their own course and Cpl Anil was top among a cohort of over 200.

and 6 members from 36 Engineer Regiment and QGE took part, led by Lt Z Tarrant Taylor with LCpl Sureen Thapa a capable 2IC.

Although there were a few experienced skiers in the team most, had little or no race experience. The first 3 weeks were spent practicing on the Stubai Glacier where race skills were taught and honed, all which required a good dose of courage due to the speeds involved. We were also taught how to maintain skis effectively and prepare them for racing.

The race programme included both individual and team races and the 36 Engineer Regiment team raced hard and fully committed themselves to what was for many a daunting challenge when stood in the starting gates at the top of a steep run. Unlucky falls in the Slalom and Giant Slalom meant we finished 6th and 8th from the 18 teams competing in the team event. Our best individual performance came from Lt Tarrant Taylor who finished 10th out of the 73 racers.



The 36 Engr Regt and QGE team proudly displaying their flag on the mountain



70 GURKHA FIELD SQUADRON

OC's Summary

Maj I Pilbeam RE

The pace of life for 70 Gurkha Field Squadron has continued from where we left off last year and has been a busy, but successful one. In summer 2018, Major Ian Pilbeam took over from Major Robert Grant as the OC, with the focus being on conversion to a Protected Mobility Engineer Squadron. Despite this task, the Squadron still managed to deploy on international level exercises, complete both summer and winter adventurous training, secure medals on both shooting competitions and the world-renowned Cambrian Patrol, and finally culminating with the Squadron completing a rotation as a Public Duties Reinforcement Company in London. The following serves as a chronological summary of the Squadron events this year.

The Force Troops Command Shooting Competition provided the perfect opportunity for Gurkha Sappers from 70 Squadron to showcase their ability. This competition saw Lt Katie Alexander win the best shot amongst the Officers in the Corps, while Sapper Amir Gurung won overall best shot in the Corps. He then replicated this level of performance at the Army 100 Bisley Shoot, along with Cpl Sangum Khapangi Magar, LCpl Arun Thapa and Spr Dinesh Gurung, all of whom finished on the Top 100 Leader Board.

Exercise NOBLE PARTNER 18 was a 3 week multi-national exercise hosted in Georgia and on which a section from QGE deployed in support of 1 RIFLES in Aug 18. Representing QGE were LCpls Tul Thapa and Sunrise Gurung and Sprs Deepak Magar, Sagar Limbu, Lanam Lama, Sameer Rai and Rajan Rana. This was one of the biggest military exercises in Georgia and involved soldiers from Georgia, the UK, the USA, Germany, Ukraine, Armenia, Turkey and France. The Sapper's combat engineering skills were put to the test straight away, operating under simulated mortar fire, strafing attacks

and faced with a complex nest of obstacles, the section were tasked with breaching the defences on a Company level live fire tactical training package. Next, the engineers from across the nations shared and demonstrated each other's counter mobility capabilities. The Georgian Army were particularly interested about QGE's cat-wire fencing and concealed low wire entanglement and shared techniques for the rest of the exercise. The exercise finished with a large-scale defensive phase where American, Georgian, Gurkha and British soldiers were seen shoulder to shoulder digging trenches, all feeling the mutual graft despite language differences. An impressive touch was brought to the phase by US air assets being utilised in the CASEVAC process.



Lance Corporal Tul and his section on Exercise NOBLE PARTNER

This exercise is just one of many that has seen members from 70 Gurkha Field Squadron deployed on operations, projects and exercises in countries that include; South Sudan, Kenya, the Falklands, Romania, Nepal and Germany.

In summer 2018, the Squadron started the process of converting to Protected Mobility platforms with the addition of Husky Armoured Vehicles (Wheeled) to the Squadron's fleet. This conversion has seen a number of the Gurkha Sappers completing driver, commander and gunnery courses to become proficient in living, moving and fighting from the armoured vehicle. This task has been a steep learning



The Field Troops and their new Husky Armoured Vehicles





A full Squadron effort for the 12-bay double storey medium girder bridge

curve for the Squadron, but the formation of an Armoured Vehicle (Wheeled) section has seen the Squadron move from strength to strength. This success has been recognised from across 12 (Force Support) Engineer Group and was formally acknowledged by Brigadier Eldon Millar MBE, Commander 8 Engineer Brigade, through the presentation of a Commander's Coin to Corporals Ashish and Yogesh for leading their section. Thulo shyabash.

The first outing for the Squadron in their Protected Mobility role saw a deployment on Ex SHINY KUKHURI; where drivers, commanders and gunners were tested on their navigation, convoy and contact drills across the Aldershot training areas. Although tentative at first, the Gurkha Sappers soon became confident in their new role and were pushing the vehicles to their limits. The exercise was a great opportunity for the Squadron members to relearn basic skills and adapt to operating from a vehicle for sustained periods.

The basic skills learnt were then tested on Ex DHARILO KUKHURI; a squadron level deployment to the training areas of Minley and Aldershot. This exercise saw all members of the Squadron deploy, with the Echelon Department leading

the way in setting up a resources yard for all the engineering stores and plant vehicles for the upcoming exercise. The first task for the Field Troops was the construction of a 12-bay double storey Medium Girder Bridge across a 29m gap. The complexities of controlling of troop of 9 vehicles was felt by newly arrived Lt Oscar Maynard, but he was ably supported by SSgt Yakthung Angbuhang. The success of this task was then further replicated with the construction of a brigade water point and the reserve demolition of Claycart Bridge across the Basingstoke Canal. Throughout, the support that the Echelon Department and Support Troop provided ensured the tasks were delivered within the time constrained nature of the exercise. The exercise was underpinned by C3S members enabling both voice and data communications across the 20km range that the Squadron was operating within. In true Gurkha fashion, the Squadron ended the exercise with messing, before being welcomed back to camp with fireworks overhead.

The Cambrian Patrol competition provided another excellent training opportunity for the Gurkha Sappers to showcase their abilities. Sprs Govinda Rajbanshi, Gobinda Rana Magar, Angshihang Limbu, Jagadish Gurung and Bibek Gurung

were chosen alongside LCpl Laonya Limbu, Patrol 2IC Cpl Krishna Kumar Rai and Patrol Commander Lt Charlie Collins to represent 36 Engineer Regiment. In the arduous conditions of the Welsh mountains, the team completed 48 hours of gruelling military skills tests and it was testament to their skills and expertise that they were rewarded with a Silver Medal for their efforts.



The Cambrian Patrol team with their silver medals with Comd 12 Force Sp Engr Gp, Col T Marsden





The changing of the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace with SSgt Bishnu from 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn

The final event in 70 Squadron's busy forecast of events saw 87 members from across QGE fulfilling the role of a Public Duties Reinforcement Company. This saw Gurkha Sappers completing guarding duties as The Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, St James' Palace, the Tower of London and Windsor Castle. The vast preparations required saw all members completing drill training delivered by the Scots Guards, in which Gurkhas had to learn and hone both heavy and light drill. For each mount, The Queen's Guard detachments would move from Woolwich and prepare themselves for duties in front of the huge audiences that gathered outside the Palaces.

The initial inspections within Wellington Barracks allowed the Gurkhas to demonstrate their proud history with the drawing and inspections of kukris. Once ready, the detachments would move to the Royal Palaces behind the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas. Throughout the 2-month period, the bearing and turnout of the Gurkha Sappers was immaculate, gaining praise from the highest echelons of the Armed Forces and the Royal Family.

The next year for 70 Gurkha Field Squadron remains set to be a busy, yet enjoyable year. The ongoing conversion to Protected Mobility will continue, reinforced through another round of squadron level exercises before deploying on Ex WESSEX STORM in support of the 3 SCOTS Battlegroup. The foundations that have been laid throughout this year puts the Squadron in an excellent position to continue showcasing the depth that Gurkha Sappers can provide to the British Army.

QGE's 70th Birthday Celebrations from a Young Troop Commander's Perspective

Lt Katie Alexander RE

I travelled out to Nepal last September to start my Nepali Language Course in Pokhara. It was to be an experience, not only of the language, but the culture, history and traditions of Nepal and the Gurkhas. I was lucky enough not only to be there during the festive season that incorporates Dashain and Tihar, but also to celebrate The Queen's Gurkha Engineer's 70th Birthday.

My first exposure to the celebrations was at Col (Ret'd) Andy Mills' House where there was a gathering of local Ex QGE personnel. The event commenced in true QGE fashion with what promised to be a lengthy Health and Safety brief from the QM. Pre-empting this, Col Mills jumped in on the mic and the celebrations were able to start 30 mins earlier than expected!

While there were mainly people from Pokhara, some had travelled from further afar like Kathmandu and Dharan - apparently a 9-hour bus ride is somewhat normal in Nepal while most of us Brits consider a 4-hour car journey to be a major feat! What struck me about the group that had gathered, was their ability to recount stories of their time in QGE and reconnect with each other so quickly. There was a strong sense of comradeship and gusto, even after all the years since they retired from military life. I was impressed with the language skills of the retired British Officers, who had done their language course in Hong Kong. I could see that while language and communication is less of a barrier now than it was during the Hong Kong days, by being able to communicate in Nepali, you might be able to connect with your Gurkha soldiers and peers on a different level. I endeavoured to improve my Nepali enough over the next month so that, at the main birthday event, I would be able to join in with more of the conversation!

Being QGE, one celebration wasn't nearly enough – this was just the party starter and the end of November bought a clear, beautiful day with stunning views of the Machhapuchhare (Fishtail) Mountain in the Annapurna Range. The chautara was surrounded by tents, tables, colourful flags and QGE merchandise stands, all readily awaiting the crowds that were to descend on BGP for the main 70th Birthday Celebrations.

The previous evening, I had been invited to Lakeside to meet and mingle with a (large) handful of serving and ex-military/QGE Officers and Soldiers who had travelled to Nepal for the occasion. It was amazing to see friends reunited, catching up and reminiscing about their QGE days. I was welcomed



like an old friend and was instantly thrown into the buzz and excitement that is so contagious within QGE. The crowd varied from people who had served for a couple of years to those who had served a lifetime in the Army, but regardless of how long or short they had been in, their passion and pride of QGE was evident and unwavering. The sheer number of people who showed up at the main event the next day was testament to this – people had travelled from all over the world just to celebrate the legacy of QGE!

The whole event served as an amazing opportunity for people to reunite, network and explore Nepal. It became clear to me that I had become part of a very special organisation; even though I only have the potential to serve two years with the Gurkhas, I could see that if you were once QGE, you would always be QGE!

I spent the whole day feeling like I was looking down a fascinating telescope of QGE history. There were gentlemen who had served in the Malay conflict, at the beginning of QGE's formation, men who had served in the Falklands and right through to little old me who had just started out in their Army career. It was evident that QGE has come a long way since its former years - it has progressed and changed, got larger, become smaller, been based in Hong Kong, been based in Maidstone; but the ethos and kaida that binds everyone, past and present, in QGE together, has fundamentally remained the same. Jai QGE!

Life In Gurkha Company, Infantry Training Centre (ITC) Catterick

Sgt Bhupendra Gurung

On arrival of new recruits, Gurkha Company Permanent Staff and their families, warmly welcome the new trainee riflemen. This year, Recruit Intake 18 (RI18) saw 270 recruits arrive in chilly weather in Jan 18. Currently there are 10 QGE personnel in Gurkha Company and it's been a huge privilege and great opportunity for us to be a part of the training team delivering the 39 week long Combat Infantryman Course 2016 (CIC(16)) to a new generation of Gurkhas. The CIC(16) syllabus is followed by all the Companies across the 2 x

Battalions in ITC and is a very challenging and demanding training program that has recently been updated.



Gurkha Company is a great place to work alongside other very highly motivated and selected instructors from across the Brigade of Gurkhas. As we are all aware, the dedication and demands on our time to train young Gurkha recruits, and to inject the Gurkha ethos and Kaida are significant. All QGE instructors within the Company are exceptionally professional and have displayed outstanding performances to develop and nurture the young Gurkha recruits. The prime example of excellence by Sappers are Capt Dirgha, Sgt Raju, Cpl Bishnu, Cpl Krishna, Cpl Bijay and Cpl Nagesh who were all awarded the CO's Tankard 2018 for their continuously outstanding performance throughout the year. Gurkha Company has always had a very competitive Platoon competition, run throughout the year and with a winning mentality and effective team management Sgt Raju's (Kabul) platoon was the runner up Platoon of 2018, only losing by a small margin to the Champion Platoon.



Sgt Raju leading 7 Kabul Plt RI18 off parade during the Pass Off Parade at BGP



Along with the CIC (16) training, QGE members are always keen on organising Charity events for good causes. This year Cpl Bishnu, who rules the entertainment package in the Coy, organised an Open Mic Charity



Open Mic Charity Event Cheque Presentation

event during the Khukuri Cup 18. With first class planning a well organised Open Mic Concert Charity event led by Cpl Bishnu and his team managed to raise £360.24 for the Gurkha Welfare Trust (GWT).

Apart from CIC (16) training, to enhance and maintain the trade skills, QGE instructors are always leading inhouse project within the Gurkha Company, utilising their trade skills to full effect. I, along with all QGE members, have refurbished the Mandir and SP bar this year. For 2019, myself and Sgt Bikram are leading on the Chautra and Messing Hut projects which will be completed by summer 2019.



There have been a few changes in QGE personnel this year and we have bid farewell to WO2 Prithi Chhantyal, Sgt Tilak Pun, Cpl Bijay Shrestha and Cpl Dibesh Lama who have returned to Maidstone, the ARRC Support Battalion and 1 RSME Regt. Their posts have been taken up by WO2 Hemraj Gurung as the Training Coordinator, myself as the Kandahar Platoon Sergeant and Cpl Anil Rai as a Section Commander in 4 Iraq Platoon. As I write RI18 have completed the 39-week CIC and 267 trainees have recently completed the Pass Off Parade. 3 Trainees were kept back due to injuries and have

joined Guards Company and will complete their training by April 19.

Our preparations for the Recruit Intake 2019 (RI19) will start immediately after the RI18 Pass Off Parade. A week of staff training followed by zero week will be conducted in order to standardise procedures and make sure that all instructors perform in the same manner and to the same standard throughout the Company. Straight after the zero-week, 50 permanent staff will deploy to Nepal for Recruit Assistance (RA) Duty. The growth in the Brigade will give opportunity for 400 young Nepalese recruits to join the Brigade as RI19 in 2019.



The uplift in QGE Permanent Staff in order to deliver the enlarged RI19 is 5 x pax; the post of C Wing Assistant Commander will be filled by WO2 Birendra Kambang, Training Coordinator assistance will be fulfilled by Sgt Bikram Gurung, G4 support by Cpl Dipash Gurung, 3 Tobruk Platoon Sect Commander by Cpl Kulbir Sapkota and finally the Gym PTI will be Cpl Dhan Ghale. In total QGE strength in Gurkha Company will have risen to 15 Permanent Staff by Jan 2019.

3 RSME REGIMENT UPDATE

Capt Khelendrabhadur Gurung QGE



QGE ERE Personnel at 3 RSME Regt





Trainees and Permanent Staff of Training Party 72

It has been almost a year since I took over from Capt Ashok Kumar Gurung as Curragh Tp Comd, 3 RSME Regt and it has been a very busy but highly productive year. SSgt Eka Rai was awarded a Chief Royal Engineer's Commendation and promoted to WO2, Cpl Sandesh Rai was promoted to Sgt and Cpl Arun Tumbahangphe has moved on to undertake Clerk Of Works training. In their place Cpls Roshan Budha Magar and Victor Fombo have settled in following the rigorous Royal Engineer Trainer Insight Course (RETIC) and the QGE footprint within 3 RSME has grown further with the establishment of GURTAM posts within 63 HQ & Trg Sp Sqn. Currently there are 2 x posts in the Sqn, filled by Sprs Anil Tamang and Chet Gurung and they will shortly be joined by more.

This year the integrated QGE B3 course, Trg Party 72, consisted of 32 Gurkhas and 11 British trainees and on completion of the 10 week ME Cbt 0-3 course, Spr Nagendra Sarad Malla was awarded the prize for the best academic performance amongst the Gurkhas and Spr Jesh Magar was overall top student.

There is no such thing as quiet year for any Engineer Regiment and this is especially true for training establishments and Curragh Troop. The Troop has always striven to take part and excel in every Regimental activity, and this ethos continues to this day. Cpl Dil Pun single handily organised a Level 2 Multi-activity adventure training package for the Squadron in Newquay, focussing on developing leadership skills and team cohesion through exposure to risk in challenging outdoor environments. SSgt Eka Rai ran multiple Level 2 Mountain Bike Instructor Courses and frequently represented the Regiment in mountain bike competitions as well as Squash. In addition to sport and adventure training, every year the Regiment organises a battlefield study (BFS) and this year Cpl Dil Pun was privileged to take part in Ex GALLIPOLI SAPPER, a BFS in Turkey and SSgt Eka Rai, Cpls Victor and Roshan took part in a BFS to Germany.

We have also played an active role in supporting The ABF, the Soldiers' Charity and also The Pahar Trust through the now traditional bag packing which, under the leadership of Cpl Dil Pun raised over £4000. A team from Curragh Tp (SSgt Eka, Cpl Dil, Victor and Roshan) also took part in Feet Half Marathon while Sprs Chet and Anil represented the Royal Engineers and completed the arduous 125 mile Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race. If that was not enough they have also represented the Army in the Tri-Service Field Gun Competition, narrowly missing the first position.



1 RSME REGT UPDATE

Sgt Jas Rai - Gurkha Liaison SNCO

2018 has been a successful year for QGE personnel serving at 1 RSME Regt. There are now a total of 6 permanent QGE staff across both 24 and 36 Trg Sqns; Capt Naresh Limbu (Perie Tp Comd), Sgt Jas Rai (GLO), Sgt Bhim Limbu (Trade SNCO), Cpl Sachin Limbu (Ops JNCO), Cpl Jit Thapa (Boat Instructor), and Cpl Arpan Gurung (Duty of Care JNCO). Over the past year we bade farewell to Cpl Bhesh Gurung after his successful tenure at 1 RSME Regt and he is now assigned to IBS Brecon as a Sect Comd. Over the course of the past year there have been 25 QGE personnel who have completed either a Class 2-1 or 0-2 trade course or Clerk of Works Training at 1 RSME Regt. Amongst the, on the outgoing Clerk of Works course SSgt Bobin Gurung achieved



the overall top student and was awarded the Fowkes Medal Award while SSgt Dinesh Gurung achieved the Best Academic Performance Award. Sgt Ramkaji, currently on the junior Clerk of Works (Mechanical) course won the Bog Snuggs Award for the first year top student. The following QGE personnel completed their course over the past year.

Name	Rank	Course	
Santosh Gurung	SSgt	Clerk of Works	Mechanical
Dinesh Gurung	SSgt	Clerk of Works	Mechanical
Bobin Gurung	SSgt	Clerk of Works	Electrical
Rupesh Gurung	LCpl	Surveyor	Class 1
Sandeep Sombaphe	LCpl	H&P	Class 1
Mohan Gurung	LCpl	FTR EQPT	Class 1
Deben Wagle	Spr	FAB WELD	Class 1
Bibek Nembang	Spr	FTR EQPT	Class 1
Nayan Mabo	Spr	FAB WELD	Class 1
Puskal Limbu	Spr	FAB WELD	Class 1
Hemanta Gurung	Spr	FTR ACR	Class-1
Himal P Limbu	Spr	FTR ACR	Class 1
Puspa Gurung	Spr	C&J	Class 1
Sunil T Magar	Spr	FTR EQPT	Class 1
Gobinda R Magar	Spr	FAB WELD	Class 1
Amit Gurung	Spr	ME POM	Class 1
Sadip Rai	Spr	ME POM	Class 1
Bir Dhan Rai	Spr	C&J	Class 2
Jitendra Limbu	Spr	H&P	Class 2
Ghan Bdr Chettri	Spr	Elect	Class 2
Sadip Rai	Spr	ME POM	Class 2
Ashish Thapa	Spr	FTR Gen	Class 2
Rohan Rai	Spr	FTR ACR	Class 2
Susan Nalbo Limbu	Spr	C&J	Class 2
Sudesh Rai	Spr	C&J	Class 2

Army Radio Operator into an Army Boat Operator Instructor

Cpl Jit Thapa

After successfully completing the RE Boat Operators' course, I have been assigned to 1 RSME Regt as a Boat Operations Instructor. It was a very proud moment for me to be selected as an Instructor in Boat Troop as this is a rare opportunity for QGE Sappers. Boat Troop is based on the banks of the River Medway in Upnor, opposite the Historic Dockyard.

Working alongside my British counterparts my role includes teaching and assessing soldiers on the Large Rigid Raider Boat, Combat Support Boats (CSB), Army Work Boats (AWB). In addition, I am required to teach them to navigate at sea. Navigating a new gig, travelling to different locations on an Army Boat and teaching All Arms Soldiers to be

responsible boat operators is a great pleasure. Being an Army Boat Operator means the doors have been unlocked and given me many exciting opportunities for future postings including Brunei, Germany and many other places around the globe. The job and organisation is uncharted territory for QGE, but I am acutely looking forward to the challenges and opportunities it offers me.



QGE DETACHMENT, INFANTRY BATTLE SCHOOL, BRECON

Cpl Gaurab Gurung QGE

It gives me great pleasure to write to you this year from the Assault Pioneer Platoon, Infantry Battle School in Brecon with even more diverse news and fascinating pictures than before! This year has been another extremely busy year for the platoon as the training demands needed to field the Army 2020 structure have led to all elements needing to maximise their output and performance.



IBS, Assault Pioneer Platoon members

Furthermore, the platoon has undergone radical change in terms of manning. What once used to be UKTAP heavy is now GURTAM only since October 2018 and a QGE QMSI will take post from May 2019 and will command the pan-Brigade of Gurkha unit with soldiers from QGE, 1RGR and 2RGR.





Spr Himlal is awarded, "Rifleman of the Year" in Gurkha Wing Mandalay

As a part of Community Engagement work members of the Platoon took part in the Brecon Beacons WAAT 4 challenge 2018, where money was raised for the Royal British Legion, Brecon Mountain Rescue Team and Wales Air Ambulance. In recognition of their service to the IBS and the wider community, a Commanding Officer's coin was awarded to Sgt Deepak and Cpl Gaurab.

The platoon fully supports the School by delivering realistic training in all aspects of assault pioneering. This mainly consists of providing Battle Noise Simulation (BATSIM), teaching the construction of field defences and explosive assault breaching.



Cpl Rashon entertaining Commanding Officer Saheb during the IBS Open Day

In addition, the platoon has done exceptionally well in both military and sporting events. Cpl Gaurab led the IBS Volleyball team and successfully defended the Minor unit title. He also led the platoon to win both inter-departmental football and volleyball competitions. Spr Himlal remained undefeated in the annual division cross country competition. In addition he was awarded full RE Corps Colours for his contribution to cross country during his time at 1 RSME Regt on his 2-1 trade course. He has also received the Best Rifleman Trophy for year 2018-2019 for his contribution to Gurkha Wing Mandalay GW(M). Sgt Gajendra continues to excel at golf and was the RE Golf Society's Autumn Meet Corps Champion.



WAAT4 Challenge 2018 winning teams including Commanding Officer Saheb IBS

The work ethic and fighting spirit remains high for QGE Sappers and is apparent by the results that all have produced across all activities at IBS and the wider Army. The accumulation of awards, trophies and the sheer volume of commitments suggest that a very high standard has been set. Jai QGE.

INSIGHT TO ALLIED RAPID REACTION CORPS (ARRC) SUPPORT BATTALION

Sgt Suman Gurung QGE

The ARRC Support Battalion is a diverse unit consisting of personnel from 24 different cap badges. The primary role of the Battalion is Real Life Support to the 3* ARRC HQ and broken down into Protection, Projection and Sustainment of the HQ both when deployed and in barracks. The Battalion's role requires a large number of specialist skills and trades and Gurkha personnel from different capbadges are an integral part of the Battalion.





Members of ARRC SP Bn on CT 1 Exercise in Brecon

What we do in ARRC Support Battalion

The role of the ARRC Sp Bn is extremely varied and stretches far beyond the construction of the staff working environments. The Infantry contingent provide protection, the Logistics component provide transport, catering and supply functions while the Engineers provide power and mobility, not to mention a huge number of other functions. The contingent of ambitious soldiers thrive for excellence and always produce excellent results.

JAVELIN KNOCKER 18: Ex JAVELIN KNOCKER 18 was a Combat Engineer exercise as part of Special to Arm training conducted at the Wyke Regis Training Area. The training concentrated on Combat Engineer Mobility, Counter Mobility and Survivability. Soldiers from The Queen's Gurkha Engineers played a pivotal role in the planning and execution of the training. The Exercise focused on the 5 Bay MGB, MGOB, HGOB, Infantry assault bridge, water supply capability and watermanship training. Overall the exercise was a resounding success and helped to contribute to the effectiveness of ARRC Support Battalion.



Dashain 2018 with Brigadier P Griffiths (Commander 1 Sig Bde) and Lt Col N Thomas QDG (CO ARRC Sp Bn)

JAVELIN PATROL 18: Ex JAVELIN PATROL 18 was a Battalion Section competition and its goal was to test the sections in an arduous environment, based on common military tactics and skills. The sections were tested on CBRN, C-IED, river crossing skills, first aid, infantry skills, patrol reporting, navigation and physical stamina. The event lasted for 48 hours in the unforgiving weather and terrain of the Leek Training Area. Close Support Troop, which consists of both RGR and QGE soldiers were victorious in the event. The CO of ARRC Support Battalion, Lt Col N Thomas QDG kindly distributed the prizes to the winning team.

Ex FLYING JAVELIN 18: Ex FLYING JAVELIN 18 was the joint capstone training event for 1 (UK) Signal Brigade and 11 Signal Brigade and took place in September 2018. The primary aim for the ARRC Support Battalion on this exercise was to prepare, deploy, establish, operate & sustain a robust Initial Command Element (ICE) base. During the exercise the Battalion constructed and maintained accommodation, a dining facility, working environments & security for the ICE. QGE soldiers were heavily involved in the planning, recce and construction of the base and the soldiers applied their skills and initiative to execute the exercise to the highest the standards.



Inter Troop Improvised Raft Competition

Battlefield Study: Soldiers from the Battalion were lucky to visit the Gallipoli Peninsula as part of a Battlefield study in March 18. The Gallipoli campaign was a First World War battle fought between Allied forces and soldiers from the German and Ottoman Empires. The Campaign is not only remembered for chaotic and incompetent leadership by the Allied commanders, but also for the valour and dedication of the Allied soldiers who came from all corners of the British Empire (Australia, Britain, New Zealand & India) and friends of the Empire (Gurkhas). The pristine Gallipoli National Park was an exceptional place to conduct a Battlefield study. Gully Ravine, where a battalion of Gurkhas were reduced to half their strength in a day was still well preserved. Human bones, empty cases from the bullets, artillery and equipment used by the soldiers are still visible on the site. The study was an eye-opener for all the soldiers who learnt about the conditions and terrain where the Allied soldiers fought with distinction.





View of Initial Command Element (ICE) Site set up

Visitors. Finally, we mention the visit to the Battalion by HRH The Princess Royal, who officially opened the Messing Hut, built by QGE and Bn personnel led by SSgt Lal Rana, on 4 Jul 18. In addition, Col BG, Col Robinson CBE came to the Battalion to officially open the BFBS Gurkha Radio Tower on 30 May 18. As we are mixed unit it is also a pleasure to receive Brigade Unit COs, GMs and RCMOs throughout the year and this includes our own GM and GRMCO who visited on 10 May 18.



IMJIN Messing Hut Opening Ceremony

LIFE IN BRUNEI BOAT SECTION

SSgt Rojan Rai QGE

Background. British Forces Brunei (BFB) comprises a resident infantry battalion of Gurkhas (the RIB), Jungle Warfare Division (JWD), the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, PCMF and Garrison Support Troops. BFB was formed in 1963, when British troops were moved here from Singapore to quell a revolt against Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin III that started in December 1962. BFB Garrison Support Troops consists of the Brunei Signal Troop, QOGLR, **Brunei Boat Section (BBS)**, 7 Flight Army Air Corps, the Garrison

Workshop, an RMP detachment, the RLC Stores Section and the SSO Department. The RIB and JWD are supported by the Garrison Sp Tp, which provides all logistic and administrative support. The JWD is the Army's jungle warfare school and it is part of the Infantry Battle School, Brecon. It runs a number of courses, ranging from Jungle Warfare Instructor Courses (JWIC) to the Operational Tracking Instructor Course (OTIC).

BBS was formed in June 2003 in order to deliver boat capabilities to support both enduring and contingent riverine activities, maintain high readiness in support of BFB and deliver watermanship courses inline with RSME Training Policy. Currently there 5 x QGE personnel (2 x SNCOs and 3 x Cpls) and 2 x LECs working as part of the Garrison Sp Tp and we hold 12 x Hard Hulled Riverine Craft, 4 x MK 6 Assault Boat, 3 x W525 Inflatable Boats and associated motors and equipment. The role of the SNCOs is to support the planning and decision-making process, with responsibility for training as well as equipment maintenance, boat support and manpower. For the Cpls, they are responsible for maintaining the Water Safety Equipment, documents and OBMs in order to make the equipment readily available for the riverine activities.

There are numerous rivers that flow into the South China Sea from interior Brunei. Therefore, the use of the boats to transit rivers and conduct tactical river crossings are heavily in demand by exercising troops. Teams from BBS are regularly deployed to provide boat support for jungle exercises for both the British and Bruneian Armed forces in addition to which the JWD runs JWIC and OTIC twice a year and our main job is to provide support during the riverine operations.

After a long pause we have now been issued a Franchise Licence from HQ RSME to run the All Arms Basic Boat Operator and the All Arms Safety Boat Operator courses and these will run in

Apr 19 to qualify 2 RGR personnel. Cpl Nirajan deployed to Hakuba, Japan on Ex FROSTED KUKRI on a level 3 Adventure Training Alpine Skiing expedition and I am in the early stages of planning a Level 3 Mountain Biking package for the BBS team; there is no doubt the rewards of working in BBS are high with the chance to explore South East Asia with our families.





Ex PEMULA HUTAN in Ulu Tutong Dam

BRITISH GURKHAS POKHARA UPDATE

Capt Meenjang Gurung – Quartermaster



It has been another successful year for British Gurkhas Pokhara (BGP). It has delivered Gurkha Recruiting in a free, fair and transparent manner, provided local support to the soldiers and veterans and maintained its capability in Disaster Relief readiness all in order to support Firm Base activity in Nepal.

Following the Attestation Parade on 9 Feb 18, 270 Trainee Rfn deployed to the UK to start their new careers as brave Gurkhas (Recruit Intake 2018). The BGP Camp was deserted for two weeks and then the process started again for Recruit Intake 2019 (RI19). Selection for new Senior Recruiting Assistants (SRAs), formally known as Galla Walas, was conducted followed by a week of refresher training where all 34 SRAs gathered at BGP. As usual, straight after their training, they deployed to their Area of Responsibility and started the advertisement campaign for Gurkha Recruitment. Throughout the process they were supported by the Recruit Cell and serving personnel from the wider British Gurkhas Nepal (BGN). For RI19 there were 9992 applicants which self-selected down to 8891 Potential Recruits during the Registration Phase. From this number, and after Central Selection, 400 British Army and 120 Gurkha Contingent Singapore Police Force recruits were selected for RI19.

However, the logistics behind enrolling 400 new trainees was not easy. We had initially been told to prepare for 270 British Army recruits which then went up to 320 and a last minute hike saw the final number eventually reach the total of 400 and thus caused considerable work for the G4 team. Extra kit had to be demanded from the UK and flow out, extra rations ordered and more accommodation space provided. However, these were all overcome successfully by our professional

staff although the logging of all items issued to recruits on the MoDs G4 software platform, MJDI (Management of the Joint Deployed Inventory) is still taking place as I write, some 3 months later!

Future Recruiting Process – As soon as the MoD announced female recruiting into the Brigade of Gurkhas and the implementation of the new pan-Army Physical Employment Standards (PES), preparation for this new chapter began. The ordering of new kit and equipment, converting the infrastructure for female recruits and trial as to what impact PES would have, kept us busy. Currently, members of the Recruiting Cell are deployed to various parts of the country in order to brief and demonstrate the PES so that future potential recruits can prepare accordingly. Female recruiting will unfortunately not take place this year but we are ready for whenever the order comes.

Additional Commitments. In addition to recruiting, Sgt Shiva Rai (BGP MT Sgt) and myself have been extremely busy supporting visitors, duty treks, preparing for various inspections and maintaining the unit's operational effectiveness. This year, we also hosted the QGE 70th Anniversary where almost 600 QGE members attended this highly successful event. But away from our standing commitments we have also managed to have some fun. We organised a cycling trip to and from Bandipur (approximately 160 km) and a BGP Team Training Exercise has been highlighted as one of the most interesting and motivating events for our Civilian Staff. This event included a day trek around the hills of Pokhara with some educational and team tasks in between.



BGP Team Training organised by QM BGP

Look Forward. BGP is looking forward to RI20 which will include the implementation of PES and Sgt Shiva Rai will have a key part to play in this. However, for me it is resettlement courses and termination leave, followed by the transition into Civilian Street. I have thoroughly enjoyed my second tenure as QM here in BGP and feel very lucky to have been able to hold this interesting and dynamic post in my home country. Jai QGE / BGP.



REGIMENTAL PHOTO NEWS



Left: 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn: WO2(SSM) Birendra Kambang hands over to WO2(SSM) Chandrabahadur Pun
Centre: 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn: WO2(SSM) Prithi Chhantyal handing over the SSM's cane to WO2 (SSM) Ramkumar Rai
Right: HQ SQN ARRC Sp Bn: Offgoing WO2(SSM) Ashokkumar Gurung handsover to incoming WO2(SSM) Hemraj Gurung



Ex DHARILO KHUKURI 19



Corporal Mahendra Angbuhang winning the most recent Squadron range competition





Final Queen's Guard



QGE Officers and Warrant Officers with Col of the Regt at the Bde Dinner Night



QGE Tug of War Team in action during Bde bhela



GM and GRCMO with Min AF



Project Anemoi



Sport and Adventure Training



36 Engr Regt Cross Country Mountain Bike Team



Brigade of Gurkhas Squash Team 2019





69 Gurkha Fd Sqn mountain biking and hiking in Spain



QGE Golf Team during Bde Competition



Army Cross Country 3rd place Cpl Topjang Rai



Spr Anil in the DW Canoe Race



6 Engr Regt Army Championship Badminton Team



QGEA NEWS

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Mike Carter



Once again I am hugely struck, as the content of this magazine reflects, how busy, active and successful the Regiment continues to be. For the Association, this year has seen the landmark occasion of our 70th anniversary, which was celebrated in style both in the UK and in Nepal (of which more in this magazine). In the background we have continued to support the Regimental family and our wider charitable aims and looking forward to the future.

I would also like to mention that this year is the 20th Anniversary of the liberation of Kosovo and to recognise the key role that the Regiment played in that operation. Tragically Lt Gareth Evans and SSgt Balaram Rai from 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn lost their lives in executing their duty and we remember them.

As an Association we continue to seek to be more attractive to all ranks that have or are currently serving with the Regiment. This remains a vital issue as we wish to ensure the Association remains relevant for the future though taking pride in our collective past, and provides a focus for friendship and camaraderie that has always been at the heart of its purpose. We see a steady increase in our membership from both Gurkha and British personnel who are or who have served with the Regiment, and as ever, I would urge all to encourage membership.

We continue to be very grateful to the Commandant, Gurkha Major and all ranks of QGE for their support and for their hospitality on Regimental occasions. I would also commend the committee who do a considerable amount on your behalf, m u c h unseen, but very much appreciated.

I look forward to seeing you at the Regimental Birthday.

QGEA UK SOCIAL EVENTS

Over the previous year there have been a plethora of social events organised by either the QGEA or the GBA. These include the annual RMAS lunch, the Gurkha marching contingent at the Cenotaph and the regular QGEA London Drinks. Going forward for the remainder of 2019 the next one will be the QGEA Birthday followed by the GBA Dinner on 5 Nov 19 at the Army Navy Club. The Association Social Secretary, Lt Col Rob Oakes can give more details and it would be great to continue to build on his success of getting good QGEA participation. Here are a few photos of recent events.





was taken in the Long Pension Room, which offered a glimpse of bygone days, bedecked with Regimental Silver, it very much felt like the Officers' Mess in Perowne Barracks. The specialist chef, Ranjit, had flown back from India only 2 days previously. Used to providing culinary delights for Buckingham Palace, he started with Mughlai Scotch Anda, a mouth-watering Lamb Dhal Bhat finishing with a Walnut & Green Cardamom Brownie with Passion Fruit Ice cream.

Musical accompaniment was provided throughout dinner by The Band of The Royal Yeomanry (Inns of Court & City Yeomanry), on home turf! They looked resplendent in their Blue Mess Dress Concert Order, and played to perfection the Regimental March, as well at

Blaydon Races, the James Bond Theme and finished on a high with a superb rendition of The Posthorn Gallop around the room. The Colonel of the Regiment Saheb said a few words and the piper with the usual gusto entertained all with a solo, finishing with Highland Cathedral. Sathiharu departed just before midnight, having had a wonderful evening celebrating the QGEA Pariwar, as well as raising £120 for the Gurkha Welfare Trust. Jai QGEA!



GRAY'S INN QGEA DINNER

On Saturday 16th March 2019, forty three members of the QGEA and their partners assembled in London for the Annual Association Dinner Night. The Honourable Society of Gray's Inn, having been home to lawyers since before 1388, was the esteemed venue, thanks to the very kind offer of the current Under Treasurer (Brigadier Harking Saheb). Members old and new, serving and retired, from near and far (the Commandant Saheb had just flown back from Africa), sahebharu ani gurugihar, met on The Bencher's Landing, and caught up over a glass of prosecco. The Dinner Call was piped by LCpl Mahesh, and Tuggey Saheb & Clare Memsahab made a fashionably late entrance having travelled all the way from Wales (via the Six Nations Game in Twickenham). Dinner





Keep up to date with all the latest news through the following websites:

www.gurkhabde.com – the new website for the GBA

www.qgea.org - Our own QGEA Website that needs your support

or why not join the QGEA Facebook site, just search for QGEA

or follow the QGEA Twitter feed: @qgeassoc





THE CENOTAPH

Last November not only saw an unprecedented 70th birthday celebration take place in Nepal, but also a smaller group of QGEA members parade past the Cenotaph alongside 40,000 other veterans marking the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. This tholi gathered to remember and pay tribute to the those fallen comrades, QGE and wider, who have made the ultimate sacrifice so that we can enjoy the freedoms we do today. The QGEA Tholi kept in step throughout the whole morning showing that however long since you have served, the drill memory lives on as strong as ever! For those who have not experienced the Whitehall Remembrance Ceremony, the chance to join the Gurkha Brigade Association and march past the Royal Family is strongly recommended.

Those representing the QGEA included (photo below L to R) Capt (Retd) Ian Slack, Lt Col (Retd) Roger Morton, Col (Retd) Mike Carter, Lt Col (Retd) Jim Fernandes, Maj (Retd) Dilprasad Limbu and Maj (Retd) Milanchanra saheb.



INAUGURAL INVICTA PARK BARRACKS QGEA DRINKS

An opportunity for retired QGEA members to be entertained in the WO's' and Sgts' Mess at Invicta Park Barracks.



THE GURKHA BRIGADE ASSOCIATION

Maj Manikumar Rai MBE- Brigade Secretary

What is the Gurkha Brigade Association (GBA)? If you are a serving officer or soldier, it may not mean a lot, but if you are a veteran, it will be of interested to you.

The GBA was established in 1949 to bring together the Gurkha Brigade Regimental Associations. In the same way as HQ Brigade of Gurkhas (HQBG), whilst not an operational command, is responsible for supporting the moral and historical component of Gurkha servicemen, the GBA aims to do the same – *To promote the customs and traditions of the Brigade of Gurkhas, hard won over more than 200 years of service to the British Crown and to foster esprit de corps among its members; both serving and retired.*



President GBA, Lt Gen Sir David Bill KCB, with Field Marshall Sir John Chapple GCB, CBE, DL at Field Marshall Slim's statue after the Field of Remembrance Service

The GBA is one of the Gurkha **4 Pillars**; **The Gurkha Museum** looks after our heritage, **the GBA** acts as the focal point for servicemen and veterans in UK, **HQBG supports the moral component of fighting power by sustaining the Corps/Regimental family as Head of Arm** and the **Gurkha Welfare Trust** the welfare of our ex-servicemen in Nepal. The GBA provides a focal point for the Brigade's constituent Regimental Associations (RA) to engender a commonality of purpose and a shared vision in the best interest of all its members.



Reminiscing about the "Good Old Days" at the GBA Luncheon

The GBA realises that for the younger generation, it seems to have little utility and see it as an "Old Boys Club"; which to a certain extent is true. Those still serving, understandably, focus on their current job and career, others who leave the Army to pursue a second career concentration establishing themselves in their new environment. Ex-servicemen tend to renew their association with their RAs and GBA once they are secure in their jobs or retire, when they have time to renew old friendships.

As anniversaries of historic battles are celebrated, the Gurkha contributions are being recognised. The GBA is frequently asked to take part in the services or approve monuments erected to honour our role in the conflict. Some examples are; a memorial is being planned at Monte Cassino for the 2nd Goorkhas, 7th Gurkhas and 9th Gurkhas contribution to that operation. Another is being erected at the Heroes Park in Kuching for the Gurkha Brigades contribution to the Brunei Emergency and Haig Homes (a charity founded in 1928 to provide housing for ex-servicemen in the United Kingdom and the Channel Islands) is naming a block of flats after the first Gurkha VC, Rifleman Kulbir Thapa VC 2/3rd Gurkhas. The GBA continues to promote the Gurkha heritage.

Many of us joined our respective Regiments during our formative years; after school or university and matured from young adults to the men we are today. The friendships we made during our service continue to thrive, not only within our own RA, but with those who we served with, in Hong Kong, Malaya, Brunei, Nepal, UK or elsewhere. To maintain and encourage those links and enable those friendships to be renewed (and tell shared "war stories") the GBA organises 3 major events, the GBA Memorial Service and Luncheon at RMA Sandhurst in June, The GBA Bhela at Queens Avenue in Aldershot in July and the GBA Dinner at the Army and Navy Club and the Cenotaph Parade, London in November. These occasions provide an opportunity for younger members (serving and retired) to meet the officers and soldiers who wove the fabric of the Gurkha history and reputation. There are also annual Briefing Days for Gurkha Community Leader to update them on the work of the 4 Pillars.



GBA Gurkha Community Leaders Briefing Day

The GBA is co-located with HQBG in Robertson House, RMA Sandhurst to enhance the synergy between the serving and retired elements of the Gurkha Brigade. Should you wish to have more information, please contact Major Manikumar Rai MBE – GBA Brigade Secretary.



NEPAL UPDATES

KATHMANDU UPDATE

THE 70TH QGE REGIMENTAL DAY CELEBRATION IN KATHMANDU

Lt (Ret'd) Ravindra Sahi



Approximately 100 Kathmandu based QGE members including their families gathered in their usual place, the Crystal Banquet, Man Bhawan to celebrate the 70th QGE Day

in traditional style on 29 September 2018. The weather was nice and beautiful, just perfect for the occasion.

The event commenced at 1100 hours with the registration of members followed by drinks and some snacks however, the committee members were already in the place by 1030 hours to check the arrangements and to welcome the members and the ladies. The formal programme commenced at 1215 hours with the welcome speech by the Chairman, Maj (Ret'd) Surjabahadur Thapa MVO sahib followed by the reading of the Special Routine Orders. The Chairman sahib then called all members and ladies to stand up for a minute silence in honour of those members who had passed away during the past year as a nominal roll of 35 deceased former Gurkha Sappers was read out to the members. Soon after this, the



cake cutting ceremony took place followed by the distribution of a Life Membership Certificate to 21165340 LCpl Lilbahadur Pun.

At about 1300 hours, the Association President Maj (Ret'd) Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE sahib addressed the members with a short speech thanking all for coming and making it an enjoyable day. He also updated and praised the members for celebrating the QGE Day in a very fine and traditional way and said he hoped to see all of them in Pokhara at the 70th Anniversary celebration in November. He also thanked the Chairman sahib and his committee who made the event a great success. Soon after this, the Secretary, Capt (Ret'd) Manilal Thapa sahib requested all members and ladies to take their places for a group photograph followed by a buffet lunch which was thoroughly enjoyed by all members.



LCpl Lilbdr Pun receiving his Life Membership Certificate

Without a doubt, the event turned out to be extremely enjoyable and a true family event as everyone seemed to be relaxed and jovial throughout the day. It all came to an end at about 1600 hours when all members and ladies started to thin out promising to meet again at the 70th Anniversary at Pokhara. Finally, all members would like to thank and congratulate the Association Chairman and all committee members who made the event a great success. Last but not least, all members would like to thank the QGEA for the annual grants. Jai QGE!

The following are currently members of the Kathmandu Committee:

Maj (Ret'd) Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE – President (Central Committee)

Maj (Ret'd) Surjabahadur Thapa MVO – Chairman





Capt (Ret'd) Imanhang Limbu BEM – Vice Chairman
 Capt (Ret'd) Manilal Thapa – Secretary
 LCpl (Ret'd) Bhusan Rai – Treasurer
 WO2 (Ret'd) Keshav Thapa – Member
 SSgt (Ret'd) Hari Roka Magar – Member
 Mrs Rupa Thapa - Member
 Mrs Shakuntala Pradhan - Member
 Mrs Indradevi Roka Magar - Member
 Lt (Ret'd) Ravindra Sahi – PR/QGE Magazine

in making the 70th Anniversary Re-Union celebrations a success. Hukum sahib was also able to travel from Pokhara to thank the Kathmandu team. Syabash!



28 Trg Party (standing) with the 17 Trg Party Sect Comds



The following members were present; Maj Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE, Maj Hukumraj Thapa, Maj Surjabahadur Thapa MVO, Maj Haribahadur Thapa, Capt Gopalkrishna Gurung, Capt Chitrabahadur Thapa, Capt Manilal Thapa, Capt Budhikumar Gurung MVO, Capt Imanhang Limbu BEM, Capt Mohankumar Gurung, Capt Bhaktabahadur Rai MBE, WO2 Keshav Thapa, WO2 Siri Gurung, SSgt Hari Roka, Sgt Dal Thapa, Cpl Khadkabahadur Gurung, Cpl Dhanbahadur Sarki and myself.

A BHETGHAT PROGRAMME POST QGE 70th RE-UNION



On 11 Dec 2018, A bhetchat programme was held at Dharane Sekuwa Corner, Dholahit, Lalitpur to thank the Kathmandu Committee Members for their hard work



The get together started at 1100hrs in a friendly and jolly mood and then Maj Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE addressed the members and thanked them for their hard work in playing



the role of the Supporting Team in Pokhara. He specially thanked Maj Hukumraj Thapa sahib and Maj Surjabahadur Thapa MVO for their hard and painstaking work in organising such a marvellous and memorable Re-union. Hukum saheb said that he has received so many thank you letters from British officers and members and was still receiving them.

SECOND RE-UNION OF FORMER NEPAL CUP PLAYERS IN KATHMANDU

Lt (Ret'd) Ravindra Sahi



The much awaited 2nd Nepal Cup Re-union was organised by Capt (Ret'd) Manilal Thapa sahib and was held in Dharane Sekuwa Corner, Dholahiti, Lalitpur on 14 December 2018 and to celebrate this historic reunion, twenty six former Nepal Cup players of QGE including their wives gathered at 1100 hours. The first one was held on 11 April 2015 at Area Welfare Centre Bagmati organised by Maj (Ret'd) Dalbahadur Limbu MVO, WO2 (Ret'd) Bhagi Pradhan and Lt (Ret'd) Ravindra Sahi and all were keen to once more get together and reminisce.

Most of those attending were based in Kathmandu and so found it easy to attend however, due to prior engagements or health reasons Maj (Ret'd) Bharatsing Limbu, Maj (Ret'd) Sunar Gurung MVO BEM, Maj (Ret'd) Dalbahadur Limbu MVO, Capt (Ret'd) Embahadur Gurung, Capt (Ret'd) Manbahadur Gurung and WO2 (Ret'd) Dambersing Gurung were absent. However, Maj (Ret'd) Hukumraj Thapa sahib

had travelled from Pokhara for the event but sadly had to miss it as he was taken ill the night before; thankfully he recovered after a few days.



The event started with a minutes silence in memory of those ex-Nepal Cup players/ managers/ referees who had passed away and included; Maj EP Heaton, Maj Kharkajang Gurung MVO, Capt Makardhoj Sahi, Capt Ganesh Chhetri, Capt Jogindrasing Gurung MBE, Capt Dilkumar Limbu, Lt Upendra Gurung, Lt Mehersing Gurung, WO1 Birkhabahadur Limbu, WO1 Kharkabahadur Gurung, WO2 Bhimnarayan Newar, WO2 Lokbahadur Gurung, SSgt Jangaprasad Rai, SSgt Yamkumar Rana, Sgt Kulbahadur Gurung, Cpl Lalit Thapa and Cpl Hastabahadur Lama.



The elaborate tipan tapan prepared at the Sekuwa Corner was very tasty and together with the drink helped to pick up the "gaph saph". Just before lunch, Maj (Ret'd) Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE and Maj (Ret'd) Milanachandra Gurung MBE sahibs delivered some short and touching speeches reminiscing about the past Nepal Cup days. Maj (Ret'd) Bejoy Moktan sahib's reminiscence of the Nepal Cup days from the early seventies was very lively and humorous, and



as expected, Capt (Ret'd) Manilal Thapa sahib and WO2 (Ret'd) Bhagi Pradhan came out with some HAMJAYEGA (Nepali comedian) jokes that had everyone in stitches.

All those who attend were very thankful to Capt (Ret'd) Manilal Thapa sahib assisted by Lt (Retd) Ravindra Sahi for organising the excellent event which was, as usual very successful. Similarly, a bundle of thanks must be given to all those members and didi bahinis for attending, making the historic get together a most enjoyable and successful day.



arrived at 1100hours and mingled each other with each other outside enjoying the perfect sunny weather and drinks and tid bits. The social atmosphere soon became very pleasant with lots of conversation and laughter, mainly about the old times. A light snack was served at 1300hrs and the BBQ buffet at 1530 hrs. Just before the lunch, two group photographs were taken, one for ladies and other one for Sappers. At the time of dispersal, all members shared good wishes with each other for the year to come. Jai QGE!

Of course it goes without saying the best part of the day was meeting each other once more and sharing the our past experiences of the Nepal Cup days. It was an honour for all ex-players to have been able to represent the Regiment in the Nepal Cup and all are proud of the pride and passion that the Regiment still has in this. All in all, this was a meaningful and enjoyable re-union that coincided with the historic 70th Anniversary of the Regiment; an important milestone in the history of the Regiment. Finally we hope to see Milan sahib here again in Nepal sooner or later to take part in the 3rd Nepal Cup Re-union. He led the Regimental team to many fine victories in the Nepal Cup but lost his way to the venue! He later told me that's why he was never in the Regimental orienteering team! Jai QGE!



NEW YEAR IN KATHMANDU

Forty five Kathmandu based Sappers and their families gathered at the Crystal Banquet, Man Bhawan to celebrate the New Year on Tuesday 1 January 2019. Before the main New Year gathering, a meeting of Perowne Trust Scholarship (PTS) was held with the aim putting forward the names of students for PTS Grants for 2019. The main party guests





BHETGHAT/PEROWNE TRUST SCHOLARSHIP DAY IN KATHMANDU

Lt (Ret'd) Ravindra Sahi

The Perowne Trust was founded in 1986 in memory of Maj Gen LECM Perowne CB CBE KStJ, the first Col of the Regt from 1957 – 1966. The objective of the Trust was to provide scholarship for the children of the Gurkhas for higher education in Engineering. But later medical, nursing, science and hotel management subjects were included in order to allow potential eligible students a broader range of opportunities while still ensuring the study occurred in Nepal. At first, the responsibility of finding scholars was given to Gurkha Welfare Scheme in Nepal. However, for the last six years this jobs has been transferred to The Queen's Gurkha Engineers Regimental Association Nepal (QGERAN).

The Kathmandu branch of QGERAN organised a Perowne Trust Scholarship (PTS) Day on Sat 30 Mar 2019 in order to celebrate the Scholarship Day and a Bhetghat. The Day was celebrated in the form of a curry lunch at Bagaincha restaurant in Jawalakhel. A total of 33 members including

ladies, students, sponsors and parents were present. The guests of honour were Maj (Ret'd) Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE and Maj (Ret'd) Hukumraj Thapa sahibs.



All members and students assembled at 1100hrs and mingled with each other until 1300hrs when the Association Chairman, Maj (Ret'd) Surjabahadur Thapa MVO sahib welcomed all members and ladies including students and delivered a speech and read out the details of the PTS grants. He also thanked the UK Committee for the grants which are valuable and very gratefully received by the students. A total of ten students received their grants and two students were unable to attend due to their studies. However, their sponsors/parents received the grants on their behalf. The President sahib also thanked the members and students for attending and making it a successful Day.



Right after this, a group photograph was taken and all proceeded for the typical curry buffet. At about 1500 hrs, it was time for all students followed by members and ladies to leave. Finally, all members and students would like to thank the Chairman sahib and his committee for their hard work in making a successful day. Jai QGE! Jai Perowne Trust!



POKHARA UPDATE 2018/19

Maj (Ret'd) Hukumraj Thapa, Chairman A-Team QGE Pokhara

The details of the QGE 70th Anniversary Reunion, the grand 10 yearly event, celebrated in Pokhara over 24 & 25 Nov 18 is found elsewhere in this publication so I will not dwell on this here. The grand party was preceded by the usual celebration of the 28 Sep, QGE Day, which was celebrated across the world; Invicta Park Barracks, Farnborough, Cwmbran, South Sudan, Hong Kong, Brunei, Australia, Darjeeling, Kathmandu, Pokhara, Butwal and Dharan! In Pokhara veterans celebrated the day on 30 Sep 2018 at the Ivory Tower, the beautiful residence of Andrew Mills Saheb, Director KAAA.

A TEAM QGE - OUTINGS

The A Team, an active social forum in Pokhara formed in 1994, had numerous gatherings throughout the year. For Outing 89 we organised a dinner for Col M Quare MBE ADC, Royal Engineers Corps Colonel and WO1 (Corps RSM) S Webster. We said goodbye to Capt MJ Gurung at the end of his 3rd posting to Nepal during Outing 90 and who knows, we may see him back in Pokhara for his second career! In Outing 91 we welcomed Capt Govinda Rana as MJ's successor as QM BGP.



Cake Cutting Ceremony



Col M Quare MBE ADC and WO1 (CRSM) S Webster Corp RSM



DBG, HRT & D Ghale



QGE Families



Members of A Team at Chilli Bar



QGE Day at Ivory Tower



A Team Outing 91 Welcome Drinks





A Team Good Bye to Capt MJ Grg for the 3rd time from Nepal!



Col Mills Saheb & Hon Lt Mahendra Saheb reminiscing about their time in Kitchener Bks



Maj Damar Ghale welcoming the A Team to his Fewa Beach Residence



A Team Welcome to Capt Govinda Rana QM BGP

Finally, A Team hosted a dinner for Nirmal Purja, aka 'NimsDai' (ex-QGE and ex-SBS), a leading and legendary mountaineer and world record holder on 28 Apr 19 at Chili Bar at Lakeside Pokhara. He was accompanied by a renowned mountaineer Mingma Sherpa 'David'. NimsDai is in Nepal for his own Project Possible 14/7 and is attempting to climb the World's 14 highest peaks in 7 months. When he joined us, he had just summited the 1st and most difficult of the 14, Annapurna 1.



Mountaineers Hari Buda Magar, NimsDai and David

Coincidentally, Hari Buda Magar (ex-RGR) who lost both his legs in Afghanistan and now uses prosthetics was also in Pokhara at the same time having just completed a training expedition in Manang. He is attempting to climb Everest in 2020 and was able to join us for the evening along with his support team. His team consists of another mountaineering legend, Krishna Thapa Magar (1 RGR) who is his Trainer, physiotherapist Mr Mo, Dr Savana and photographer Shanta. It was a great evening where everyone wished both teams good luck and success in their extremely challenging projects.



Hari Buda Magar



Members of NimsDai and Hari's Team



THE 70TH QGE BIRTHDA DHARAN

Bhimraj Limbu (Hon Lt.QGO ret'd)

Chairman: Khadka Bahadur Limbu (Capt, Ret'd)

Vice: Bhimraj Limbu (Hon, Lt QGO Ret'd)

Secretary: Khadka Samsher Limbu (Sgt, Ret'd)

Dharan held the 70th QGE Regimental birthday on 29 Sep at Sainik Bhawan where 57 guests, members and their families attended the event. Everything was prepared and ready for the families and guests by 1030hrs and at about 1130am they started to arrive. Chairman Saheb, Khadka Bahadur Limbu was busy at the entrance meeting and greeting the guests with khadas in hand, who were then led to the guest tables by Santa Bahadur Limbu.

After all had arrived Khadka Samsher Limbu then made an announcement, requesting all to stand up for one minutes silence to pay respects to, and remember their fallen friends and brothers. The main event then started by lighting the Panas Batti by Senior Sahab Jamansing Rai (Hon Capt ret'd), supported by the Chairman.

A welcome speech was given by Lalit Bahadur Limbu (Hon Lt QGO Ret'd) thanking all Guests, QGE members and their families for coming. He highlighted the importance of our Regimental Day and made special mention of 21156747 Spr Jar Bahadur Limbu, a number of Maj Hukum Raj Thapa, who had come all the way from Taplejung Pahard to attend the event; making him the the first Sapper to have travelled from so far to attend the QGE day. The Regimental Orders were then read out by Bhimraj Limbu and ended up with thanking all saying "Jai QGE".

The main event of the celebration, the cutting of the 70th Birthday Cake was carried out by none other than 21164364, Bhagiman Limbu, the junior Spr present. After cutting the Cake, drinks and tit-bits were served along with slices of the birthday cakes. The atmosphere inside the Bhawan then

began to change, getting slowly noisier and nosier, and while all were busy with drinks and tit-bits, Khadka Samsher asked for silence in order for (Hon Lt QGO) Lalit Bahadur Limbu to address everyone. He informed all present of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers 70th Anniversary celebrations due to be held in British Gurkhas Pokhara later in the year, extolling all present to attend and represent the people from the West of Nepal.



The Chairman Saheb addressed the gathered crowd thanking all for coming and to express his sincere thanks to the QGEA (UK) for their continued financial support for the QGE Day. At the end he thanked all and wished everyone a Happy Dashain and good health for the year ahead. Lunch was then served, with the ladies leading the way and after lunch the event came to the end. "Jai QGE".



QGE 70th CELEBRATIONS NEPAL

Having been fortunate enough to have taken part in The Queen's Gurkha Engineers 60th Birthday in Pokhara in November 2009, as soon as I heard a whisper of the 70th celebrations I knew I wanted to be able to take part once again. So with much excitement I left the UK on Wednesday 21 November bound for Kathmandu. I was not alone and 24hrs before a party of nearly 50 former British Officers and their families, organised and shepherded by Hamish MacLeod had also left the UK bound for the celebrations. Over the previous days and weeks countless ex-QGE soldiers and officers, now resident in the UK had also left for extended chutti in Nepal. All up it was estimated that those travelling to Nepal from UK and destinations such as Hong Kong, Brunei and further afield totalled over 150 including a very large contingent of ex-Gurkhas living in the UK. With such a driven and dedicated team organising everything in Nepal all knew the coming days of celebration were sure to be something special.

22 November - Hotel Himalaya, Kathmandu - Reception Party¹

Over the years I have been lucky enough to have spent time posted to Nepal, first as the Assistant Brigade Welfare Officer working for the GWS and then for a short stint covering a gap as the DRO. Through these experiences I have got to know many of the retired QGE community in Nepal and so it was with great happiness that I made my way through the streets of Patan from the Summit Hotel where the British party were staying to the Hotel Himalaya where the a function had been put on to welcome the travelling British Contingent. This was a great ice breaker and a chance for all the travelling party to meet one and other and start to plan for the days ahead. There were the customary speeches by the President of the RAN, Maj Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE and the President of the QGE RAN, Maj Surjabahadur Thapa MVO and the Col of the Regt, Maj Gen R Wardlaw who welcomed the 75 people who had made it to the event. But it was also tinged with sadness when we learnt that Hukum Saheb's mother had passed away the day before and he would not be able to take part in any of the celebrations due to his observance of the funeral rituals. The evening also saw the first, but by no means the last emergence of Hamish MacLeod's pipes much to the entertainment of those present.



The following day people made their way to Pokhara by various modes of transport and by early evening Lakeside, the tourist heart of Pokhara was alive with former and serving BOs and GORs wandering the streets catching up with old friends and enjoying food and drink in one of the numerous restaurants that make up the strip. When I look back at the photos I took when I

¹ The photos reproduced here are either my own, the official event photos or ones the Archibalds, Bowens, Caulfields, MacLeods or Smythes have kindly allowed me to copy.



first visited Pokhara in Spring 1999 this stretch of the town has probably quadrupled in size but there is still much more of a laid back feel than you would ever find in Kathmandu.

24 November – The Big Party, British Gurkhas Pokhara

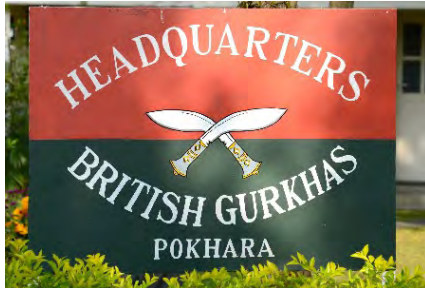
The morning of 24 Nov dawned and while there the views of the Himalaya were not present the weather was fine and there was a buzz in the air as all made their way from Lakeside to British Gurkhas Pokhara, some 8km away. There is always something special when you walk up to road to the Camp and see the brass plates on the wall as you enter and this time was no different. As soon as we passed the guard room and turned right to where the Welcoming Committee were, the scale of the event became apparent. I do not have an exact number but am told more than 600 people attended. To enable this the organising team had arranged transport and hotels for former QGE soldiers to travel from across Nepal and the serving Regiment had raised a significant amount of money to help pay for this; a true symbol of the family nature of our organisation.

All were welcomed with khadas and then invited to have their head sized in order to find a hat that fitted before entering into the main area around the chautara. There was tea and coffee on tap and for the more adventurous beer, wine and whiskey before the hour hand had passed 11 o'clock, Tippan Tappan produced the marvellous BGP team kept coming as did the opportunity to meet old friends before the welcome speeches started followed by a 90min photo shoot to ensure all who attended were captured. Food followed and then a great cultural show complete with the ex-QGE players including a guest appearance by Clee saheb, and of course Hamish's bagpipes.

Everything you would expect and more was included and it was dusk before people finally started to depart, with a souvenir goody bag in hand and to continue the celebrations down town. I will not describe all that happened anymore and hope that the selection of photos over the next few pages give a feel for the day. Needless to say there had been an incredible amount of work by the Central Working Committee to pull off something of this scale and the following must be acknowledged in this magazine and history of ours.

Chairman.	Maj Hukumraj Thapa.
Co-ordinator.	Capt (QM) Meenjunga Gurung
Master of Ceremony.	WO2 Jagat Gurung
Secretary.	Capt Gangabhadur Gurung
Treasurer.	Cap Dalbahadur Gurung
Assistant Treasury.	SSgt Hari Roka
Souvenir/Sponsorship Mgmt.	WO2 Siri Gurung
Brochure Editor.	Maj Judbahadur Gurung
Transport and Hotel Mgmt.	WO2 Nirbahadur Rana
Cultural Show Manager.	Capt Purnabahadur Gurung
Cake Management.	Capt Imanhang Limbu BEM
Advisors.	Maj Bhimbahasdur Gurung MVO MBE and Maj Surjabahadur Thapa MVO.















25 November – The After Party, SRKC Party Palace, Sitala Devi, Pokhara

The following day the mountains were out in their full glory and due to the generosity of the various donors, all of who received a token of appreciation by the Central Organising Committee, it was possible to have a second big party. The location was the SRKC Party Palace, near Sitala Devi. Many of the British Party visited the Gurkha Memorial Museum in the morning before joining 450+ others at the party palace to carry on where the celebrations finished the day before.





92yr old WO1 Singbahadur Gurung, the oldest QGE member present at the leaving the Party Palace with his wife

Final Thoughts

Following the culmination of the events at the Party Palace groups started to disappear, either back to their home towns or off on other adventures across Nepal, some with QGE's own Khil Thapa and his Gurkha Adventure trekking agency. As well as the Central Organising Committee there were others who pulled together the plans for different areas of Nepal and different countries and they are listed below and deserve our gratitude too. For the UK party a huge thanks has to go to Hamish MacLeod and all the work he did.

UK Toli (British).
UK Toli (Gurkha).
USA/Canada.
Hong Kong Toli.
Darjeeling Toli.
Dharan Toli.
Butwal Toli.

Lt Col (Ret'd) AWHH MacLeod
Capt (Ret'd) Tirthaman Gurung
Lt (Ret'd) Indra P Chhetri
Lt (Ret'd) Gopal Gurung
Lt (Ret'd) Arun Zimba
Hon Lt Lalitbahadur Limbu
Cpl (Ret'd) Dhanbahadur Rana

For me, I caught a plane the following day down to Bhairawa and visited the former British Camp at Paklihawa but more of that later. As I travelled south my abiding memory was of the strength of the bond that serving with QGE instils in people and the lifelong friendships that are made. Having been a member of the Association Committee for the past 10 years + we are always asking can, or should we do more, and how to be more inclusive? But when you are part of an event such as this you immediately understand the importance of what it stands for and that the Regimental Bond is as strong as it has ever been and transcends the generations. Finally my own thanks to all who worked so hard to make the event a resounding success. See you next time.



MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES

SAPPER RAMBAHADUR RAI – THE BOWEN FAMILY

John White, and Piers Lawspn

In October 1969, Sapper Rambahadur Rai, along with many hundreds of other young Gurkha soldiers being made redundant, following the drawdown of the Brigade of Gurkhas at the end of the Borneo and Malaya campaigns, was discharged from the Army and returned to his home in eastern Nepal. His discharge coincided with the birth of the Gurkha Welfare Trust, created to look after those, like Ram and his family, who were returning to a country with little prospect of employment and no social or welfare safety net. At about the same time, the then Major Hank Bowen was returning to the Far East, having previously commanded 68 Gurkha Field Squadron and, some 4,500 miles away in a prep school in Herefordshire, a small boy was trying to understand why, if as he was being told he was skating on thin ice, he would soon be in hot water.

I first met Brigadier Hank in 1984 when I was 2IC of 69 Gurkha Field Squadron at Chatham; as Chief Engineer UKLF, he was a welcome and frequent visitor to the small mess we kept at Kitchener Barracks. Some 10 years later, I was back in Hong Kong as the last OC of 68 Gurkha Field Squadron and we kept in touch over the years, me feeding his thirst for news of the 'Burrhos' with whom he had served and he firing the imagination of the still small boy within me of his days in Malaya and Borneo in those early years of the nascent Gurkha Engineers.

It was therefore entirely appropriate that, when Hank and Juliet's family asked the Gurkha Welfare Trust to find a suitable beneficiary in Nepal, I took to the hills with our welfare officer in Rumjatar who introduced me to Rambahadur. Following the 2015 earthquakes in Nepal, the Gurkha Welfare Trust rebuilt almost 1100 homes of former servicemen and this year, with funds provided from ever generous supporters such as the Bowens, we embarked on a pre-emptive programme to rebuild or strengthen 100 homes a year for the next three years. Ram's house was damaged in the earthquake but he continued to live there until, following successive visits by our staff, we decided it was unsafe for him and his wife to remain.



Location of Rambahadur's house in Oklandungda

Between December and March, our prime building 'season', we completed Ram's house and I visited shortly before he moved in. We spent a few hours discussing his military service (his last months were spent in hospital in Singapore following a bridging accident in which he broke his arm) and, while Ram served in 69 Gurkha Field Squadron during his service, he remembers stories of 'Bomb-Bahadur Saheb' (Hank Bowen) who commanded 68 Squadron. We had just celebrated the QGE 70th birthday in a series of epic celebrations across Nepal so I presented Ram with his QGE 70th topi and he was insistent that, despite the early hour, we toasted the Regiment properly with a glass or two of a particularly excellent brew he had just distilled. As we sat in companionable silence, looking into Okhaldhunga across the Maulun Khola, I silently raised another glass to my friend, Brigadier Hank and his beloved Juliet, whose name now endures in a country and with a people whom he loved.



Before he died, Hank's children (Clive, Claire and Paul) were able to discuss with him their plan to visit Nepal, meet some of his regimental friends, trek in the hills above Pokhara and to scatter some of his ashes in the homeland of his treasured Gurkhas. He was able to advise and be part of the plan, which gave him great pleasure. The family gathered in Pokhara on 18th October 2018. They were kindly met by Hukumraj Thapa, who escorted them to the home of JP Cross and Buddhiman, which had last been visited by Paul and Mimi in 1998 and by Hank and Juliet in 1993.



AWO Bagmati and the Snellen Eye Chart



The family then enjoyed a five-day camping trek around Panchase and returned to Pokhara to be met by Hukumraj and Jagat Gurung who accompanied them to the sacred Seti River. Each of Bowen Saheb's children scattered some of his ashes in the river, saying a few words as the sun shone on the water. We believe he is the first British officer to be thus commemorated in those waters.



The family returned to Kathmandu on 24th October and were generously hosted at Bagaicha Restaurant by Surjabahadur Thapa and the Gurkha 'wala' of soldiers old and new. They could not have been made to feel more welcome. They returned to the UK understanding why Nepal and the Gurkha people held such a special place in their father's heart. ...



For previous GWT piece on Brig Hank Bowen OBE, see: <https://www.gwt.org.uk/news/memory-of-brigadier-hank-bowen>

QGE AND THE NEPAL CUP

Maj (Ret'd) Milan Chandra Gurung MBE. kindly assisted by Lt (Ret'd) Ravindra Sahi.

Most Gurkha ranks and officers who have served in the Regiment will be aware of the significance of the Nepal Cup. On the Independence of India in 1948, when half of the Gurkha Regiments in British India moved to the Far East, Maharajah Shamsheer Jangabhadur Rana of Nepal, kindly presented the Nepal Cup to the Brigade of Gurkhas for an inter-unit annual football competition.

From the onset, the competition has been fought fiercely by all battalions and regiments for the prestige and honour of their unit. Such is the passion in the Brigade, the importance of winning the Nepal Cup for regimental status and honour has been regarded almost equivalent to winning the Jules Rimet and even glorified as the "holy grail" of sports in the Brigade!

It is good to know that the competition is still ongoing in the UK and fought for voraciously every year with the final taking place in Aldershot to coincide with the Annual Gurkha Mela.

The first Nepal Cup competition was held in Malaya in 1949. By this time, all the Gurkha Battalions were located either in Malaya, Singapore or Hong Kong and the final was always held at Seremban (Malaya), the Brigade Headquarters. However, that was later changed to TDBG, Sungei Patani, Malaya. On the Independence of Malaya, when the Brigade was relocated to Hong Kong, the venue for the final was TDBG, Sek Kong, HQ 48 Bde.

From the beginning until the Bde moved to the UK in 1996 so much importance and significance was given to the

Nepal Cup, winning the trophy was top priority for the units in the sporting calendar. Unit teams trained for months in readiness for the competition and up until 1971, QGE players serving in the Field Squadrons in Hong Kong and Brunei, were centralised in Kluang, the Regiment HQ. If the team kept winning consecutive rounds and reached the final players were often away from their parent squadron for up to three months. Nepal leave and sometimes even courses for regular

players were altered to fit in with the Nepal Cup season. Winning the Nepal Cup for the regiment became the "ultimate aim", particularly for the Gurkha Major saheb and every avenue was explored for the Nepal Cup success. I think if



Pele was available to be enlisted into the Regiment, I am sure the GM sahebs would have somehow organised it!

After recruit training, I joined the Regiment in 1965 in Kluang, Malaysia. On arrival there, the training party was spoken to by the Gurkha Major (Major QGO Kalusing Limbu) who said "who is Milanchandra"? I literally jumped and said "hajur saab"! "Regiment le Nepal Cup jitnu parchha, bujhyo!" I almost wet my starched OG shorts and replied, "hunchha hajoor". Sadly, that year, though we won the District League and the HQLF Knockout Cup, in the Nepal Cup we miserably lost to GTR by 1-0. To rub salt into the wound a week later we easily beat them in the Kluang District League match.

When in Malaya, the Nepal Cup was a huge regimental affair as well as an administrative nightmare for the commanders. Depending on the draw sometimes an overnight journey by train to the venue had to be taken by the away team together with a large chunk of regimental supporters on a footballing trip. For some people, being selected to cheer the team on at away match was almost like winning a mini lottery! During home matches, all the wives, (in some units, wearing regimental saree), complete with the children were expected to cheer the team on. It was clearly like a day at the circus. It was also an opportunity to meet up with friends and relatives after many months, even years. However, it was a logistical nightmare for the home team Admin group, to arrange accommodation and food for the visiting team and their supporters for several days!!

Until 1968, one of the Nepal Cup rules was that the team captain HAD to be a British Officer. Unfortunately, the Regiment had not been lucky enough to post in an officer who had good footballing skills or was related to Stanley Matthews or Bobby Moore. So, in a way, the team had been slightly handicapped. However, that was never regarded as an excuse because the officer to his credit (normally a super fit subaltern just out from Sandhurst), was simply carrying out the "hukum", always gave his very best.

From 1968 onwards the "must have British Officer" rule was abolished and newly promoted Lt Bhimbahadur Gurung saheb (Retd Major BB Gurung MVO) captained the Nepal Cup team. However, despite successful results in the HQLF Knock-Out and District League Competitions and flagged as one of the best teams in the Brigade, the Nepal Cup continued to be elusive to the Regiment. That year, although all the bets were on the Gurkha Engineers to win, we lost by 1-0 to 2/2 GR.

So, despite being one of the front runners, the Nepal Cup, to the frustration of the Regiment, the players and particularly the GM, continued to slip through our fingers. Winning the Nepal Cup, for every regiment was a source of great pride and passion and therefore every year was always the Gurkha Major's pet project and he was passionately involved in the build up to it.

From 1972, once the Brigade was permanently based in Hong Kong, administration and the running of the competition became that much easier for units. However, despite winning all other footballing competitions and remaining hot favourite

in the Colony, QGE still failed to secure the Nepal Cup.

At long last in 1974, on the officers' horse polo field next to the TDBG Officers' Mess, converted overnight into a football pitch, QGE overcame the curse and convincingly beat 6 GR 3-1 in the final and secured the elusive Nepal Cup for the first time! Captain (QGO) Makardhoj Sahi, who had previously played as an NCO, captained the team in this long-awaited victory. However, very sadly, the victory was not without any sacrifice as Spr Kul Tamang broke his leg during the match. Credit must also go to the then coach, WO2 Briggs, who believed in the team and worked extremely hard to bring the Nepal Cup to the Regiment.



The 1974 Winning Team

That night, the whole Regiment celebrated in the messes, clubs and homes. The Gurkha Major invited the team to the Gurkha Officers' Mess and the mess bar was still open until the early hours of the morning. Some players even took the opportunity and dared to hug and dance with the Gurkha Major!!

The GM, Major QGO Kesarbahadur Limbu, was clearly very proud and elated and personally presented the players and coaches with tankards and ties inscribed "Nepal Cup 1974". So, for QGE this win opened the Nepal Cup flood gates as we went on to win it numerous times after that. All the Gurkha Majors and the Commandants from the past would have been very proud of the Regiment.

The late Major Eric Heaton, Unit Paymaster, who was not a footballer but a passionate lover of the game, took over as the Football Officer in 1976 and that year the Regiment swept the board in the Colony when the Regiment won the Nepal Cup, Major Units Knockout Cup, HKLF League Cup and the icing on the cake was winning The Best Sportsmanship Trophy in the Colony. He was a fitness fanatic and kept the squad fit and was also an excellent administrator. As the unit paymaster he was able to provide "the tools of the trade", such as good training equipment, good quality footwear and he even quietly approached the Messing Officer for some extra nutritious rations. He was also unquestionably an immaculate gentleman who always had a smile on his face whatever the situation or the result and he kindly left the coaching to me. From 1974 to 1993 the Regiment went on to win the Nepal Cup, seven or eight times. I have lost count. Coming to the present, I am sure the Regiment in the UK



continues to carry the flag and strive to retain the regimental Nepal Cup reputation.



The 1980 Winning Team

At this point I would like to thank all those players from the Regiment who played with me and were in the team when I captained and coached the team. I could not have asked for a better bunch of players who had strong characters and iron discipline and always gave their very best at every training session and match whilst maintaining their qualities as professional soldiers. Balancing the two was sometimes difficult because we did not always win and being away from the troop and work sometimes worked against us. My motto to the players was always- "give your best both at play and work and you will be alright" and to always remember that first and foremost we were professional soldiers. I am very happy to acknowledge that the majority of the players involved in the Nepal Cup from 1970 to 1993 all had rewarding careers and as expected many of them became officers and SNCOs. I know, Damarsing, our own Maradona, after retiring gained fame as a coach of the Nepal Police Team. I would like to, through this article, thank all the regimental players, trainers, administrators of that special era. You were a special bunch and I will always be proud of you guys because you worked so hard to make the Regiment proud. My sincerest "salaam" goes to the Regimental hierarchy for their unwavering support throughout.

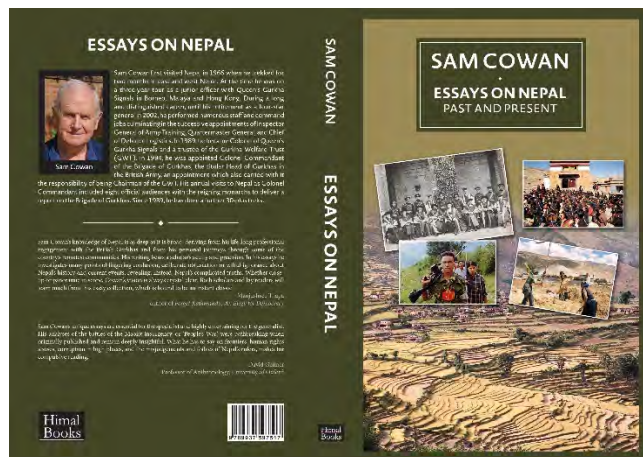
I would also like to pay tribute to some of our fellow players and trainers who are sadly no longer with us; Major Eric Heaton, Capt (QGO) Ganesh Chhetri, Major (QGO) Khakajang Gurung, Capt (QGO) Makardhoj Sahi (Team Captain 1974), Capt (QGO) Jogendrasing Gurung, Capt (QGO) Dilkumar Limbu, Lt (QGO) Mehersing Gurung, Lt (QGO) Upendra Gurung, WO1 Kharka Gurung, WO1 Birkha Limbu, WO2 Lokbahadur Gurung, WO2 Bhimnarayan Newar, Sgt Jangaparsad Rai, SSgt Yemkumar Rana, Cpl Lalit Thapa, Cpl Hastabahadur Lama, Sgt Kul Gurung. And finally, my utmost gratitude goes to the late Lt Minbahadur Gurung saheb, my first football officer in the Regiment who gave me the encouragement and inspiration to help, with others, win the Nepal Cup for the Regiment.

After the Regimental Tamasha in Pokhara in November 2018, Captain Manilal Thapa and Lt Ravindra Sahi sahebs and others very kindly organised an excellent ex Nepal Cup players' party in Kathmandu which was thoroughly enjoyed

by everyone. Mani saheb as usual recited some humorous incidents from Nepal Cup days and made everyone laugh. It was a special moment for all of us, reminiscing about the trials and tribulations of the Nepal Cup of the gone by days. Finally, although I led the team to many victories, I nearly failed them this time-I got lost on the way to the venue! That's why I was never in the Troop Orienteering Team! Watch out for an article on this "ramailo jamghat"! JAI QGE!!

ESSAYS ON NEPAL

Editor. I saw this article / book review written by Gordon Corrigan and published in the 2GR journal and have sought permission to reprint it.



From his first incarnation as a subaltern at the Gurkha Depot in Sungei Patani, Malaya, to four star general and the poisoned chalice of Defence Procurement. Sam Cowan's life has been one long love affair with Nepal and its people. Accompanied by Anne, a true soldier's wife, he has trekked throughout the country, from East to West. and knows its terrain better than many an officer of the Permanent Cadre. As Colonel of his regiment, Queen's Gurkha Signals, he was a steadying influence in the Council of Colonels injecting much needed common sense into the occasional parochial blinkerdom of some of the infantry. The so-called 'Options for Change' whereby the British government reverted to its long standing custom of toadying to its enemies and betraying its friends, reduced the army by 18% but the Brigade of Gurkhas by 70%. The Brigade having been saved from complete disbandment by John Chapple as CGS and Peter Duffell as Commander British Forces Hong Kong, it fell to Sam Cowan, as the first Colonel Commandant, to steer the Brigade from what was effectively an imperial gendarmerie, focussed on the Far east. to becoming an integral and much valued asset of the wider army. This involved much delicate negotiation to resolve myriad issues of terms and conditions of service, pay and pensions, the status of Gurkha Officers, family permission, leave, quartering and much more besides. The Brigade owes a huge debt to Sam Cowan, and that the Brigade is once more expanding is very much due to the foundations that he laid.

This superb book is a collection of essays, papers and reports penned during and post his service, but published afterwards in various journals and newspapers on and off line. The breadth of subjects covered is enormous, ranging



from descriptions of treks in remote parts of a remote country (although not the one on which atrocious weather confined him to a sheepfold and incommunicado, thus unable to profit from his horse back in England winning its race at 33/1). through descriptions of the Maoist insurgency, to the Chinese treatment of Indian Gurkha prisoners of war captured in the Sino Indian war of 1962, to civil military relations in the aftermath of the recent earthquake and examinations of cross border actions by the Chinese army. As a lover of Nepal a lesser author might have been tempted to avoid the murkier aspects of the country, but Sam Cowan is unflinching in his criticisms of the failure by democratic forces to control the army and pulls no punches in his expose of corruption in, amongst other institutions, the administration of Nepali football. Those who are familiar with Sam Cowan will know that he is not a man to take no for an answer, and of particular interest is his battle with the apparatchiks of the Foreign Office to obtain an un-redacted copy of a file dealing with Khampaguerrilla operations – it is probably needless to say that despite all sorts of bureaucratic objections put in his way Sam won out and got his file.

Well and lucidly written, even the most knowledgeable can learn something about Nepal that he did not know (this reviewer certainly did) and it is strongly recommended for any diplomat or NGO operative posted to Nepal and for all officers of the Brigade. While one is surprised that it has not been picked up by a major British publisher, but has been published in Nepal, the quality of paper and the printing is much better than many publications emanating from Kathmandu. An excellent book and a cracking good read.

Gordon Corrigan

The book can be ordered from the publisher, Himal Books, at the link below and costs US\$25. The cost quoted includes airmail posting from Kathmandu and having brought a copy myself it arrives in about 7 days.

<https://himalbooks.com/product/essays-on-nepal-past-and-present/>

Improving the Gurkha Museum's Collection

The Gurkha Museum is trying to improve its collection with some oral history recordings. Historical areas they are currently focusing on are:

- Malaya (particularly 1948-55)
- Brunei Revolt 1962
- Borneo Confrontation 1962-65 (particularly the soldiers' perspectives and any information we might be able to get about Claret).
- Cyprus 1974
- Falklands 1982 (not crucial but we could do with some additional information)
- Op Granby, Op Telic, Op Herrick

They are also interested in the following themes:

- Peacekeeping

- Changes to the Brigade post 1994
- Life in Hong Kong before the handover
- How things have changed for the Gurkhas now that they're based in the UK (rather than in Malaya, Hong Kong, Singapore etc.

They would like to interview anyone who can help with these topics and may identify more themes once they know who we will be interviewing. Should you feel you can help please let the editor know and he will put you in touch with the relevant party.

THE FORGOTTEN WAR: JOURNEYS THROUGH BURMA

Bertie Alexander Lawson

On the 15th December 1943, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Southeast Asia Lord Louis Mountbatten, addressed the 25th Dragoons:

"I know you think of yourselves as the Forgotten Army", he said to them. "Well, let me tell you, you're not forgotten ... nobody even knows you're here!"

His quip had the intended effect and made the men laugh. But it was a quip intended to uplift troops from the dispiriting reality of the circumstances.

The Second World War in Burma is often described as 'The Forgotten War', and the soldiers that fought in it, 'The Forgotten Army.' However the stories of courage, cruelty and audacity that emerged from it are as great and varied as in any of the other theatres of war.

Retreat from Burma

When visiting Myanmar today, one site where many of those with an interest in the Burma Campaign gravitate towards is Thanbyuzayat.



Thanbyuzayat War Cemetery

Thanbyuzayat was the site of the Western Terminus of the Burma-Siam "Death Railway", built by prisoners of war to connect Rangoon and Bangkok during the Japanese occupation in WW2. The Cemetery commemorates the 12,000 Allied soldiers who died during the construction. Only one prisoner – a rambunctious Brit called Ras Pagani – successfully escaped, taking refuge with pro-British Karen guerrillas.



The Japanese, alongside forces of the newly-formed Burma Independence Army, had first entered Burma from its southern tip “Victoria Point” in December 1942, and the fall of Mawlamyine was not only a psychological blow to the British but also a major strategic loss that led to the ensuing fall of Rangoon.

In Rangoon today – now known as Yangon – travellers often pay their respects at Htuakkyan to the north of the city, the country’s largest Commonwealth War Cemetery, and the serene but smaller Rangoon War Cemetery in the city centre.



Htuakkyan War Cemetery

Another point of pilgrimage is the Holy Trinity Church. In 2017 a plaque was unveiled for Major Hugh Seagrim who, after the retreat of the British into India, remained undercover in the jungles of Burma with Karen guerillas loyal to the British. After surrendering himself to the Japanese so to avoid the continued brutalisation of Karen villages, Seagrim was taken for a prolonged spell at the ghastly jail of the Japanese military police in the New Law Courts - nicknamed the “Rangoon Ritz”. He was later shot for espionage.

The Fourteenth Army

The story of Seagrim – a Brit living amongst the Karen people – is representative of a war that brought a score of disparate nationalities together

The 14th Army included men from England, Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, as well as soldiers from China, and East Africa and West Africa. Flying in the air above were Newfoundlanders, Australians, Canadians, New Zealanders, and South Africans. There were men from every state in America, and there were Indians of every caste, each with rifle and Tommy gun.

In his book “The Road Past Mandalay”, John Masters, a British Officer with the Indian Army, artfully captures both the horror and humanity that he experienced fighting amongst this mix of ethnicity.

“No one who saw the 14th Army in action, and above all, no one who saw its dead on the field of battle, the black and the white and the brown and the yellow lying together in their indistinguishable blood on the rich soil of Burma, can ever doubt that there is a brotherhood of man; or fail to cry, “What is Man, that he can give so much for war, so little for peace?”

The Patchwork of Burma

Amongst these men caught up in the tide of war were the men of Burma itself. Men, too often forgotten in the narratives of the Second World War, and even in narratives from the Burma Campaign itself. Alongside the ethnic Burmese or ‘Bamar’ and the Karen guerillas, were Chins, Kachins, and Karenni; men of Nagaland and the Shan States, and of other, yet smaller ethnic groups that make up the patchwork of the country.

As Masters described them:

“... small-boned men in worn jungle green, doubly heroic because the Japanese held possession of their homes, often of their families, too; and, until about now, how could they be sure which side was going to win?”

Conflict continued uninterrupted after the departure of the British, leading some people to say that the Second World War in Burma never ended. The men that fought so bravely for Britain and her allies were largely forgotten after the country’s independence. Forgetting was a luxury they were not granted.

Forgotten Allies



On the trail of the Forgotten Allies

In 2017, Sampan Travel supported the production company Grammar Productions as they accompanied the small British charity Help for Forgotten Allies and recorded the stories of Myanmar veterans before it was too late. Venturing far off the beaten path, the team visited Karen veterans around Loikaw and Chin veterans up towards the Indian border.



Alex Bescoby & Royal Artillery veteran David Daniel



Premiering this year in London, the documentary “Forgotten Allies” principally focuses on these ethnic soldiers but recognises the part played by the thousands of men from a score of countries that made up Burma’s Forgotten Army.

At Remembrance Day 2017 at Rangoon War Cemetery, H4FA and Grammar Productions alongside veterans, military personal from around the world, diplomats and other interested parties gathered to remember those who had fought in Burma during the Second World War



Myanmar Veterans at Rangoon War Cemetery

For all of us in Myanmar, living or visiting, it is important we think of those caught up in the whirlpool of war, and think of their stories.

Stories of courage, cruelty, and audacity. Stories of horror and humanity. Stories from a war that must not be forgotten.



Kyaiik Than Lan Pagoda, Mon State today

[Sampan Travel](#), a tour operator based in Yangon organizing battlefield tours through Myanmar.

GURKHA WELFARE TRUST JERSEY

Capt Steve Gadd

Since the formation of GWTJ at the end of 2014, and with the support of Jersey Overseas Aid Commission (JOA) through matched funding, we have raised some £498,000 for Gurkha Projects in Nepal. Apart from £50,000 we sent for initial emergency aid supplies (tents, food, medical packs) in the

immediate aftermath of the April 2015 earthquake, by July 2018 our fundraising resulted in the completed construction of four schools, getting some 2,000 Gurkha children back into school, and the construction of two Community Centres.

Our projects are selected from a priority list put together by the Gurkha Welfare Trust infrastructure team in Nepal. All projects have a Completion Report, posted on our Facebook page [@TheGurkhaWelfareTrustJersey](#).

Projects completed in the last financial year, Jul 2017 to Jun 2018:

- The Dandakharka Primary School in West Nepal. The project was started in November 2017 and completed in April 2018.
- GWTJ applied to the Bailiff of Jersey’s Disaster Relief Fund for support and funds were distributed to the JOA. The charity received combined funds from JOA and a total of £103,938 was distributed to GWT UK to rebuild the Shree Panchamabi School in Diktel, East Nepal, which was destroyed in the 2015 earthquake. The rebuilding started in Nov 2017 and was successfully completed in May 2018, providing education to approximately 380 pupils.
- The Balkumari Community Centre in Lamjung District, West Nepal. The project started in November 2017 and was completed in June 2018.
- The Indrakamal Community Centre in West Nepal. The project was started in December 2017 and completed in June 2018.

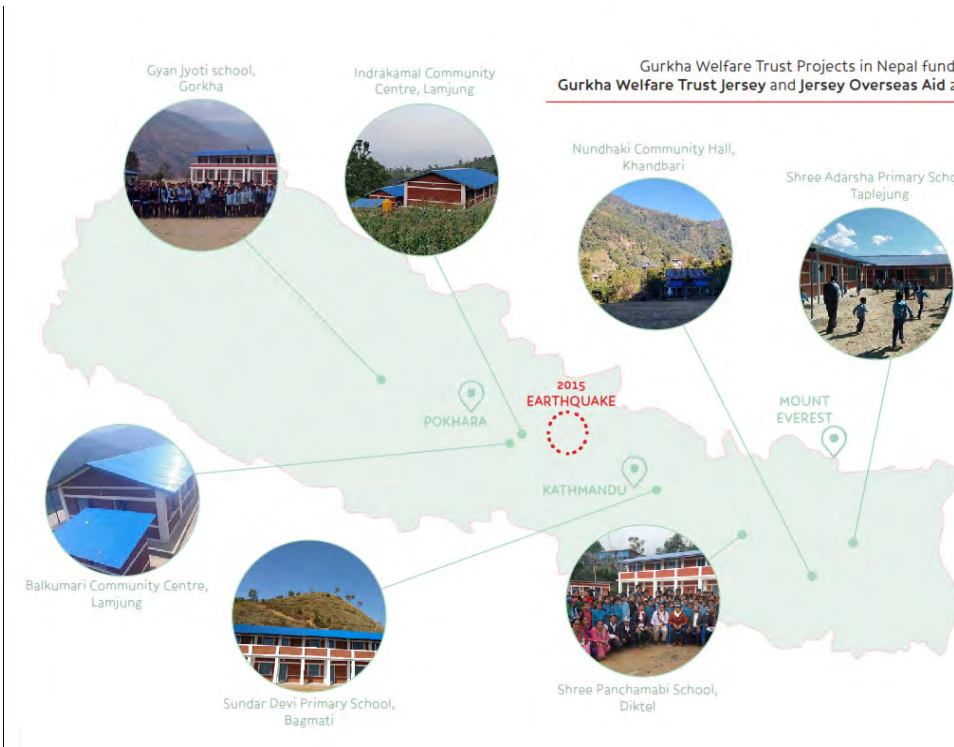
GWTJ sought to involve more of the Jersey community to expand the scope of the projects. This concept has been enthusiastically supported by Highlands College and a group of students will raise funds and travel to Nepal. GWT in Nepal will assist with logistic and emergency support.

Our initial project for 2018 was to fund a Community Hall in the village of Nundhaki in East Nepal, where none currently exists. The original estimate was for £50,000, but GWT Nepal revised costs downwards to £41,715, in part due to exchange rate changes and also because they constantly seek the best deal for buying materials in Nepal. JOA formally agreed to match our funding, and the GWTJ has raised its half share of this lower cost. 80% of the total funds have been sent to GWT UK. Building started in Nov 2018 and will be completed in Jun 2019

Further fundraising in 2018 and 2019 will be for 3 water supply and sanitation projects in remote Gurkha communities, which are on the GWT UK (Nepal) list of priorities. The total cost is expected to be £82,050. JOA have approved funding for 2 of the 3 Water and Sanitation Projects and the other one will be funded by GWTJ, as follows:

- East Nepal, Beteni. Cost £27,883 funded by JOA.
- West Nepal. Bhawang. Cost £28,864 funded by JOA.





with personal hygiene, many villagers suffer sickness due to drinking contaminated water or not being able to wash themselves, or their clothes and cooking utensils properly and, generally, there are significant economic and social benefits of the projects to the community. In all cases the villagers will provide labour and locally available material for the projects. GWT works in partnership with the community who also contribute funds towards the projects.

- West Nepal. Sarigadanda Tallo. Cost £25,303 funded by GWTJ.

Sarigadanda Tallo village is located in a remote rural region of West Nepal, high in the Himalayas at an altitude of over 1,800 metres above sea level. From Pokhara it takes 22 hours travelling to reach this village. The major sources of income are subsistence agriculture farming and animal husbandry. The climate is moderately hot during summer and moderately cold during winter season.

The village had a water supply installed by UNICEF in 1981, but the supply spring dried out. Although the stream source was changed in 1994/95 and the wooden stand taps were repaired the supply is erratic and unreliable. At present the village community do not have an adequate water supply due to the age of the system resulting in intermittent supply. It takes villagers 45 minutes to fetch water from houses still having any supply.

The Sarigadanda Tallo villagers need a potable, safe, adequate and systematic water supply project to avoid contracting water-borne diseases and suffering diarrhoea. The population of 180 persons (36 households) will directly benefit from this project. This involves building a new catchment dam and installing 7,281 metres of pipeline, 3x distribution chambers, 5x reservoir tanks, 36x supply connections with air valves and washout (purge) facilities.

Education programmes are run alongside the Water / Sanitation projects to improve hygiene and health. Training is provided in terms of use, maintenance, and water conservation. The benefits they deliver include the impact on the time and distance it takes for women/girls to get water, the impact on farmers and irrigation and the impact on the health of villages and students. Many schoolgirls miss some 3-4 days of schooling each month due to having to deal



Condition off existing tap stand

One of the most popular fund raising activities for the GWTJ is the Annual Bhat, held in the Army Reserve Centre and is supported by 2 chefs from tQGE who deploy to the Island of Jersey for 5 days to cook and serve the Bhat. After their hard work they have 2 days R&R available to visit the various parts of the Island. The Trustees are grateful for the support from the Regt with a very busy RegtI FOE.



QGE AND THE FAKLAND ISLANDS

AA Gooch



In March 2019 I was very fortunate to visit the Falkland Islands as part of trip to assess whether the training being delivered the RSME is equipping the Corps' artisan tradesmen with the

skills necessary to undertake complex construction tasks as is currently been delivered as part of Op ANEMOI.



During the trip I visited the Remote Radar Head site on Mount Kent and while in the living accommodation my attention was drawn to a plaque at the base of a fireplace like book of wood.

Despite going back and reading the Regimental history I could not find mention of this work

anywhere, perhaps due to the sensitive nature of the construction of the radar heads at the time? Perhaps now is the time to correct this and I wondered if any of our readers could shed and light on it?

I was also told of the work that had just been carried out by RGR and QGE soldiers to construct two memorials to those killed in 1982 from 7 DEO Gurkha Rifles and QGE. They are based at the foot of Mount William and I was able to stop on my way to Stanley to visit the one dedicated to Cpl Krishnakumar Rai.



MOMO CHUTNEY RECIPE

AA Gooch

I am not sure where I picked this recipe up but it has been in our cook book for the last 10 years so thought I would share it with you all. It punches quite a kick so dial down on the chillies (either type) as you see fit. Please feel free to send in other recipes for next year's magazine.

Ingredients

- 6 medium tomatoes
- 6 garlic cloves (peeled)
- 8 fresh green chillies (8 for max heat)
- ¼ cup finely chopped coriander
- 2 teaspoons of freshly grated ginger
- ½ teaspoon of salt
- ¼ teaspoon Szechwan pepper – finely ground
- 2 tablespoons mustard oil
- 3 dried red chillies (reduce number and remove seeds for lesser heat)
- ½ teaspoon fenugreek seeds

Recipe

- Preheat the oven to 220°C and place the tomatoes in a roasting pan and roast for approx. 30min until they are soft, blistered and blackened.
- Add the garlic and green chillies and roast for a further 5min.
- Remove and transfer all to a food processor and blitz into a smooth puree.
- Transfer to a bowl and mix in the coriander, ginger, pepper and salt and then put aside.
- In a small frying pan, heat the mustard oil until almost smoking and add the fenugreek seeds and red chillies and fry for 5 seconds.
- Remove the oil mix from the heat and add to the tomato puree and leave to stand for 10min to allow flavours to blend.

The chutney can be served immediately or kept in the fridge for a number of days.



WHATEVER HAPPENDED TO.....

Having spent the last 3 ½ years in Brompton Barracks I have watched the redevelopment of Kitchener Barracks, once the home of 69 Indep Gurkha Fd Sqn, and seen various objects linking QGE to the area. This has sparked an idea for a series of articles in the coming editions of the magazine to visit camps and barracks that were once home to the Brigade of Gurkhas and QGE and see what has become of them.

I hope to cover Kitchener Barracks next year when the redevelopment work will be complete and after that I need to persuade Memsahab to let me go to Malaysia, Borneo, Hong Kong and back to Nepal!

.....PAKLIHAWA?

Following the 70th celebrations I took the daily flight from Pokhara to Bhairahawa, near Butwal in order to visit the former British Camp in Paklihawa, that sits very close to the Indian Border.

I had spoken about my plan during the previous few days and it turned out that Maj Prem Ale MVO and his wife, Pabitra were going to be on the same flight and wanted to accompany me to the Camp and see it for themselves. We were met at the airport by Kishor Thapa, the son of ex QGE SSgt Gambahadur Thapa who is currently AWO Gulmi and who kindly drove us the 20min to the camp.

The camp closed in 1978 when it was moved to Pokhara and is now the Tribhuvan University Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science.



I have tried with very little success to find photos of what the camp looked like when it was occupied by the British in order to compare and contrast the change over 40+ years. However, as soon as you walk in the architecture and layout is very similar to the likes of British Gurkhas Pokhara and the former camp in Dharan. You can easily imagine how it looked when it had a bit more TLC applied to it.

When we arrived we spoke to one of the many men milling around the entrance and one person keen to show us around was Bishnu Gurung who it turned out was a security guard when the British were still in residence.



Just inside the entrance, the Guard then and now



As you walk up the main road past the guardroom you pass what was the small hospital and attached morgue before getting to what was the camp offices.



Down a lane on the left is the water tower and the mandir, both of which are still in working order and the former officers' swimming pool which has become a fetid swamp! (photo below)



Further along the main stretch are the buildings that used to be the British Officers' quarters, complete with a still functioning badminton course.



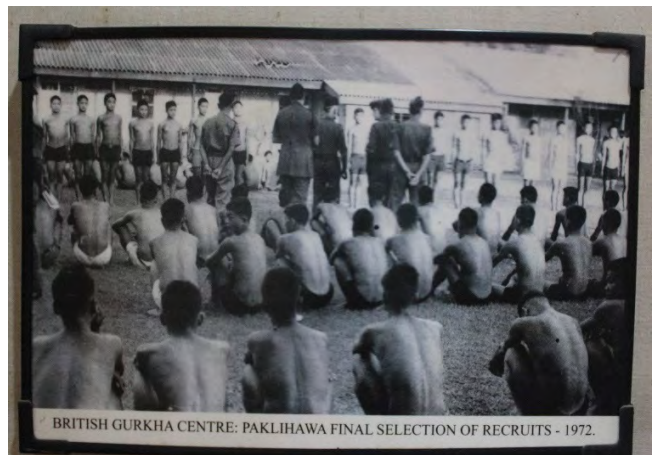
Around the back of this area is where there used to be a small cemetery for those British personnel who died while stationed there. I am told 5 people are still buried there but sadly any sign that this is case has completely disappeared.



Retracing steps backwards and then walking down the lane with the swimming pool, you eventually come on the right to what used to be the Pension Paying Camp.



On the other side is the former Transit Camp where those selected to be trained as Gurkhas would be housed before being sent off to Malaya or Hong Kong for training.



Further along this road you get to the technical stores and Quatermaster's area and here there are a few signs of the British days of occupation.





In the boarded up Canteen there is still a menu on the wall and what appears to be the remains of a Dashain Ghar painting



Back at the main camp entrance, on the other side of the road is the former British School that sadly we did not have time to visit. However, talking to QGE members at the 70th celebrations it is clear that a significant number were educated there including Majs Damar Ghale and Yogprasard Gurung.



Bishnu Gurung, the former security guard who kindly showed us around

The road then runs to the rear gate to the camp, out beyond which is the Gurkha Cemetery and cremation ghat that is evidentially still in use today.



Rear Gate



Main Entrance



Ex QGE DEATHS 2018-19 as at 24 Apr 19

Number	Rank	Name	Date of Death
21162699	LCPL	SIRIPARSAD LIMBU	19/02/2018
21151205	LCPL	LALBAHADUR GURUNG	15/03/2018
21147801	SPR	SETE DAMAI	31/05/2018
	MRS	ROSAMUND SPEIGHT	May 18
21152565	SPR	KRISHNAPRASAD LIMBU	05/06/2018
21151138	CPL	TEKBAHADUR PUN	10/06/2018
21146049	HON LT(QGO)	CHANDRASING LAMA	17/06/2018
21151261	SPR	BHAKTABAHADUR TAMANG	01/07/2018
21132584	SSGT	JASBIR GURUNG	08/07/2018
	MRS	ERIKA ELDERKIN	23/07/18
21148902	SPR	RATNABAHADUR RAI	30/07/2018
21137294	CPL	HIMANSING GURUNG	13/08/2018
	MAJ	TONY CRONK	15/08/18
21147159	SPR	TEKANSING GURUNG	07/09/2018
21142491	SGT	RANBIR THAPA	17/09/2018
21151192	SPR	NANDABAHADUR RAI	07/10/2018
21150121	SPR	SARDAL LIMBU	08/11/2018
21158682	SSGT	PRASAD LIMBU	10/11/2018
21132444	CPL	RAMPARSAD RAI	17/11/2018
21139935	SPR	TEKBAHADUR THAPA	27/11/2018
21164508	SPR	GANGABIR PUN	19/12/2018
21150115	SPR	SHAMSHER GHALE	11/01/2019
21158928	LCPL	INDRABAHADUR LIMBU	16/01/2019
21179096	SGT	DIMBAHADUR MALL	17/01/2019
21158670	WO2	HITBAHADUR MAGAR	23/01/2019
21147157	SPR	KRISHNABAHADUR SUNWAR	06/02/2019
21150287	LCPL	KHEMBAHADUR GURUNG	08/02/2019
21151285	CPL	MAKARSING LIMBU	14/02/2019
21151287	SPR	RAMPARSAD GURUNG	27/03/2019
21156060	CPL	PATHARMAN RAI	18/04/2019
	MRS	MAUREEN ALLEN	



FAMILY NEWS

Jim (94-96), Gillian, Joseph and Roseanna Fernandes

As Andy Gooch's deadline approaches once again, family Fernandes are passing the milestone of 5 years of settled civilian life. Jim left the Army on a high in April 2014, having spent his last tour in Minley commanding 3 RSME Regiment. The privilege of commanding QGE soldiers once again (in the form of Curragh Troop, 57 Training Squadron), and completing Adventurous Training in Nepal in 2013, was a little like going back full circle to the heady days in Hong Kong, learning the art and science of Troop Command with QGE.



Jim, Gillian, Joseph and Roseanna settled in Camberley and, after a compressed gardening leave spent finding and buying a family house (with suitable sized garden for leave activities) and job hunting, Jim settled into a role with Kier while Gillian got into the swing of teaching Modern Languages nearby. Joseph and Roseanna continued at Gordon's School near Woking where they are completing A Levels and GCSEs this summer (where did the time go?!). Jim spends his spare time trying to keep fit, usually road cycling or mountain biking around the Surrey Hills, and keeping the ex-military network active. Alongside Rich Walker, Jim is a founding member of the Camberley Officers' Club, a not for profit whatsapp group that meets monthly to reminisce on the good old days and talk knowledgeably of the new cut-and-thrust commercial world they are now (or soon to be) a small part of.



Jim and Gillian at the Remembrance Ceremony at Albert Hall, Nov 18
Gillian is convinced that the main reason Jim was happy to

settle in Camberley was the close proximity to the epicentre of the Gurkha resettlement base in UK and the chance to practise Nepali on any poor unsuspecting passing ex Gurkha. These one-way conversations continue to prove that there is still enough Nepali vocabulary lingering in the old grey matter to discuss the halcyon days of QGE in Hong Kong. Jai QGE!

Peter Kershaw (91-94)

Photo taken after supper at the Union Jack Club in September 2018. "The Lads from 69 Sqn QM Staff circa 1992/93"



Boz Baral, Dinesh Gurung, Peter Kershaw and Bhawa Krishna

Major D A Walker (75-77 and 86-88) (David and Judy)



We are still in Tetbury and life revolves around our work at the Goods Shed Arts Centre and our family, interspersed with a few holidays. The Arts Centre was opened in late 2016 by the Prince of Wales and is now regularly hosting musical concerts, cinema and other arts activities including



the Tetbury Community Choir and Swing Jive, both of which we attend. David is treasurer and the licensee but has also spent much time working on the Finnish railway carriage which now forms a highly prized adjunct of the Arts Centre and operates as a café.

Judy also supports the Goods Shed working at the box office, in the bar or front of house. Eldest son James still works for Appsbroker in Swindon, is now married to Isobel and has a new son, Artie. His other children, Jude and Dulcie, will both be at grammar schools in Gloucester by the coming school year. William and Poppy with sons Henry, Inigo and Bertie now live in Graveley Cambridgeshire. Charlie still works for Global Water Research and lives with his girlfriend, Charlotte, in Oxford.

In September 2016 we travelled to Russia which we are now glad we did before the events in Salisbury. In November 2018 we went to India and saw some fantastic sights, the highlights being three tigers (very) close-up, and being only yards away when a leopard caught a monkey in Ranthambore National Park.

Bill & Janet Wiggett (65-71)



An eventful year.....

Our son Tom was married to the lovely Heather in October and honeymooned in Guatemala and Belize. Tom continues to make progress toward overtaking Fever Tree with his drink mixer Company, **Long Tail**. See www.drinklongtail.co.uk Buy some from Amazon or Selfridges!



Alice is now Head of 6th Form English Literature at her School but, more importantly, marries Dan in August. Dan, a music producer, now has a recording studio in our barn! **'UpTop Studio'**

Janet and I completed a three week visit to India where we took the Maharaja Express around Rajestan for a week – fantastic!

We also flew to Darjeeling to stay at the Windermere Hotel where I last stayed 50 years ago having driven from Dharan.



The hotel has not changed at all, but I was disappointed reception didn't remember me! As you all may know, Nepalese is the lingua franca in Darjeeling – locally named Gurkha Land – and I was rather pleased to enjoy being understood by the hotel staff, or were they just being kind? OK, kind it is!

Finally, after meeting with Indian friends in Delhi, we flew to Udaipur for a four day stay in the Lake Palace – again, fantastic. All in all, a must bucket list trip.



Janet is working hard on the arrangements for the wedding and I still busy myself running my Company and working with Abu Dhabi.



STOP PRESS. To be GOC Army Recruiting and Initial Training Command/Commandant Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, in the rank of Major General, in April 2020, Brigadier J H Ridge CBE



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION HELD AT ON SATURDAY 29th SEPTEMBER 2018

Present:

Major General R Wardlaw OBE	President
Major (Retd) I Moore	Honorary Secretary
Lieutenant Colonel A Gooch	Magazine Editor
Lieutenant Colonel M Baker	Website and Social Media Editor
Major G Drysdale	Deputy Commandant
Major Purnasingh Tamang	Gurkha Major
Major Prembahadur Ale MVO	Gurkha Secretary
Major R Oakes	Social Member
25 Members of the Association	

Apologies were received from the Chairman, the Commandant, the Treasurer, the Historical Member, MiC Nepal Reunion and 5 members of the Association.

ITEM 1 – OPENING REMARKS BY THE SECRETARY

a. The Honorary Secretary opened the meeting by welcoming the Members present. He then thanked the Regiment for hosting the day's events and presented the apologies of the Chairman, the Commandant, the Treasurer, the Historical Member, and MiC Nepal Reunion.

ITEM 2 – PREVIOUS MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

a. The Minutes of the 2017 AGM were passed as a true record. There were no matters arising that were not covered in the remainder of the meeting.

Proposed: Capt (Retd)Duncan Pierce
Seconded: Major (Retd) Dudhprasad Gurung

ITEM 3 – ACCOUNTS

a. The Honorary Secretary summarised the Treasurers report, noting that the Association's fund performance was satisfactory; that the AFCIF's wider investment had had a positive effect; that some management charges had reduced; but that Charifund had performed slightly below the FTSE index. A copy of the complete report is attached, with copies of the accounts.

ITEM 4 – THE MAGAZINE

a. The Magazine Editor started his brief with an apology. Unfortunately this year's magazine had been printed with an early version of the Colonel's foreword. A link to the correct version is distributed with these minutes. A transcript is also attached.

b. The Editor then summed up this year's edition, stating that over 700 copies of the were sent out; that after resales, etc, the cost to the Association is c£2000; and that this continues to be a good deal given the magazines physical quality and distribution costs. That written, the Editor committed to seeing if/where savings could be made. One area of exploitation to be looked at, is wider use of e-copy which has replaced the previous expensive CD distribution. The Editor will report back at a future meeting/via the Honorary Secretary.

c. The Editor encouraged members to submit articles for next year's magazine, especially 'family news' which has been light for the last couple of editions. He also stated that he will include an article on the reunion in Nepal as he is attending but hoped that others would also submit to get the most balanced article as possible.

d. The Editor remarked that several member addresses were incorrect/that magazines had been returned to sender. As a result, he made a plea for members to keep their details up to date with the Honorary Secretary to reduce this wastage.

e. The Editor noted that there have been a several deaths amongst the membership in 2018. He hoped that other members would submit obituaries, recalling these individuals and their achievements.



ITEM 5 – THE QGEA WEB SITE

- a. The Web and Social Media (W&SM) Editor commented on the recent website security breach. It has now been resolved, and security measures have been increased. **N.B. As no personal data is stored on the website, this breach has no direct effect on the membership.**
- b. The W&SM Editor reminded the meeting, that the website remains the repository for dates and back issues of the Regimental Magazine (magazines dating from 1958 onwards are now hosted on the site). The Facebook page (a closed group) offers more up to date Regimental/family news. He also remarked that the Association's Twitter feed is "ticking over" but not much more.
- c. The W&SM Editor encouraged members to state what they would like to see on the website, and remarked that he is to work with the Honorary Secretary to enable routine messages and announcements to be shared through that medium.
- d. The W&SM Editor suggested that, given the type of usage that the facebook page sees (largely younger, serving soldiers), the Regiment would be better placed to run it in its current form (being closer to the highest user group, they can interrogate membership requests more easily). If this option is taken, the W&SM will set up a more focused QGEA only group. This could be used solely for Association business (communication of function details, bereavement notifications, etc) **Action: Further discussion between the Regt and QGEA Committee is required.**
- d. The W&SM Editor also briefed on the Britain Nepal Society (BNS). Future BNS updates will be shared via the Honorary Secretary.

ITEM 6 – REGIMENTAL UPDATE

Deputy Commandant (DComdt) QGE briefed the meeting on Regimental activities and achievements. In summary:

- a. The tempo and level of commitment to operations, training and training support remains high.
- b. Similarly the soldiery continue to perform and achieve recognition across the sporting spectrum, from traditional activities such as badminton, squash and volleyball, to newer, more niche activities, such as powerlifting, mountain bike racing and canoeing.
- c. The operational and training forecast for the next six months is much the same. Equally the key themes for RHQ remain: the challenges of under manning; GURTAM to UKTAP transfers; Regimental growth; role changes; and future planning/reaction to the basing plan. **After note: Maj (Retd) Dudh asked if Regtl updates could be shared with HQ BG, as they were not included in recent HQBG briefings. DComdt to investigate and share Regtl Comms strategy with QGEA Sec.**
- d. DComdt also highlighted a few specific and important dates, including:
 - i. Dashain – 13 Oct 18
 - ii. A QGE History Study Day (Regimental personnel only) in Q2 of 2019

ITEM 7 – QGEA FUNCTIONS

The Social Member briefed as follows:

- a. Running functions remains challenging, due to the diversity of the membership (age, location, preference, etc). That written, there has been some success and the Social Member thanked all those who have got involved and attended.
- b. He listed some upcoming dates for your diaries: *(Editor comment. Dates removed as have now passed)*
- c. There was also a discussion about exploiting links with other 'Branches' e.g. Farnborough/Aldershot, and how we could collectively do better. It was acknowledged that this will become increasingly important when the Regiment moves from Maidstone. The discussion also included how we could better include other ranks (the incorrect perception that the Association is a BO/Offr club still exists in some quarters). The Honorary Secretary declared that this is a focus area for the Association. He also reminded the members that all functions and gatherings, except those in the HQ mess (due to mess rules) are open to all members/ranks. The Social Member is looking at other, more inclusive venues. Brig Tony Harking suggested that Greys Inn could be a possibility but that rates would certainly be higher than those enjoyed in the HQ Mess. **Action: Social Member to investigate.**



d. The Social Member said that he is to establish a functions area on the website (dates, etc). He will work with the Honorary Secretary and W&SM Editor to achieve this. **Action: Social Member**

ITEM 8 – MEMBERSHIP

a. The Honorary Secretary briefed the meeting that 35 additional members have joined the Association in the last year. These have been predominantly serving soldiers of the Regiment. **After note: The Honorary Secretary has received 12 more applications since the AGM.**

b. Membership numbers now stand at: 429 Full Members, 12 Associate Members and 45 Honorary Members. 60 Members made an annual contribution to the Association of at least £10.

c. As per the Magazine Editor's earlier plea, the Honorary Secretary reminded members to keep their personal details up to date, He also reminded members of the importance of completing forms and returns clearly, as some recent submissions have been illegible. This is particularly relevant to those joining from the Regiment, who often have the same name. It was suggested that Army numbers were included on the form and that the submitting SNCO checks applications for clarity.

d. The Honorary Secretary briefed the meeting of his work to refine 'the Membership Offer'. This will be presented to the Association Committee and thereafter the membership.

e. The Honorary Secretary also briefed on the initiative to link the Association to the Royal Engineer's Association. All should note that this will not facilitate REA benevolence funding but rather linkage to the support and social networks they have established. More detail will follow in early 2019.

ITEM 9 - THE REGIMENTAL HISTORY

The Association's Historical Member submitted his apologies and a short brief on progress to date. In summary.

a. The Historical Member thanked Tony Sowerby and Mohan Gurung for their work to compile the Regimental Archive and thereafter to brief him on its material.

b. The Historical Member is currently planning the next volume of Regimental history. He intends the end result to be "more through the eyes of the soldiery".

c. The Historical member outlined his next steps: gather further data (war stories committee, Nepal reunion, engage museums, all help welcome!); clarify the end point (guidance required); and get an illustrator.

d. The Historical Member declared his current timeline: draft late 2019; edit spring 2020; publish Sep 2020

ITEM 10 – NEPAL

a. The Nepal/Gurkha Member had no specific news to brief the meeting on.

b. The Member in Charge of the Nepal Reunion submitted his apologies. His brief is attached. All questions relating to it, should be directed to him. The Nepal Member also remarked that a small Gurkha toil also join the reunion under their own bhandobast.

ITEM 11 - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a. Future moves of the Regiment were discussed. The DComdt could not give any further detail, as it has not yet been determined. However he did give the meeting reassurance that the safeguarding of Regimental property would be part of the plan. Being Director Army Basing, the Colonel of the Regiment reiterated this point, stating that whilst the plan was still in development and that no options had been confirmed or written out, it will encompass Regimental property and memorials. When further detail is available, it will be circulated by appropriate means.

b. Major Devbahadur Gurung asked why certain Regimental paintings had been removed from the Mess and if there was a plan to redisplay them. The DComdt and Lieutenant Colonel Jim Hawkins responded saying that, "8 Bde had audited the Regiment, and concluded that in some areas, especially the Officers' Mess, the Regiment was inappropriately skewed towards the QGE. This sentiment echoed the findings of wider Regimental engagement and as a result, RHQ took immediate action to bring more balance." DComdt stated that RHQ are pulling together a plan to ensure Regimental property is displayed appropriately and rotated on a routine basis.



c. Major Dhanbahadur Chand and Lieutenant General ir David Bill briefed the Meeting on the progress and changes in the Pahar Trust. They said, “the Trust has been restructured in Nepal and UK to ensure better leadership, management and administration. It has also changed its focus slightly, as the demographic of those supported has changed (it is now more focused on the Terai than the Pahar), and as the needs of the establishments it created have also changed. Support is now more focused on facilities management and improvement, IT infrastructure improvement and better quality of education.” They also acknowledged and thanked the Regiment for its continued financial support (in excess of £3000 was gifted in the last year.)

d. Major Yogprasad Thapa asked if there were any plans to enable retired personnel access to the Regimental PRI shop. This has since been answered by the Magazine Editor. Personnel can purchase Regimental items through Scott Hamilton Tailors (www.hmtailors.co.uk 01252 863036). Whilst he does not have an online shop, he is happy to take orders and payment over the phone.

e. Capt Yambahadur Pun asked what measures were being made to attract further members to the association. In particular he asked: if QGEA Committee job specs/construct were available for a better understanding? Were there any plans to widen or deepen the Committee to include further Gurkha/other rank representation? and if the AGM could be extended to enable better/more involved discussion? The Honorary Secretary responded to this by stating that the intended “Offer” proposal would seek to answer some of these question.

f. The Special Routine Order for the 2018 presentation of the Bowering Trophy is attached to these minutes.

g. The meeting was closed at 11:20am.

Ian Moore
Honorary Secretary

Attachments

1. Financial Report
2. Financial Statement
3. Colonel of the Regiment's Magazine Foreword (*removed as already sent to members in 2018*)
4. Social Member after note (*removed as not relevant now*)
5. Nepal 2018 update (*removed as event has passed*)
6. SRO relating to 2018 Bowering Trophy (*removed as covered elsewhere in the magazine*)

THE QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS REGIMENTAL TRUST INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT SEPTEMBER 2018.

The Armed Forces Common Investment Fund (AFCIF)

The performance statistics of the Fund are collated with those of other common investment fund managers and published on a “peer group” basis by Charity Investments.co.uk.

AFCIF's performance is measured internally against a testing benchmark, currently being reviewed in view of requirement for periodic review and the fact that conditions ahead look stormy. It is the stated intention of the Board to increase the actual yield of the Fund and to distribute a growing stream of dividends as well as protecting the capital value of the investment. In both these areas the Fund has been successful. Measures are now in hand to convert from a Common Investment Fund (CIF) to a Charities Authorised Investment Fund (CAIF). This will result in a reduction in the Management fee as VAT will no longer be chargeable on fees.

AFCIF DETAILED FUND PERFORMANCE

AFCIF. In 2017 achieved 13.3% total return against the CI Hub Multi Asset Index of 10.0 %. This placed it as the leading fund in a peer group of 18 funds. Over the latest quarter (Q2 2018) AFCIF has achieved 4.3%. At present it is invested as follows; 6.0% cash, 8.8% in Bonds, 39.7% in UK Equities, 33.0% in Overseas Equities, 7.9% in property and 4.6% in other assets. Its annual charge is 0.42% and this will reduce when the Fund converts to a Charities Authorised Investment Fund (CAIF) and will then be exempt from VAT (on charges).

The Advisory Board considers that AFCIF continues to provide an excellent investment vehicle for Armed Forces units and



military charities in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. New investors are still being found from across the spectrum of the three Services and existing investors continue to re-invest.

Performance is reported daily and is accessible via BlackRock's website (www.blackrock.co.uk).

The Annual Charge is in the order of 0.4 which compares very favourably with the peer group.

Investors' Meeting are held every six months. The next is at 1400 on Tuesday **Tuesday 13 November 2018** at Drapers Gardens, 12 Throgmorton Avenue in the City of London.

Mike Adler and Sally Cranwell-Child attend all meetings of the AFCIF Advisory Board, as they are the Company Secretaries.

M&G Charifund

This is the longest-lived UK Charity collective investment. Technically it is a unit trust and not a common investment fund. Traditionally it has invested mainly in UK equities. Charifund has recognised its lack of spread and now still has most of its assets in UK equities but overseas, bonds and alternative investments are being increasingly used.

Fund objective

The Trust is designed to provide a high and growing income for charities, while at the same time protecting their capital from the erosive effects of inflation over a rolling ten year period. There is no guarantee that the Trust will achieve a positive return over this, or any other, period and investors may not get back the original amount they invested. The units are a suitable investment for the equity portion of charitable funds. Normally the Managers' policy is to invest in a portfolio mainly of equities and convertible stocks to provide a yield significantly more than that of the FTSE All-Share Index.

Investment approach

The units are a suitable investment for the equity portion of charitable funds. Any UK charity, including those in Scotland and Northern Ireland, can invest in Charifund. Charifund's portfolio comprises approximately 100 stocks. The fund invests mainly in a well-diversified portfolio of high yielding UK stocks with the objective of generating a high income and increasing the annual distribution.

The aim is to provide a level of income that is significantly higher than that of the FTSE All-Share Index. The high yield premium attached to the fund generally means that there is a bias towards good value, out-of-favour stocks. The emphasis on yield helps to identify shares that are cheap and to avoid those that are expensive. Good quality companies with attractive dividend growth prospects are identified from the available universe of high yielding stocks as those that exhibit a strong business franchise, competitiveness and good turnover and dividend growth. In view of the yield premium, the portfolio is constructed quite differently from the FTSE All-Share Index and therefore will usually move at a quite different speed from the index in the short run.

The most recently available performance figures (as at 30 June 2018) are as follows;

Charifund. In 2017 achieved a total return of 12.1% versus the FTSE All Share Index's 13.1%. Over the latest quarter Charifund has achieved 7.7%. At present it is invested as follows; Cash 1.0%, Bonds 4.2%, UK Equity 85.8% and Overseas Equity 9.1%. It has an historic income yield of 4.7% placing it as number 2 in a peer group of 11 funds.

Overall the QGE Trust's investments are aimed at providing the highest possible income in a low interest rate environment coupled with diversification achieved by spreading risk on a world-wide multi-asset basis with the medium term aim of capital preservation. In the case of all our holdings there is a very high degree of oversight of each investment via independent advisory boards and investment committees. Charges are lower than we could achieve on a non-unitised basis (that assumes that we could actually find an investment manager prepared to provide active management for a portfolio of this size).



ENCLSOURE 1 – FINANCIAL STATE

THE QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION FINANCIAL STATE AS AT 20 Sep 2018

Current Financial year ends 28 Feb 19

CAF CASH ACCOUNT

This account has been closed and incorporated into the combined Regimental Trust Account held by Holt's Military Banking

AFCIF Income units

24675.48 units

Cost probably £1.00 per unit

31/12/2007	£41,454.81
29/02/2008	£39,011.00
21/08/2008	£36,273.00
25/09/2008	£34,570.35
18/05/2009	£30,646.95
31/12/2009	£35,162.56
03/02/2010	£34,841.78
03/09/2010	£35,236.59
02/02/2011	£38,296.35
23/05/2011	£38,370.37
22/09/2011	£34,545.67
31/01/2012	£36,840.49
25976.717 units	
01/06/2012	£38,107.84
21/09/2012	£40,913.33
01/02/2013	£42,523.89
23/05/2013	£45,407.30
20/09/2013	£44,108.47
23/01/2014	£44,556.07
25/04/2014	£44,342.26
19/09/2014	£45,952.81
24/06/2015	£48,004.97
24/09/2015	£44,809.84
22/09/2016	£50,290.93
20/03/2017	£53,122.39
17/09/2017	£53,018.48
20/09/2018	£54,317.32 CURRENT VALUE

20/09/2018 **£54,317.32 CURRENT VALUE**

THE QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS REGIMENTAL TRUST FINANCIAL STATE AS AT 20 Sep 2018

Current Financial year ends 28 Feb 19

RBS C/A £500.00
RBS D/A

Investments at cost

M&G Charifund Income Units

1,839 units at £11,0204 per unit £ 14,146.85 COST

Less
Add

Market value as at

27/02/2004	£20,229.40
19/01/2005	£22,747.82
06/05/2005	£22,333.72
03/08/2005	£23,878.74
31/08/2006	£26,954.82
15/05/2007	£30,839.60
31/12/2007	£26,712.39
29/02/2008	£24,456.00
21/08/2008	£21,680.00
25/09/2008	£20,989.96
18/05/2009	£16,577.84
31/12/2009	£19,707.04
03/02/2010	£19,223.64
03/09/2010	£19,723.21
02/02/2011	£21,062.56
23/05/2011	£21,470.23
22/09/2011	£19,052.34
31/01/2012	£20,537.81
01/06/2012	£19,662.01
21/09/2012	£21,899.77
01/02/2013	£23,236.92
23/05/2013	£25,278.57
20/09/2013	£25,565.29
23/01/2014	£26,694.93
25/04/2014	£26,874.32
19/09/2014	£27,273.16
12/03/2015	£27,349.63
24/06/2015	£27,946.61
24/09/2015	£25,391.61
22/09/2016	£28,269.51
20/03/2017	£28,953.65
17/09/2017	£28,950.71
20/09/2018	£29,087.82 CURRENT VALUE



THE PEROWNE TRUST

The Perowne Trust is now a sub-account with the Regt Trust

FINANCIAL STATE AS AT 20 Sep 2018

A/c now sub a/c of Trust

THIS BALANCE IS CONTAINED WITHIN THAT REPORTED FOR THE REGIMENTAL TRUST (ABOVE)

			Original holding was in	ACIF Accm units
			46526.686 Accm units	Cost probably £1.00 per unit
			Market value as at 6 May 2005	£ 60,438.17
			Market value 3 Aug 05	£ 65,509.57
Accumulation units converted to income units 21 Oct 05			50421.946 Income units	AFCIF Income units
11/11/05 sold income units to fund payment			-2334.702 raised £4,000.00	
			47487.244	
23/11/06 sold income units to fund payment			-2810.362 raised £4,000.00	
			44676.282 M/v 31 Aug 06	£ 66,612.33
21/12/2006 sold income units to fund payment			-1835.135 raised £3,000.00	
			42781.147	
01/11/2007 sold income units to fund payment			-2066.115 raised £3,500.00	
			40715.032	£68,401.25 Market value
29/02/2008				£64,370.00 Market value
21/08/2008				£59,851.00 Market value
25/03/2008				£57,041.76 Market value
18/05/2009				£50,568.07 Market value
31/12/2009				£58,018.32 Market value
03/02/2010 (14/05/2010 sold income units to fund payment)				£57,489.63 Market value
03/03/2010			37309.983	£54,135.46 Market value
02/02/2011				£58,836.23 Market value
23/05/2011				£58,350.02 Market value
22/03/2011				£53,073.36 Market value
31/01/2012				£56,539.60 Market value
01/06/2012				£55,613.35 Market value
21/03/2012				£59,708.22 Market value
01/02/2013				£62,058.64 Market value
25/05/2013				£66,266.65 Market value
20/03/2013				£64,371.15 Market value
23/01/2014				£65,015.62 Market value
25/04/2014				£64,712.34 Market value
19/03/2014				£67,062.76 Market value
12/11/2014 bought inc units on closure CAF a/c			2408.34 at £1.7600 XD per unit Cost £4,246.36	
			37309.983	
			40318.923	
7/1/15 sold income units to fund Scholarships			-2857.142 at £1.7500 proceeds £5,000.00	
			37461.781	£63,229.37 Market value
24/03/2015				£64,621.58 Market value
19/01/2016 sold 4,115.226 inc units			-4115.226 raised £7,000.00	
			33346.6	£64,558.33 Market value
22/03/2016				
29/12/2016 sold 3,287.325 inc units			-3287.325 raised £18,000.00	
			24058.6	£49,159.30 Market value
20/03/2017				
19/01/2018 sold 3,358.314 inc units			-3358.314	
			14699.7	
20/03/2018				£30,737.11 CURRENT VALUE

TOTALS

Cash at bank

QGEA & Perowne

Now one with Trust, all cash is in a/cs below

Regt Trst

Current account

Deposit account

add Gift Aid due

Les Magazine postages

£13,497.60

Investments

£54,317.32

£29,087.82

£30,737.11

£114,142.25 Current market value

The cash figure includes the Brigade Education & Welfare Fund grant of

£5,000 This grant has to be spent in the calendar year on serving soldiers

The Gurkha Major is requested to put forward suggestions for the expenditure of £5,000.



THE QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS

70th ANNIVERSARY REUNION

POKHARA, NEPAL

24 NOVEMBER 2018



The Queen's Gurkha Engineers Association

President	Major General R Wardlaw OBE
Chairman	Colonel (Ret'd) MP Carter
Secretary	Major (Ret'd) I Moore
Gurkha Secretary	Major (Ret'd) Prembahadur Ale MVO
Treasurer	Mr M Adler esq
Social Media Editor	Lieutenant Colonel MAS Baker RE
Magazine Editor	Lieutenant Colonel AA Gooch RE
Social Events Member	Major R Oakes RE
Historical Member	Major (Ret'd) A Sowerby

BREMONT PROJECT POSSIBLE 14/7



Mt Annapurna – April 23
Mt Dhaulagiri – May 12
Mt Kanchenjunga – May 15
Mt Everest – May 22 (am)
Mt Lhotse – May 22 (pm)
Mt Makalu – May 24
Nanga Parbat – July 03
Gasherbrum I – July 15
Gasherbrum II – July 18
Mt K2 – July 24
Broad Peak – July 26

There are 14 mountains on earth higher than 8000m (the “8000-ers”) and Bremont Project Possible is an attempt by Nimal “Nims” Purja, a QGE and SBS soldier for 16 years, to summit them all in 7 months. The previous world record? Almost 8 years!

With Bremont Project Possible back on track, Nims Purja has done it again, submitting K2 and Broad Peak in Pakistan in the last few days. Phase 2 of Nim’s mission is now complete (11 of 14 peaks submitted). I think you’ll all join me in wishing him the best of luck for the final push.

The final phase will begin in September with plans to climb the remaining three peaks – Mt Manaslu, Mt Cho Oyu and Mt Sishapangma by this November and I hope to report on it in next year’s magazine. Jai Nims and team!

<https://projectpossible.co.uk/>

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The deadline for material to be with the Editor for 2019 Magazine is 10 Apr 2020 and will cover the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020

