Queen's Gurkha Engineers Association

Newsletter

No 29

QGEA DASHERA PARTY

At 8.00 pm Saturday 26 October 1985 at US (Medway) Sports Club.

From: .....

To: Major A S Tuggey RE
HQ RSME
Brompton Barracks
Chatham
Kent

(0634 44555/Chatham Mil Ext 434)

1. I wish to attend the QGEA Dashera Party to be held at the US (Medway) Sports Club, Chatham at 8.00 pm on Saturday 26 October 1985.

2. I wish to bring ..... guests.

Date: .....

Signed: .....

NB. RETURN TO QGELO BY FRIDAY 18 OCTOBER 1985 AT THE LATEST.

THE QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

NO.29 MARCH 1985

	Page
QGEA Committee	2
Editorial	3
Obituary	3
QGEA and GBA Future Functions	5
Commandant's Newsletter	6
Honours/Awards	10
Arrivals/Departures	10
Regimental List	11
IO's Notes	14
Regimental Programme 1985	18
Sports Round-Up	20
69 Squadron Newsletter	24
I survived Ex Palm Frond 32 with 67 Squadron	27
Going Back to Gurkha Bridge	29
The Durand Medal	31
The Lantau Project	32
The Gurkha Museum	35
Family News	37
Minutes of AGM	38
RSME Newsletter	41
Stop Press	43

Enclosure - Proformae for:-

QGEA Dinner
Ballot on Venue for 1986 Dinner
Change of Address
QGEA Dashera Party

QGEA COMMITTEE

President:	General Sir George Cooper GCB MC
Immediate Past President:	Lieutenant General Sir Hugh Cunningham KBE
Chairman:	Brigadier D. H. Bowen OBE
Field Office Recently Returned:	Colonel M. J. F. Stephens
Secretary & Treasurer:	John Major J. A. Pinel RE (Office Tel: 01-218-4434)
QGELO:	Major A. S. Tuggey RE (Office Tel: 0634-44555 Ext 434)
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Editor:	Lieutenant Colonel I. C. Slater OBE (Office Tel: 01-488-1313 Ext 3243) (Home:- 29 Pynchon Paddocks Little Hallingbury Bishops Stortford Herts CM22 7RJ Tel: 0279-724529)

From Major J A Pinel RE
(Engr 1)
HEADQUARTERS ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF (ARMY)
Old War Office Building Whitehall SW1A 2EU
Telephone (Direct Dialling) 01-218 ext 4434
(Switchboard) 01-218 9000

Mr T LeM Spring-Smyth
14 Derwent Road
New Milton
Hants BH25 5HY

Your reference

Our reference
QGEA 6

Date
25 June 1985

Dear Tom

Thank you very much for your generous donation to the Perowne Scholarship Trust in memory of Colonel "Jumbo" Thomas.

Once all donations have been received a list of all donors will be sent to Priscilla, his widow.

Yours sincerely

John

Sec QGEA.

Thank you very much also for your information on the Minley dinner location. I shall produce at the next QGEA Committee meeting in July and suspect you'll win the day.

EDITORIAL

This is the first of the "annual" newsletters; the timing is aimed at reaching members at a time when they will be making a decision on whether they are able to attend the Minley Party. Even if you are unable to get to this year's party, could you please complete the part of the party proforma which seeks your views on the venue for 1986.

Our representation at the GBA Dinner was at an all-time low again of 1.

I apologise to Associate Members that I did not notice the absence of the list of British WOs/SNCOs until just before our printing deadline.

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OBITUARY

Wendy Edwards

Wendy set something of a precedent in the Regiment when she joined John in 1958, to make him the first ever married subaltern in the Regiment where there were precious few married officers of any rank! Gloomy predictions abounded about wives preventing young officers from doing their jobs properly. Those of us who served with John in the years that followed know that in Wendy's case it was quite the reverse, and during John's six tours with the Brigade of Gurkhas she was an outstanding support and inspiration to him - and a true friend to us all.

The cancer that was to be the cause of Wendy's death was diagnosed while John was Commandant, but this and the debilitating treatment she endured did not prevent her fulfilment of the role and duties as Commandant's wife completely and ever enthusiastically.

In the years which followed, the shadow of the disease was always present but few people realised it as she continued to live her life as fully as she was able.

The final stage of her illness began back in Hong Kong while John was Deputy Commander, Gurkha Field Force. Once again Wendy strived to live a normal life but eventually had to return to UK for further treatment.

At Chatham, close to the hospital at Woolwich and amongst friends, Wendy endured without complaint chemotherapy and its appalling attendant side-effects, but which gave her a period of remission during the summer of 1984.

In the autumn she began to go downhill but with typical determination she stayed alive for Christmas with her family and died at home early on 29th December 1984.

A large number of members of the QGEA, the Corps, and the Brigade of Gurkhas attended the funeral and interment at Fort Pitt Military Cemetery.

The recurring themes in the many letters that John has received are those of Wendy's courage in adversity, her total lack of self-pity, her unfailing sense of humour, and her interest in other people. Someone who visited her in hospital when she was desparately ill and approaching the end said that they came away cheered by her company rather than the other way round.

Reverend Walter Evans, who was our Garrison Chaplain in Kluang and who officiated at the burial provided the most fitting epitaph in his words to John:

> "It is not the quantity of life that is important, but the quality."

To John, Matthew and Rebecca we offer our sincere sympathy. The QGEA has made a donation to Cancer Research as a token of our gratitude for everything we owe to Wendy.

I.C.S.

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QGEA DINNER - MINLEY MANOR

The QGEA Dinner will be held at Minley Manor on FRIDAY 17th MAY 1985. Timings - 7.15p.m. for 7.45p.m. Dress - Black Tie. (The GBA Sandhurst Reunion is the following day)

The format will be as previous years and your Committee has invited, as guests, the 69 Squadron QGOs and the WRVS Honorary Members.

The cost will be £10 per head and will include pre-dinner drinks and wines with dinner.

A proforma is enclosed; please return it WITH YOUR CHEQUE to the Secretary, Major John Pinel, before 26th April 1985.

Please make a note of which type of meal you order. Last year there was cold buffet wasted and a shortage of curry as a result of lapses of memory/changes of choice.

Members are asked also to indicate on the proforma their preference for either retaining Minley Manor as the venue for the 1986 Dinner, or for a change to the Headquarters Mess at Chatham.

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QGEA DASHERA PARTY

The party will be held at Chatham on Saturday 26th October and will be preceded by the AGM of the Association.

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GBA DINNER

The 1985 Dinner will be held on Friday 8th November; the venue will again be the Cavalry & Guards Club. Details can be obtained from LOBG at MOD Old War Office Building.

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COMMANDANT'S NEWSLETTER

The second half of 1984 was dominated in Hong Kong by the signing of the Sino-British accord. The many 'inspired' leaks and the gradual relaxation evident amongst our masters ensured that even lowly Regimental officers, reliant on newspaper reports, were not surprised by the really quite generous terms of the agreement. Although euphoria would be too strong a word to describe the subsequent reaction in Hong Kong, there has been a noticeable upsurge in confidence and increase in smiling faces. The Christmas decorations in the Tsim Sha Tsui East complex of shops and hotels had an extravagant and expensive air of celebration about them and the Hang Seng Index continues to climb.

Our life in the Regiment continued in its different but equally exciting (for some) way. Work on the Lantau project continued, aided by generally good weather and only marginally affected by holidays! A separate article (which will also appear in Kukri 1985) is included in this magazine. Visitors are impressed by the size and scope of the work and by the obvious technical competence of our officers and soldiers. We hope to be able to send the Association a tape for next May's annual reunion.

There was much movement in July. The Commandant arrived back from his visit to Brunei on 1 July and by 9 July the whole of 67 Sqn had also returned. At the same time the Diving Team (less Steve Tucker) came back from their six weeks in Fiji. Steve 'had' to stay there and was joined by E Troop; they spent a further 6 weeks there carrying out construction tasks situated mainly on idyllic and remote islands - all good hearts and minds stuff! Rest assured that there is no shortage of willing volunteers for exercises in Fiji. Towards the end of the month Colin Peebles was off again; this time on a recce to Papua New Guinea for a troop exercise from October to December.

Life settled down in August and September when social and other life is generally minimised due to the heat - and the presence of the school kids. The weather was remarkably fine, however, and in spite of the temperature long hours were worked on Lantau. Mark Freeman and A Troop were flat out constructing the Hyperfix navigation chain (see separate article) and B Troop (less Chris Cockerill on his language course) replaced the absent E Troop on Lantau.

At the end of September there were disastrous floods in Nepal which washed out roads and bridges and even took out quite a lot of the newly completed (by PSA) Dharan-Dhankuta highway. Hamish Mac Leod, the Adjutant was going on trek at the time and as a result of his Sitreps and assessments Robin Lavies abandoned Lantau and 68 Squadron and spent the whole of October in Dharan. His main task was concerned with helping to restore temporarily the water pipeline which

supplies Dharan Cantonment and planning the proper rebuild which will take place in 1985.

Meanwhile QGE Day on 28th September was effectively the start of the Dashera holiday. We celebrated quietly but enjoyably with fun water sports and a barbecue at Gordon Hard. The newly commissioned Regimental junk, Grace, was very popular for family trips round the bay. This followed the morning muster parade at which the Bowring Trophy was presented; the Commandant had the embarrassment of handing it over to his own driver, LCpl Gyanraj Rai! Dashera then followed with a Regimental Kalratri on the Basketball pitches beside the new Gymnasium. The weather was fine and Kalratri was to have been in the open. Inevitably, however, an awning in the shape of a Dashera Ghar appeared magically on the day.....

The Commandant had his revenge, however, and the day after Tika the Regiment stood-to in IS formation with all six field troops reconstituted. A brief inspection was not followed by the expected dismission and, instead the whole Regiment marched out of barracks. Bhat was served on top of the Tai Lam Reservoir Dam. Brief though the march had been it certainly got rid of some of the Dashera Beer!

Over the Dashera period the Lantau project had been kept ticking over by visiting Sappers of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces embryo Combat Engineer Squadron commanded by (Acting) Major Freddy Kemp. Their presence meant that all our men could leave site and we repayed them by arranging adventure training at Gordon Hard. A few lessons were relearned notably the problems that can arise over different religious customs and rates of work.

The Bruneians were replaced by a composite troop of Sappers from the PNG Defence Force Engineer Battalion; a splendid body of men, good tradesmen, well motivated and with high morale and discipline. They have an instant rapport with Gurkhas and made many friends on Lantau - even the Police commented how well they had behaved. They contributed significantly to progress on site and all but completed a major culvert before joining training wing for a session of combat engineering.

A Troop meanwhile went down to PNG on Exercise Tarho Sathi accompanied by a small diving team. The troop spent much of its time in Vanimo near the Indonesian border on the North Coast where they constructed the first building of a new Company base. The location is quite beautiful, one of the loveliest tropical beaches imaginable and, apart from the horrendous price of beer, the troop enjoyed themselves. The work demanded high standards of our tradesmen and was completed to the satisfaction of the RAE Clerk of Works who was on site throughout. The troop then returned to Port Moresby, carried out an adventure training trek-cum-route recce and finally constructed a substantial improvised

bridge in the Goldie training area.

The Commandant managed to visit PNG with A Troop. He was able to horrify the British High Commissioner by reporting that the Indonesian Border, scene of considerable unrest, was tranquil during an inadvertent visit with a patrol from the Pacific Islands Regiment.

The Commandant returned to Hong Kong just in time to greet the E-in-C, General Mike Mathews who arrived on 30 October. After a day on Lantau they both went off to Nepal to visit Dharan, Pokhara (via Ekbahadur Saheb's Welfare Centre at Gorkha) and Kathmandu where he met Capt(QGO) Tekansing who, along with 6 other members of the Regiment is providing valuable support to Exercise High Trig, a 42 Survey Regiment triangulation project in the far West. A 24 hour flight delay combined with a Kathmandu bug nearly wrecked General Mike's trip but he managed to get down to Brunei for 24 hours before spending the last couple of days of his fortnight in Hong Kong. The visit, optimistically billed by the Commandant in advance as 'fairly relaxed' was enjoyable but very demanding.

Novemeber started with the great SSAFA Military Extravaganza in the Government Stadium. The Regiment was heavily involved as usual although not in the arena. An enormous sum of money was raised and it is certain that the Perowne Appeal will benefit as a result. Another event that month was the JLC Pass Off Parade on 9 November at which the Inspecting Officer was Colonel Mike Betts, ACOS G1/G4 at HQBF (Colonel AG for those who have not yet caught up with the New Speak). Some of you will remember him from the early 60s when he was a troop commander in the Pack Company at Lo Wu. The next parade was for Remembrance Day and, following the successful occasion of 1983, we again gathered quietly in Perowne in civilian clothes. Inevitably Brigade Week 22 - 24 November clashed once again with the E-in-C's Conference. The 'Week' is a pale shadow of former years and is mainly serious discussions and meetings. The only social events are the Beating Retreat and Cocktail Party on Friday, still the best party of the year, and the Brigade Box at Shatin Races on the Saturday. Racing this year was enlivened by Jeremy winning $3,000 on a $10 'exotic' bet by correctly forecasting the first three horses past the post in the fourth race!

Our major social effort of this part of the year was reserved, however, for the visit of the Colonel of the Regiment and Lady Cooper. They arrived in Hong Kong on 27th November for 2 weeks and stayed in turn with General Archer, the Commandant and CBF. The fairly full programme allowed them to see and meet most of the Regiment at a variety of functions. The Gurkha Sergeants held a picnic, the QGOs hosted a most successful nautch party and the British Officers and Sergeants both had lunches. After a fine start the weather gradually deteriorated and almost wrecked, for instance, the day spent on Lantau; the Commandant's credibility was only rescued by

the excellent lunch at Charlie's Restaurant. Morale was further restored by better weather during the second half of the visit which included racing at Sha Tin, a boat picnic to Gurkha Haven and a day outing to Macau. In spite of the weather the visit was a great success and we were delighted to be able to welcome Cynthia on her first visit to Hong Kong.

A highlight of the Colonel's visit was the Cocktail party and the Beating Retreat held in his honour on 1 December. The weather relented for the evening and it was warm and dry; essential since we had nowhere we could accommodate the 300 or so who attended the party! The Beating Retreat itself was a great success; Hamish Mac Leod has achieved wonders with the Pipes and Drums and they are now playing and marching as well as they have ever done.

The rest of December, including Christmas and the now 'traditional' (ie it happened last year too) drinks and carols at Perowne House for all British ranks was almost an anti climax after all this. Work continued right up to Christmas with priority ranges, Lantau still going strong and a major deployment of Search Teams in support of the Police for the visit of Mrs. Thatcher. The last minute deployment of the Search Teams finally destroyed all hope of holding the Sapper Bowl Competition which has therefore not been awarded for 1984.

We closed the year finally with the arrival of 38 Training Party, some 67 strong. Arguably an event of 1985, Mark Freeman announced his engagement to Jacky at midnight on New Years Eve thus matching in effect the announcement by Hamish Mac Leod of his engagement to Liz a few months earlier.

The year ended on a sad note. We had already suffered the loss of Sgt David Goodburn who was killed climbing in the Indian Himalayas. On 26th December Cpl Sukbahadur Ghale died of renal failure caused by chronic high blood pressure. Shortly afterwards we were saddened to hear of the death of Wendy Edwards after a long and courageous battle against cancer.

We look forward to a busy and enjoyable 1985. The pattern of overseas exercises is much the same as in 1984 and we hope to complete the Lantau project. Philip Cook is looking forward to taking over as Commandant and occupying the house most other CO's covet. Our new training wing will be complete and operating by March and hope the reconstruction of the British Officers Mess will be completed by the middle of the year. The continuing success of 69 Squadron and the standards of work we are achieving in Hong Kong bode well for the future.

HONOURS/AWARDS

CBF Hong Kong Commendation

21165477	SPR	Lalbahadur Sarki	22 June 84

PROMOTIONS

To Lt(QGO)

WO2	Motiram Gurung	16 Apr 84
WO2	Manilal Thapa	1 Sep 84

ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES JUNE 84 - JAN 85

1. Arrivals

				Appointment
7 Aug 84	Lt	C M Cockerill	RE	Tp Comd 67 Sqn
"	2Lt	R A W Welsh	RE	Temp att
"	2Lt	C J Prowse	RE	"
"	2Lt	S M Vandennienwenhuysen	RE	"
28 Aug 84	Capt	P A Wall	RE	Trg Offr
11 Oct 84	Lt(QGO)	Haribahadur	Thapa	Leave
1 Nov 84	Lt(GQO)	Milanchandra	Gurung	Leave
1 Jan 85	Maj	D J R Stack	RE	2IC
1 Jan 85	Capt(QGO)	Jogindrasing	Gurung	Leave/Posting
8 Jan 85	Lt	A R H Cole	RE	69 Sqn

2. Departures

17 Jul 84	Lt	S J Evans	RE	69 Sqn
4 Sep 84	Capt	P J Gilbert	RE	21 Engr Regt
11 Sep 84	2Lt	R A W Welsh	RE	Temp att
"	2Lt	C J Prowse	RE	Temp att
"	2Lt	S M Vandennienwenhuysen	RE	Temp att
11 Oct 84	Capt(QGO)	Tekansing	Gurung	Ex High Trig Leave
23 Oct 84	Lt(QGO)	Haribahadur	Thapa	69 Sqn
26 Nov 84	Lt(QGO)	Hukumraj	Thapa	Leave
13 Dec 84	Lt(QGO)	Birbahadur	Limbu	Leave
18 Jan 85	Capt(QGO)	Jogindrasing	Gurung	Leave/Posting
8 Jan 85	Maj	D R Humphrey	RE	JSDC
14 Jan 85	Lt(QGO)	Lakpatshering	Bhotia	Leave

FORMER OFFICERS OF THE REGIMENT NOW SERVING

Col	J H	Edwards BSc psc ptsc	AD ROE (FE) DCts
Col	J E	Kitching FBIM psc	Col D&W RSME (Des)
Col	M J F	Stephens BA MICE C psc	Col D&W RSME
Col	J	Speight OBE ndc nadc psc	Staff Planner IMS Brussels
Col	D H G	Corsellis BSc ndc psc	Col Engr 1 MOD
Lt Col	P J	Worthington BSc ndc psc	SO1 DI (AG)2 DIS MOD
Lt Col	J A N	Croft MBIM SVY (pr)	2IC PPCU
Lt Col	H E	Vialou-Clark BSc MICE C	SO1 PQE AFCENT
Lt Col	H H	Kerr OBE BSc sq	SO1 Tac Wing RSME
Lt Col	D	Verschoyle BA MICE C psc	SO1 ADP
Lt Col	W J	Chesshyre MA ndc psc	CO Depot Regt RE
Lt Col	J N B	Stuart BSc psc	CO 111 Engr Regt (V)
Lt Col	J A	Thorp MBE MA psc	SO1 (DS) Staff College
Lt Col	W J	Preiss MA MSc ARICS SVY (gy)	AD Svy HQ AFNORTH (BAE)

OFFICERS OF THE REGIMENT

Lt Col	M	Gaffney psc	Comdt
Lt Col	P W	Cook psc	Comdt (Des Jul 85)
Maj	D R	Humphrey MBIM M Inst AM psc	2IC
Maj	D J R	Stack BSc psc	2IC (Des Jan 85)
Maj	A J	Stow MA MICE C	OC 70 Sqn (Des Jun 85)
Maj	J D C	Anderson BSc psc (n)	OC 69 Sqn
Maj	G C	Kershaw BSc MICE I C	OC 70 Sqn
Maj	P R W	Lavies MA MICE C	OC 68 Sqn
Maj	C McF	Peebles BSc psc	OC 67 Sqn
Maj	J F	Wheeley psc	OC 67 Sqn (Des Feb 85)
Maj(QM)	J J	Mason	QM
Capt	A W H H	Mac Leod BSc	Adjt
Capt	P A	Wall BA	Trg Offr

QUEEN'S GURKHA OFFICERS

Maj(QGO)	Sunar	Gurung MVO BEM	
Maj(QGO)	James	Bhujel	ERE BRIGNEPAL
Maj(QGO)	Indrakamal	Tamang	ERE ROBG
Capt(QGO)	Tekansing	Gurung	
Capt(QGO)	Jamansing	Rai	
Capt(QGO)	Kharkajang	Gurung	
Capt(QGO)	Manikumar	Prodhan	
Capt(QGO)	Jogindrasing	Gurung	
Capt(QGO)	Manbahadur	Pun	
Capt(QGO)	Bhaktabahadur	Gurung	
Capt(QGO)	Jahansing	Rai	
Capt(QGO)	Kharkabahadur	Limbu	ERE BGD Dharan
Lt(QGO)	Milanchandra	Gurung	
Lt(QGO)	Hukumraj	Thapa	
Lt(QGO)	Surjabahadur	Thapa	
Lt(QGO)	Lakpatshering	Bhotia	
Lt(QGO)	Dambarmansing	Gurung	
Lt(QGO)	Upendrabahadur	Gurung	
Lt(QGO)	Haribahadur	Thapa	
Lt(QGO)	Kumarsing	Rai	
Lt(QGO)	Durgaprasad	Gurung	
Lt(QGO)	Birbahadur	Limbu	
Lt(QGO)	Chitrabahadur	Thapa	
Lt(QGO)	Meharsing	Gurung	
Lt(QGO)	Motiram	Gurung	
Lt(QGO)	Manilal	Thapa	

Capt	G D	Phillips MA	2IC 67 Sqn
Capt(QM)	I	Kinnear	QM 69 Sqn
Capt(E&MO)	M J T	Hodson MI Elect IE MITE	PLO
Capt(E&MO)	R A	Nicholls MBE	Wksp Tp Comd 70 Sqn
Capt(GE)	D	Winship MBE	Design Tp Comd 70 Sqn
Capt(QM)	W D J	Gibson	Resources Tp Comd 70 Sqn
Capt	I D	Wright B Ed	2IC 68 Sqn
Capt	J R	White BSc	2IC 69 Sqn
Capt	P	Smith	2IC 70 Sqn
Capt	P W	Durrant MA	IO
Capt	A M	Mills BSc	Tp Comd 69 Sqn
Lt	M W	Foden	Tp Comd 69 Sqn
Lt	S J	Evans BSc	Tp Comd 69 Sqn
Lt	C M	Cockerill	Tp Comd 67 Sqn
Lt	M A	Freeman	Tp Comd 67 Sqn
Lt	S J	Tucker	Tp Comd 68 Sqn
Lt	D C	Francis BSc	Tp Comd 67 Sqn
Lt	A R H	Cole BSc	Tp Comd 69 Sqn (Des Apr 85)
Lt	D A	Caulfield	Tp Comd 69 Sqn
Lt	J W	Shanahan	Tp Comd 68 Sqn

ATTACHED OFFICERS

Capt	W I	McNeill RAPC	Pmr
Maj	R T	Powney RAEC	Ed Offr

IO's NOTES

Date	Events
6 Jul 84	- OC 68 Sqn, Maj P R W Lavies RE, departed Fiji to visit Ex COCONUT GROVE I and II.
7 Jul 84	- The advance party for Ex COCONUT GROVE II departed for Fiji.
8 Jul 84	- The main body from Ex COCONUT GROVE I returned from Fiji to Hong Kong.
9 Jul 84	- 67 Sqn main body from Ex PALM FROND returned from Brunei to Hong Kong.
14 - 20 Jul 84	- 67 Sqn stood down for block leave.
15 Jul 84	- The main body from E Tp, 68 Sqn for Ex COCONUT GROVE II departed for Fiji.
17 Jul 84	- OC 68 Sqn returned to Hong Kong from Fiji.
17 Jul 84	- Lt S J Evans RE left Hong Kong on posting to 69 Sqn.
18 - 19 Jul 84	- The film team from JSPRS visited the Regt to make a video film about QGE.
24 Jul 84	- The Annual Pay Documentation Inspection was carried out.
2 Aug 84	- The RNLO, Lt Col R K Chhetri RNA visited the Lantau Project.
7 Aug 84	- Lt C M Cockerill RE joined the Regt from the United Kingdom and took over as Tp Comd B Tp, 67 Sqn.
7 Aug 84	- 2Lt R A W Welsh RE arrived in Hong Kong for a 6 week attachment to the Regt.
11 Aug 84	- The Regt observed a holiday to mark Rikhi Tarpan.
22 Aug 84	- The main body of Ex COCONUT GROVE II returned to Hong Kong from Fiji.
25 Aug 84	- 68 Sqn won the inter squadron hockey knock-out competition held at Bowring Camp.
28 Aug 84	- Capt P A Wall RE, the Trg Offr designate arrived in Hong Kong.
3 Sep 84	- Lt C M Cockerill RE started the Gurkha Language Qualification Course, to 9 Nov 84.
4 Sep 84	- The Trg Offr, Capt P J Gilbert RE left Hong Kong on posting to BAOR.

10 - 20 Sep 84	- The annual PRE inspection was carried out.
12 Sep 84	- The British Forces Hong Kong Hockey Competition 'The Freddy Cowell Trophy' was held at Borneo Lines. QGE played in the final against 246 (Gurkha Fd Force) Sig Sqn and won by 1 goal to nil.
18 Sep 84	- The annual environmental, health and hygiene inspection was carried out.
21 Sep 84	- A Tp, 67 Sqn deployed at short notice to construct anchorages and site works for the installation of 3 new search and rescue radar position fixing beacons. The essential works were completed by 12 Oct 84.
21 Sep 84	- The gardening competition for the Gurkha married quarters was held.
22 Sep 84	- 67 Sqn won the inter squadron cross country race.
26 Sep 84	- The Adjt, Capt A W H H Mac Leod RE departed from Hong Kong for Nepal trek.
26 Sep 84	- The Pmr Capt W I McNeill RAPC departed from Hong Kong for Nepal for temporary duty at BGTC Kathmandu.
28 Sep 84	- QGE Day. The Regt birthday was marked by a Regt Parade followed by a picnic for all ranks and their families at Gordon Hard. There was fierce competition in an inter troop fun water sports competition which was eventually won by SHQ 70 Sqn.
29 Sep 84	- OC 68 Sqn left at short notice for Nepal to assist with the planning and supervision of monsoon damage reconstruction work.
1 - 4 Oct 84	- The Regt was stood down for Dashera.
5 Oct 84	- The Regt was stood to for Ex HOT POTATO, a Regt IS deployment exercise.
6 - 7 Oct 84	- The inter troop sports competition was held over this weekend. Hockey, football, volleyball and basketball knockout competitions were played. The overall champion troop was F (Trg) Tp, 68 Sqn.
16 Oct 84	- The advance party from A Tp, 67 Sqn for Ex TAHRO SATHI departed for Papua New Guinea (PNG).
18 Oct 84	- The Pmr returned to Hong Kong from BGTC Kathmandu.

20 Oct 84	- The main body of A Tp, together with a small diving team departed for PNG.
20 Oct 84	- The Comdt, Lt Col M Gaffney RE departed for PNG to visit A Tp.
21 Oct 84	- A field troop from the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) Engineers arrived in Hong Kong for an attachment to QGE for Ex NAJIK SATHI.
22 Oct 84	- The Adjt returned from Nepal trek.
28 Oct 84	- The Comdt returned from PNG.
30 Oct 84	- The E-in-C(A), Maj Gen M Matthews CBE arrived in Hong Kong to visit Engineer Units and personnel in Hong Kong, Nepal and Brunei.
30 Oct 84	- OC 68 Sqn returned from temporary duty in Nepal.
31 Oct 84	- The E-in-C(A), accompanied by the Comdt, visited 68 Sqn working on the Lantau project and 70 Sqn at Sek Kong.
31 Oct 84	- 67 Sqn Tac HQ supported the Gurkha Fd Force LW CPX Ex SKEAN DUBH 1.
1 - 8 Nov 84	- The E-in-C(A), accompanied by the Comdt visited Nepal, returning on 9 Nov 84.
9 Nov 84	- ACOS G1/G4 HQBF Col M W Betts was the Inspecting Officer at the Pass Off Parade of the Junior Leaders Cadre 84/2 which was held in Perowne Barracks Square.
11 Nov 84	- A Regt Parade was held at Perowne Barracks to mark Remembrance Day.
12 Nov 84	- 2Lt J W Shanahan RE departed for Nepal trek.
12 Nov 84	- The E-in-C(A) made an official tour of Perowne Barracks and awarded LS and GC medals to the following:

21157097 SSGT Judbahadur Gurung
21159351 SSGT Tilarkraj Thapa
21157111 SSGT Kulbahadur Gurung
21157087 SSGT Kabiram Rana
21159346 SGT Haribahadur Rai BEM
21159349 SGT Lalbahadur Tamang
21159383 SGT Wangbootshering Bhotia
21159390 SGT Narendraparsad Limbu
21158947 SGT Bhagawatiparsad Pradhan
21158941 SGT Lalitparsad Limbu

15 Nov 84	- The IO, Capt P W Durrant RE was attached to 1/7 GR for a Five Power Defence Agreement exercise, Ex SOUTHERN SAFARI, held in New Zealand.
17 - 18 Nov 84	- 67 Sqn organised a selection weekend for Op RALEIGH. 67 Sqn are involved in running a series of such selection weekends during which the fortunate youngsters who will be joining Op RALEIGH from Hong Kong, are selected.
20 Nov 84	- SHQ 67 Sqn supported a New Territories Regional POLMIL IS CPK.
27 Nov 84	- The Col of the Regt, Gen Sir George Cooper GCB MC and Lady Cooper arrived in Hong Kong.
28 Nov 84	- 67 Sqn Tac HQ deployed with HQ Gurkha Fd Force on Ex SKEAN DUBH II. RHQ Tac deployed in support of the exercise to provide engineer HICON/LOCON.
28 Nov 84	- The Regt changed into winter dress.
30 Nov 84	- The Col of the Regt made an official visit to Perowne Barracks.
1 Dec 84	- The Regt biennual cocktail party was held at Perowne Barracks hosted by the Col of the Regt and was followed by Beating Retreat played by the Pipes and Drums.
5 - 20 Dec 84	- The Regt range concentration.
6 Dec 84	- The IO returned to Hong Kong from New Zealand on completion of Ex SOUTHERN SAFARI.
10 - 11 Dec 84	- 67 Sqn Tac HQ deployed with HQ Gurkha Fd Force on Ex SKEAN DUBH III. RHQ Tac deployed in support of the exercise to provide engineer HICON/LOCON.
11 Dec 84	- The Col of the Regt and Lady Cooper departed from Hong Kong for the UK.
12 Dec 84	- The PNGDF field troop returned to Papua New Guinea at the end of Ex NAJIK SATHI.
17 - 20 Dec 84	- 4 Engineer Search Teams carried out preventative security searches prior to the visit to Hong Kong by the Prime Minister.
23 Dec 84	- 67 recruits, 38 Trg Party joined the Regt having completed their training at TDBG.
23 Dec - 2 Jan 85	- The Regt was stood down for the Christmas and New Year period.

REGIMENTAL PROGRAMME 1985

RHQ

13 - 15 Mar 85	Territory IS Ex
25 Nov - 15 Dec 85	Priority Range Period and Inter Troop Competition

67 Sqn

1 Mar 85	Take over Lantau Project
13 - 15 Mar 85	Territory IS Ex
24 Jun - 7 Jul 85	Limited War and Cbt Engr Retraining
16 - 30 Aug 85	Ex COCONUT GROVE II Fiji - One Fd Tp with 1 CHESHIRE
25 Nov - 15 Dec 85	Priority Range Period and Inter Troop Competition

68 Sqn

8 - 29 Mar 85	Ward and Gurkha Haven Maintenance
15 - 28 Apr 85	Limited War and Cbt Engr Retraining
May 85	Possible Slipway Project at Wong Shek
1 Jun - 12 Jul 85	Ex PALM FROND 36 Brunei (May be cancelled)
2 Sep - 25 Oct 85	Ex TAHRO SATHI PNG - One Fd Tp with 10 GR
2 Sep - 25 Oct 85	Ex TAHRO SATHI PNG - One Fd Tp with 10 GR
25 Nov - 15 Dec 85	Priority Range Period and Inter Troop Competition

69 Sqn

9 Jan - 14 May 85	J Tp in Falklands with 9 Sqn
May - Jun 85	Sgn (less J Tp) construct CQBR
28 Jun - 13 Jul 85	2 Inf Bde Ex
21 - 27 Jul 85	Support Dover Tattoo
13 - 29 Jul 85	Pre Falklands Training
29 Jul - ? Aug 85	Pre Falklands Leave
? Aug 85 - ? Jan 86	Falklands tour

Major Courses

4 Feb - 10 May 85	38 Trg Party Cbt Engr B3
18 Feb - 10 May 85	High Risk (Engr) Search Trg
13 - 17 May 85	All Arms Search Concentration
13 May 85 - Early 86	Trade Courses - Carpenter and Joiner, Bricklayer and Concretor and Painter and Decorator 0-2
29 May - 28 Jun 85	Junior Leaders Cadre
1 Jul - 16 May 85	Field Section Commanders
19 Aug - 1 Nov 85	Cbt Enger 2-1

Other Events

2 Mar 85	Nepal Cup Final
20 - 23 May 85	HK Skill at Arms Meeting
2 - 13 Jul 85	Bisley
24 Sep - 8 Oct 85	Ex EASTERN PROMISE - 526 STRE
7 Nov 85	Unit B Report - Formal Visit by CBF
19 - 26 Nov 85	Brigade Week
9 - 13 Dec 85	Brigade Ex with 6 GR and 2/7 GR

SPORTS ROUND-UP

KHUD RACE

The Regimental Khud race runners produced one of their best performances, when with only four weeks preparation, they finished a very creditable fourth in the 1984 race ahead of 1 Cheshire Regt and 6 GR.

CROSS-COUNTRY

Although managing to enter a team in the BFHK Cross-Country League 1984/85 the level of performance has been below that of last season and we find ourselves at the bottom of the league table. With exercise and training commitments it has been impossible to undertake the regular training required in order to compete on equal terms with the infantry battalions who take the sport very seriously.

BADMINTON

At the time of writing the season has only just got under way. The Regiment has made a promising start winning both of the first two league matches. We hope to improve on our second place league standing of last season and with regular training now taking place we expect to feature well in the individual championships scheduled for April 85.

HOCKEY

In the 83/84 season QGE Hockey Team did exceptionally well winning the Benline Trophy (the Inter Unit HK Cup), the Major Unit's Cup Competition and being runners up in the New Territories League and in the Freddy Cowell 11-a-side Knock Out Competition. There were therefore many high hopes that another successful season would follow.

On 12th September 1984 several teams from all parts of the Territory gathered in Sek Kong to play the Freddy Cowell Knock Out Competion. The first games were drowned in a torrential rain storm, and the two pitches were soon ankle deep in water. Long passes become impossible, and the high ball was soon in vogue. The sun then came out and it became unbearably hot. Despite the climate changes QGE battled their way to the semi-final beating 2/2 GR, the RAF and TDBG on the way. The semi-final was to be the crux match of the day. Our opponents were GTR who were fielding a strong team with British Forces' Players. They had already beaten the turbanned COD Team, the winners of last year's Competition. The game swung to and fro, but with pressure QGE won by 2 - 0. In comparison, the final against 246 Gurkha Signal Squadron was less daunting and QGE beat them 1 - 0, with an excellent short corner goal from Capt(QGO) Manikumar Prodhan.

Spirits were therefore high, and the league promised to be successful, unfortunately the team was instantly depleted, as the Regimental footballers were banned from playing hockey in case of injury, and other players went on course to England or to the project on Lantau. QGE have therefore had mixed results so far in the New Territories League, and at the Christmas half way point were looking fifth out of nine teams. A dismal result compared to last year's close second position. Even so it is hoped that we may be able to retain the Major Unit's Cup Competition. It all depends on how many footballers we can steal!

GOLF

Continues to be a popular "Minority" sport with 10 members of the unit taking an active part in Combined Services Golfing Society matches and competitions.

In the Brigade of Gurkhas competition for 1984, The Inter Unit Cup and Challenge Salver were won for QGE by the team of Major Colin Peebles and Capt Mike Hodson. In the individual competition Major Peebles was second and Capt Hodson third.

In CSGS competitions, QGE were runners up in the "Windsor Bowl" inter unit competition; the team consisted of Maj Peebles, Capt Hodson, Lt Cockerill and SSgt Gladstone.

All in all a successful six months, with Colin Peebles and Mike Hodson carrying out the duties of Captain and Secretary of CSGS respectively.

TAE-KWON-DO

A small team entered the July British Forces Hong Kong Tae-Kwon-Do Championships, acquitting themselves well although not gaining any of the Major Prizes. Nevertheless it was excellent experience for future tournaments.

ORIENTEERING

We entered the present season on a new competitive basis. The QGE entry is now 2 teams of 3 Cross Country Runners (who run as individuals) and 3 (Non-competitive) pairs of Novice Runners. Owing to heavy unit commitments our participation this season has had to be reduced and we do not expect to achieve as good a league position as last year.

VOLLEYBALL

The QGE volley ball team arrived for the final of the 1984 British Forces Inter Unit Knock-out Championship, having easily beaten all opponents on their way.

The final was held in the Prince of Wales building, HMS Tamar last September. QGE won the first two matches against 28 Sqn

GTR and TDBG. The final match against 1/2 GR proved to be a fierce contest. Unfortunately QGE could not quite counter the 1/2GR team's tactics and lost. All in all the season proved to be highly enjoyable and has hopefully paved the way to an even more hotly contested 85 season.

BOARDSAILING

QGE Day provided a chance for Troops to display Broadsailing talent at Gordon Hard. The biggest Services boardsailing competition of 1984 was won by 58068 Cpl Gyanbahadur Tamang, the Gordon Hard Boat Club Bosun.

The club will soon be acquiring new boards to replace the aging Mistral School boards. The new boards will be better quality and suitable for beginners and experts alike. So all those would-be Robby Naish Gunngs had better watch out in 1985!

WATER SKIING

Waterskiing at Gordon Hard this year has had its ups and downs, as might be expected! Complications early in the year meant that the boats were unavailable during the height of the summer. This situation was remedied in time for keen skiiers to do some useful practicing before the colder weather put an end to the sport for the year. A shortage of coxswains has also had an adverse effect. The club has acquired, by kind cooperation with 6 GR, another speed boat. However, due to the frequent close contact between the craft and the surrounding jungle in Brunei it is doubtful whether it will be possible to use it this year.

Future events are likely to include a waterskiing weekend - Saturday for all and Sunday for "Pros!" We hope more use will be made of the boats this year - now that they are all legal and operational!

DINGHY SAILING

The QGE teamwon the British Forces Team racing championship on 6 February. Cpl Cyanbahadur Tamang was the leading QGE helm in most races but Ian McNeill was never far behind.

FOOTBALL

Once again the football season is upon us and despite those not involved thinking that too much attention is being spent on the sport, it would appear to be justified this year.

Under the direction of the Paymaster Capt W I McNeill, assisted by Lt(QGO) Manilal Thapa, QGE are (at the time of writing) joint leaders of the Major Units League, are in the Major Units Cup Final where we will meet 1 Cheshire and have reached the semi-final of the Nepal Cup.

In the Nepal Cup games we had a convincing win over 1/7 GR by 4 goals to 1 and a hard fought victory over 2/2 GR by 3 goals to 2. We now meet 2/7 GR in the semi-final. One can see therefore that it could be the season where we win everything or nothing, hopefully the former.

STOP PRESS

QGE won their semi-final against 2/7 GR. Despite retaining possession for most of the match the team could not score the goal to secure a win from 1 - 1 until extra time. The final score was 3 - 1. We meet QG SIGNALS in the final on 2 Mar 85.

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69 GURKHA INDEPENDENT FIELD SQUADRON NEWSLETTER
BY THE OFFICER COMMANDING
MAJOR J D C ANDERSON RE

1984 has been a year of detachments, movements and visitors. Since I took over in February from John Baker, the Squadron has only been together for a few days in May and for an even shorter period in December. For the rest of the time troops and detachments have been scattered both at home and abroad.

On my arrival, I Troop under Andrew Mills and Milanchandra Saheb, were in Kenya with 9 Parachute Squadron on Exercise LARCH POLE. The troop were based in Isiolo, just North of the Equator, in a hot, arid plain. They were taking part in a long-term project to construct a new School of Infantry for the Kenyan Army. For this, I Troop built a huge Braithwaite water tower as well as playing a large part in the construction of a Sergeants Mess. I first met them at Brize Norton when they arrived back laden down with carved wooden animals, coffee, tea and walking sticks.

Whilst I Troop were sunning themselves, the remainder of the Squadron took a well-earned post Belize-tour leave, heartened by the news of John Baker's MBE, which was announced in the New Year's Honours List. As before several soldiers travelled home to Nepal for this leave, whilst the remainder went to Scotland, France or other places nearer Chatham. Leave was followed by the annual range period, this time at Hythe Ranges, and CMS and Combat Engineer Retraining. During the re-training we were lucky enough to be able to use the training areas and equipment belonging to our parent garrison, alias the Royal School of Military Engineering. Many old lessons were re-learnt and new skills were taught on Sapper equipment which is not available in Hong Kong.

April 1984 was the month of our Brigade exercise, the Regimental Conference and the start of our major Regular Army Assistance Table commitment, the preparation for the Aldershot Army Display. This year, 2nd Infantry Brigade's Concentration was on Salisbury Plain, and for once the majority of Brigade was present. The CFT was tried for the first time, attempts were made to blast a model aircraft out of the sky with small arms fire, and the Squadron organised Watermanship, Minewarfare, Field Defences and NBC training for other units in the Brigade. The climax of the exercise was a 36 hour FTX which was ended by an impressive display of friendly air-strikes and artillery bombardments, simulated by SSGT Dilkumar Limbu.

Mark Foden, Kumarsing Saheb and H Troop undertook the AAD. This was a long and varied project which included the construction of two Nissen Huts and a Cooks' Shelter, car parks, hardstanding and footpaths, and constructing the massive Bailey and Scaffolding framework which supported the canvas back-drop for the arena. This year, the theme of the display was Arnhem, and SGT Nainabahadur Tamang masterminded the construction of a simulated bow-string bridge from tank bridges and plywood. Unfortunately, unlike the original, which resisted all attempts to destroy it, Naina's bridge suffered from the Parachute Regiment's enthusiastic re-enactment of the defence of Arnhem and only running repairs enabled it to last the full four performances!

By May, Durgaprasad Saheb had succeeded Milan Saheb in I Troop and he took them off to Bovington to help with the mobility demonstration for the British Army Equipment Exhibition. Meanwhile, Staff Dilkumar again featured, this time piloting a prototype pontoon raft for the BAEE at Aldershot, which had at least thirty times the load-carrying capacity of his Father's famous Sherbahadur Raft. G Troop, too, took off on their own and went to Canada with 1st Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment. They spent four weeks on Exercise POND JUMP at Wainwright. Here they carried out battle simulations, trained the assault pioneers and went adventure training in the Rockies. They also gave support to the battalion FTX. The troop was led by David Caulfield, the first son of a QGE officer to serve in the Regiment, and the newly commissioned Mehersing Saheb. They arrived back from Canada just in time to catch a plane to Cyprus for Exercise MOON BASE I.

Cyprus, with its warm, dry summer, friendly inhabitants and excellent training areas is an ideal place for a squadron exercise. On MOON BASE I our infantry skills were practised under the experienced eyes of Larry Bohana, of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers and Roger Morgan-Grenville with his team from 1st Royal Green Jackets. Live firing, including platoon attacks were carried out, grenades were thrown, there was a two-day march and shoot competition and an overall section competition. CPL Mortimer, the RE Plant Fitter, CPL, and his section from Support Troop were the winners, with CPL Ganesh Gurung's section from Sapper Troop the runners-up. All enjoyed their two-days R & R in the Troodos Mountains (just like pahar, saheb) and even the Chief Clerk was seen to go swimming in the warm, clear Mediterranean. The exercise ended with a Barbeque beside the sea at which G Troop won the Nautch competition and the lights fused as the beer ran out at one a.m.

In the meantime, Jogiudrasing Saheb had been scoring two firsts for the Brigade. With a detachment of SSGT Rambahadur Rai, ten Gurkha Sappers and a British Sapper, he was deployed under command of 40 Commando Royal Marines in Sector 2 of UNFICYP. For six months, from June to December, the detachment gave engineer support to the Commandos. They constructed ablutions, dining rooms, kitchens and offices and repaired every kind of electrical and water fittings, not to mention the UN Patrol track. They were presented with the first ever UN medals for British Brigade of Gurkhas soldiers on 21 September by General G.G. Greindl BCE, the UN Force Commander.

Since the return from the Squadron exercise in Cyprus our time has been occupied with giving course support to RSME, sending troops on exercise with both Grenadier Guards battalions, conducting bridging trials for MVEE, combat engineer training at Wyke Regis, carrying out basic skills restraining and training the Assault Pioneers of 1st Battalion the Queen's Own Highlanders.

I said at the beginning that 1984 was also a year of visitors; top of the list was Prince Philip, who visited the UNFICYP detachment in his capacity as Captain General of the Royal Marines. Nearer home, we have been visited by the Royal Nepalese Ambassador; General Sir George Cooper, our Colonel; General Sir Hugh Beach, the Chief Royal Engineer, who presented a very well deserved Durand Medal to SSGT Dilkumar Limbu (another first; his father Sherbahadur won the medal in 1966), the GOC South East District, the GOC Cyprus, both our brigade commanders, the Commander Engineer Support (Brigadier Hank Bowen, an old QGE hand), our Garrison Commander, the Commandant, the LOBG, the QGOO and all the Nepalese children of the Pestalozzi Children's Village. All have at least left well fed; our Cook SGT, Deokumar Limbu has produced a succession of immaculate lunch-time bhats.

On the personnel side we have also been busy. David Bill has been succeeded as 2IC by John White. Tony Harking has been replaced by Mark Foden in H Troop. Robin Edwards handed over Support Troop to Andrew Mills before going to work for Barclays. Steve Evans replaced Andrew in I Troop. Finally, of the British officers, Iain Kinnear took over as Quartermaster in May.

The Gurkha officers too have been busy. Milanchandra left and was replaced by Durgaprasad Saheb in I Troop. Jogindrasing Saheb succeeded Manbahadur as MTO and in turn will hand over to Mehersing, who himself took over G Troop from Bhaktabahadur Saheb. Haribahadur Saheb took over in G Troop from Mehersing, who goes off to the Falklands for a 4 month tour with 9 Parachute Squadron RE. Finally, Kulbahadur Tamang has succeeded Mehersing Saheb as the Sergeant Major! Five out of the eight British ranks have also changed over, and 115 Gurkha ranks.

Besides John Baker's MBE and the UNFICYP medals, the then G Troop Staff Sergeant, Kulbahadur Tamang and the RE Fitter Sergeant, Mick Falconer, both received BEMs for their work in Belize in the Birthday Honours. Five officers and soldiers also received GOC's commendations, a great tribute to the Squadron's performance under my predecessor. We have also not neglected the sporting side. In the Minor Units' Shooting we were first and second in the RE Skill-at-Arms meeting, first at the SE District Skill-at-Arms meeting and fourth at Bisley. We also won the Tickle Skill-at-Arms and fitness competition, the latter by a hair's breadth, and the RE Badminton Singles Championship.

For 1985, we look forward to another trip to the Falklands, another Brigade Exercise, and more projects (including ones in Kenya and Scotland), exercises and training. It will be a busy year; and the Gurkha Captain, Kharkajang Gurung, whose advice and guidance have steadied the Squadron and steered the new OC through his first year, is off to be the next QGOO.....

I SURVIVED EX PALM FROND 32 WITH 67 GURKHA FIELD SQUADRON

From 15 May to 11 July 1984 67 Gurkha Field Squadron The Queen's Gurkha Engineers, deployed to the pleasant sunny climes of Sittang Camp in Brunei. As they were short on numbers they accepted any volunteers who wished to accompany them on their little holiday. It was therefore a motley crew wo arrived at Bandar Seri Begawan in Mid May courtesy of RAF. The attached personnel included a Section of assault pioneers from 1st Battalion the 22 (Cheshire) Regiment under CSgt B S Gibbons, a Section of Chinese from the HK Guard Company under Cpl Wat Kin Keung, Sgt P D Ward and Cpl L M Devlin from the RAF, Cpl K H Webb from the RMP detachment on Hong Kong and LCpl J W Warne from the NTGP. If any of these volunteers had realised what they were letting themselves into, then perhaps they might have stayed at home.

The programme for the exercise was full and varied, and allowed little time to enjoy the delights of Islamic Brunei. Construction work took up most of the tour with the main projects being the construction of a Jungle Village by A Troop under Lt M A Freeman and a Jetty at Sittang Camp by B Troop under Lt S J Evans.

The Jungle Village is based upon a typical Terrorist jungle village complete with tunnels connecting the houses together and will be used by Training Team Brunei for jungle training (see August issue). The Jetty was the second half; of a jetty to be built off Sittang Camp and was to complete a project started the year before 68 Sqn. Two further smaller tasks were the construction of a Rapid Refuelling Turn Around facility in Temburong and the repair of a foot suspension bridge in the jungle, done by LCpl Yakub Limbu and Cpl Madankumar Limbu respectively. Throughout the construction phase everyone was working to a tight schedule. The hours were long and the ants even longer. It was during this work that LCpl Harper of the Cheshires realised why 67 Gurkha Field Squadron was called 67. Start work at 6 in the morning and finish at 7 in the evening. Thank heavens we are not 69 Gurkha Independant Field Squadron.

During the construction phase Brigadier P R Duffell OBE MC visited the Squadron before springing his Unit Biennial Inspection on 6 GR, the resident Battalion in Brunei. Brigadier P R Duffell stayed with the Squadron for 3 days and visited all the construction sites. At each location he enthusiastically and professionally assisted with whatever work was in progress, whether it was laying bricks, breaking up rocks or hammering nails into the Sittang Jetty walkway.

A week on ranges, a week in the Jungle eating leeches before they ate you, and a final week of adventure training, sight seeing and shopping (mosquito coil pots are the main export with Gurkhas) brought the exercise to a sudden end. Sometime between everything else, everyone had partaken in BFTs, CFTS, sports, film and video shows and of course the odd party.

Although it was good to see the bright lights of Hong Kong again, everyone particularly the attached ranks came away with memories and stories worth swapping over a couple of pints. So if you hear of the Engineers asking for volunteers to go away to some exotic place, put your name down. You might learn something, even if it is only that you have never really worked hard before.

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GOING BACK TO GURKHA BRIDGE

by

Peter Knowles

"A monument to the contribution of the British Army to peace in Malaya" was General Perowne's description of the 104m long timber bridge built by 68 Squadron over the Muar River near Gemas, named "Gurkha Bridge" by the GOC Major General F N Anderson when he officially opened it on September 6th 1955.

In the summer of 1984 I was working in Singapore. At the end of the assignment, with ten days leave available and a wife and daughter eager to see Malaysia (as it is now called), it was simple to drive through Gemas to view the Gurkha Bridge site where so much hard work had been done nearly 30 years ago.

"Never go back" they say and they were right about Singapore. Where are the Adelphi Hotel, the Cockpit, the Tangle Inn? Demolished, rebuilt, disappeared respectively. However the rural areas of Malaysia are much as they were. Gemas, little changed, still has a deserted railway station, a dusty bookstall in which most of the stock has stood unsold since 1955, a dead dog lying in the middle of the main street and a Rest House about to succumb, at last, to termite attack.

We drove North from Gemas in a vain attempt to locate the site of 68 Squadron HQ. Foolish to think that any traces would remain in a country whose climate encourages such rapid growth. We turned round and took the turning signposted to Rompin; a tarmac road in poor condition (what Malaysian road is not), gradients less severe than remembered. Two river crossings on concrete bridges brought no recognition. But from the map it was clear that the site of Gurkha Bridge was very close.

And so it proved. When almost in Rompin we turned back and stopped on the longer concrete bridge for a closer inspection.

Upstream lines of square timber piles, cut off about 500 mm above the water surface, marked the site of 68 Squadron's massive effort. Not much of a monument perhaps, though still to be visible after 30 years says much for the pile driving. The Muar River had not altered but the surrounding country through which the pilot track had been carved was almost unrecognisable; in place of dense primary jungle of reputed limitless extent were rubber plantations and open fields.

Photography in the midday sun was thirsty work. We soon got back into our air conditioned car and took the road to Temerloh. The route went through Bahau, Ayer Hitam and Kemayan, scenes of 68 Squadron's attempt to reach the Beach of Passionate Love in 1956, but the exact locations were now unidentifiable. At Temerloh we stopped at the Rest House, new in the 1950's but now rather battered, for ayer limah and nasi goreng. At least some things hadn't changed.

THEN - AND - NOW

THE DURAND MEDAL

by

Captain A M Mills RE

On 27th November 1984 the Durand Medal was awarded to Staff Sergeant Dilkumar Limbu at Kitchener Barracks, Chatham, the home of 69 Gurkha Independent Field Squadron. The Durand Medal is awarded to the Regiment's most distinguished NCO, QGO or Sapper every three years.

The medal was instituted as a memorial to Major General Sir Henry Durand KCSI CB on his death, which was caused by falling from the howdah of his elephant when it struck a gateway in the Punjab. He was commissioned into the Bengal Engineers in 1828, and led a most distinguished career. He served under Napier, followed by service in the first Afghan War (where he blew in the gates of Ghazni at Kabul in the face of enemy fire), the second Sikh War, and the Bengal mutiny of 1857. He later worked in diplomatic circles before becoming the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab. The Durand Medal used to be awarded on a basis of every two years to the Indian Engineers and every third year to the Pakistan Engineers. It is now only awarded to The Queen's Gurkha Engineers.

This year the medal was awarded to Staff Sergeant Dilkumar Limbu by the Chief Royal Engineer General Sir Hugh Beach GCB KBE MC DL. It was also good to welcome several old friends of the Regiment: Lt Col Chesshyre, Lt Col Cook, and Maj Tuggey. The Squadron now holds three Durand Medals; The Gurkha Captain Capt (QGO) Kharkajang Guring and Lt(QGO) Haribahadur Thapa won the medal in 1975 and 1981 respectively.

Staff Sergeant Dilkumar's qualities are best summed up in his report from the Royal Engineer Field Sergeant's Course: "SSGT Dilkumar impressed us all with his exceptional ability and excellent combat engineer knowledge. He gave orders clearly and well and carried them through with determined leadership. His planning and reports were quite the best on the course. He displayed tremendous team spirit throughout, working hard and diligently. Some of his debriefs could not have been bettered by our own Senior Captains. He is the best Gurkha SNCO ever to have visited the RSME, and we would gladly have him back as an instructor".

His father Ex Maj(QGO) Sherbahadur Limbu also won the medal in 1966, and it was hoped that he might have been able to attend the Medal Parade; but sadly he was taken ill in Dharan and was advised not to travel. His caring son sent a signal:

"Dilkumar regrets he is not coming and is anxious to know how he is. All ranks wish you were able to come."

Back came the reply by return:

"Father requests NCRs twenty thousand only to buy land".

Obviously a quick recovery!

THE LANTAU PROJECT

When the decision was taken to construct Kohima Barracks at Clearwater Bay, a new area was required for the rebuilding of Erskine Training Camp and a site on the south of Lantau was selected. The area chosen was a remote peninsula well off the main road (see sketch map). Access would be difficult and expensive and in an effort to reduce costs the task was given to the Queen's Gurkha Engineers. Planning carried on throughout 1983 and work began in early 1984.

The project is a large one - the largest civil engineering task currently being undertaken by the Royal Engineers anywhere in the world. It consists of the construction of a 54 metre reinforced concrete bridge and a mile of concrete road. The bridge leads off the South Lantau Road and is a complex 5 span structure including both vertical and horizontal curves! The drawing shows a side view of what the bridge will look like and the finished structure will have taken about 100 tonnes of steel and over 1000 tonnes of concrete to complete. The road is conventional 'single track with passing places', but goes through some extremely difficult terrain. Six major culverts are required to carry the water under the road and forming the alignment requires the removal of about 15,000 tonnes of rock. The road surface itself will need over 2000 tonnes of concrete.

Before work could begin on the site proper, a camp had to be built to accommodate the work force of 100 men. An area near the village of Pui O was suitable and work started in March 1984 to lay concrete bases for marquees, build semi permanent structures for the cookhouse and ablutions and provide services of water and electricity. A location was also required for the extensive workshop facilities needed to keep the plant fleet maintained and to store the resources required for the main task. A disused loop of the main road provided an ideal hard standing for this and the sketch map shows the location of both the camp and the workshop site.

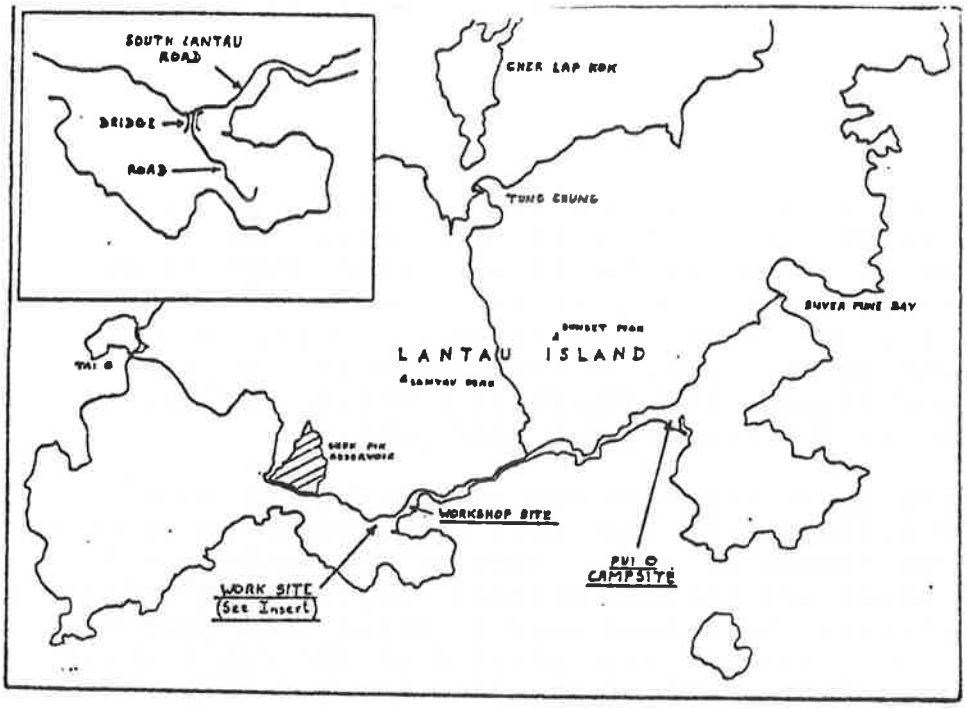
Work on the main task started in May. On the bridge site 8 caissons were dug into the ground to carry the main foundations and these were constructed using the Chinese method of digging a short way down and then pouring a concrete ring around the outside of the hole to support the ground. The process was repeated until the required depth was reached, as shown in the sketch. The caissons were between 5 and 10 metres deep and needed men working with pneumatic drills to break up the hard earth and rock that was then winched to the surface.

With the caissons complete and filled with concrete, the main foundations could begin. These consist of large blocks of reinforced concrete cast on top of the caissons that support the 4 piers carrying the bridge itself and by the end of 1984 one of the two 'H' shaped foundations had been constructed

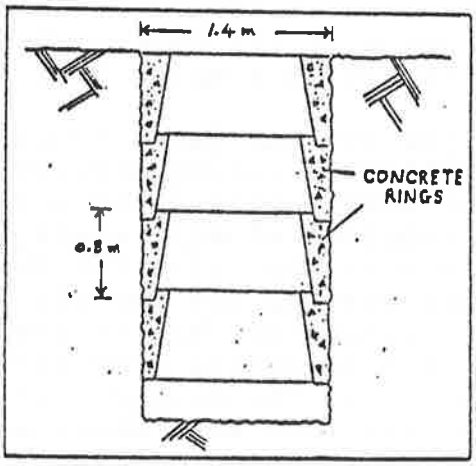
and the other had been prepared with the network of steel reinforcement ready for concrete to be poured. The foundations for the 2 end abutments were also complete and work will start in the New Year on the construction of the supporting walls, one of which is 10 metres high. Work so far has all been on that part of the bridge that will be below ground and already 450 tonnes of concrete, or nearly half the total for the bridge, has been poured.

On the road, the heavy tractors and bulldozers cut an access road along the alignment so that work could begin on removing the thousands of tonnes of rock. Many of the rocks are far too big to be moved and various methods ranging from hydraulic hammers to explosives have been used to break them down to manageable sizes. Work has also started on the construction of the culverts. By the end of the year two had been completed and at these locations the way was then clear to start forming the actual road base on which the concrete surface would be poured. To carry the water away from the road and hillside towards the culverts, cut off drains are required. Up to 2 miles of concrete U-shaped channels will be required before the road is complete. Due to the difficult terrain the ditches will all have to be hand dug and concreted and this in itself is a major task.

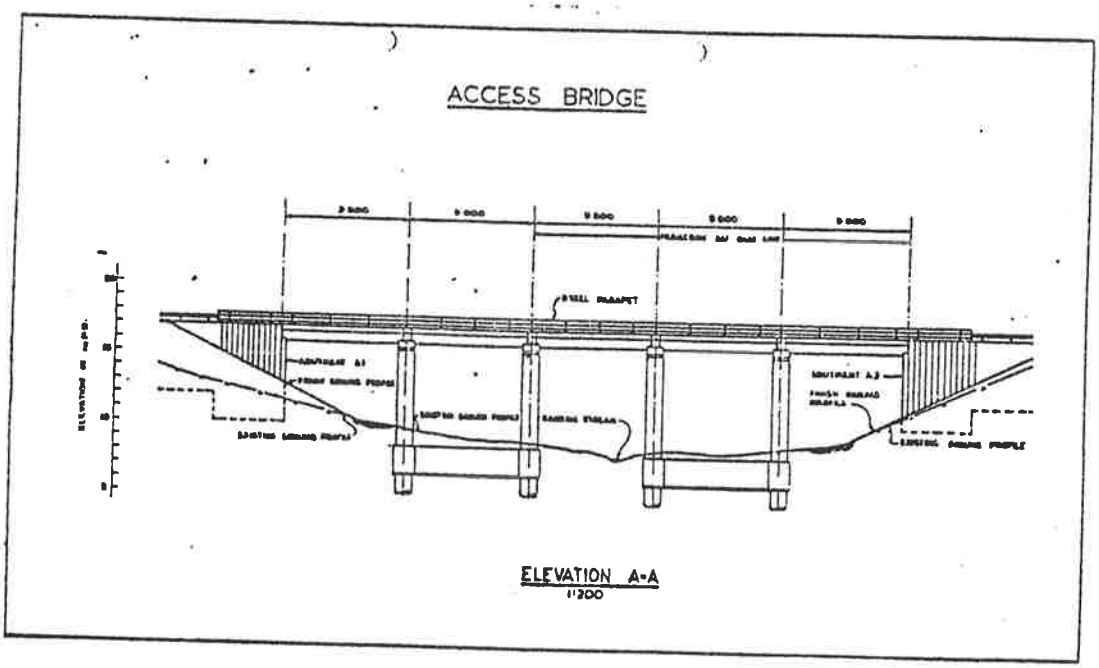
The project is a prestige job for the Queen's Gurkha Engineers and provides excellent training and civil engineer construction experience for both soldiers and officers. New techniques and skills are required at all levels, not only on the actual construction work, but also for the surveyors who have to provide accurate setting out for all aspects of the task and the resources system that has to procure the stores and get everything shipped across from the mainland. 1984 has seen the foundations of the bridge nearly complete and the preliminary work on the road well under way. In the new year the bridge will start to appear above the ground and the road will develop to its final formation. With completion due in mid 1985 there is still a great deal of work to do.



LOCATION SKETCH MAP



CAISSON CONSTRUCTION



THE ACCESS BRIDGE

THE GURKHA MUSEUM
1984

Lieutenant Colonel M P Dewing (Retd) - Curator

The highlight of this last year was undoubtedly a trip I made to Dumfries in the spring to go through the collection of the late Brigadier General W D Villiers-Stuart CBE DSO late 5 RGR. The distance involved was amply rewarded by the Gurkha Museum acquiring a large number of albums, documents, prints etc., together with his medals all of which would otherwise have been lost. An account of my visit will be appearing in the 5 RGR Association Journal.

The rest of the year progressed as in past years with visitors continuing to show interest throughout the Summer. The end of the year was somewhat tempered by the fact that there was no central heating over the whole of the Christmas and New Year Holidays, and well into January.

For many years there has been talk of the Museum possibly moving to Peninsula Barracks in Winchester if and when the HQ Light Division and the RGJ Depot move to Flowerdown. This project would now appear to be gathering momentum and one can now see such a move taking place in the next two to three years. This will not however happen during my time here.

As I think most of you now know I will be retiring as Curator in April 1985. My successor will be Major John Lamond. From the RMA, he was posted to 2 GR and joined the 1st Battalion in late 1951. He spent most of his service with the regiment and recently has been IC The Gurkha Record Office in Hong Kong where he has been closely associated with the Medal Project - a project that is researching all medals ever awarded to Gurkhas, the results being produced in loose-leaf form by regiments. An ambitious undertaking.

The following have been acquired:-

Medals of Major General A W W Holworthy 3 GR & 7 GR

The Caricature Sketches : 9th Gurkhas

Ships Bell : HMS GURKHA

The GURKHA PLATE : Serial No. 1

An 8 GR Kilmarnock : Dated 1940

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ACTION IN BURMA 1942 - 1945

by

Colonel J. B. "Charles" Chaplin

This is a tale of 21 MOUNTAIN REGIMENT in action against the Japanese during 1943-45. First, in ASSAM and later through BURMA.

Major General "Punch" Cowan, who wrote the foreword prior to his recent death, considered this book not only to be a record of the activities of 21 Mountain Regiment, but for all practical purposes, it is a history of 17 Indian Division (The Black Cats).

Readers of this book will understand why, after 40 years, the officers of 21 Mountain Regiment still meet one another regularly.

Their friendship, cemented by the dangers shares in the episodes described. A comradeship forged under fire - everlasting and indestructable.

Maybe, not for the layman, but for readers professing to have 'Soldiered' - this book is a must.

Profits, if any, will go to Royal Artillery charities.

OBTAINABLE FROM:-

P. F. SMITH
20 BOUGHTON ROAD
LONDON SE28 OAG

COST:- INCLUDING POSTAGE £12.50.

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FAMILY NEWS

Hank Bowen is firmly installed in his new vocation of career planning with W. H. Smith, and the family Bowen have been carrying out major earthworks and demolition at their new home at Wallingford. (Address is, Brook Lodge, 24 Reading Road, Wallingford, Oxon). Clive is still at Portsmouth Polytechnic. Claire is at Oxford Polytechnic. Paul is doing A-levels. Juliet is kept occupied cleaning up after the "heavy gang"!

John Archibald is in the middle of a 2 year MBA course at the London Business School. After leaving the Army he spent 3 years in HK with Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick. After a 4 month sabbatical in the United States he returned to HK and spent 3 years with Brown Boveri; this included a large power station project in Macau. He received the last newsletter via his HK address!

Peter Knowles had lunch with me last month. His article on Gurkha Bridge was written during a 3 months contract appointment with the Singapore Government lecturing to final year engineering degree students. He now lectures on 2 days a week at Surrey University, and devotes the rest of his time to his consultancy practice.

Gil Roach has retired for the second time (his second "gratuity" being considerably larger than the one he received from the Army!) Joy is headmistress of the local school.

Peter Attack (late GTR) is a colleague of Hank's at W. H. Smith. Both daughters are married. Mary Jane, the elder one is accompanying her husband on the forthcoming Everest expedition later this year.

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MINUTES OF THE QUEEN's GURKHA ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 13 OCTOBER 1984

Those Present: Brigadier D H Bowen OBE - Chairman
Colonel M J F Stephens
Lieutenant Colonel I C Slater OBE
Lieutenant Colonel W J Chesshyre RE
Major F A Cronk
Major J A Ris RE
Major C Spotteswoode
Major H Turnham
Captain J E Preedy
Lieutenant Colonel P W Cook RE - Secretary

Apologies for absence were received from General Sir George Cooper GCB MC.

Action

AGENDA ITEM 1 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

AGENDA ITEM 2 - MATTERS ARISING

2. Gurkha Plate This had been produced, was generally well thought of and was heavily over-subscribed.

3. Regimental Statuette The Chairman explained that,as this was really a Regimental matter, the details were being left to the Regiment to arrange. They had been informed that there is considerable support within the QGEA for the production of a further statuette.

AGENDA ITEM 3 - APPOINTMENTS

4. It was agreed that Major Pinel would be invited to take over as Secretary. Secretary

5. It was agreed that Col Stephens would continue as Field Officer Recently Returned until posted and that, if necessary, there would be a short gap until Lieutenant Colonel Gaffney returned. In the event of Lieutenant Colonel Gaffney being posted outside the UK another recently returned field officer would be appointed.

AGENDA ITEM 4 - CHAIRMAN's STATEMENT

6. The Chairman started by reading a signal from the Regiment which conveyed the best wishes of the Regiment to the members of the Association. He went on to draw members attention to it being the International Year for the Shelter of the Homeless and outlined details of Colonel Wright's forthcoming visit to Nepal in this regard. He then reviewed the last year's social events and gave details of presentations to Major Tom McMillen and Miss Maggie Baird. The Chairman expressed his thanks to Lieutenant Colonel Stuart for a most successful annual dinner at Minley. He then stated that he was now out of date on his news of the Regiment and handed over to Major Tuggey who gave a resume of the work of the Regiment and in particular the activities of 69 Squadron. The Chairman concluded by saying that members of the Regiment impressed all those who came into contact with them and that the E in C had been particularly impressed recently by 69 Sqn.

Action

AGENDA ITEM 5 - THE PEROWNE MEMORIAL TRUST

7. The Secretary reviewed the position of the Perowne Memorial Trust. Some £5750 has been raised to date and this, with the tax refund, should produce an annual income of about £650. An award of £120 had been made this year to Meena Kumari Gurung and it is hoped that, in addition to this continuing scholarship, a further award of up to £250 will be offered next year. Secretary

8. The Chairman briefed members on the pressure to extend the Trust to include education in India and explained why, in view of General Perowne's wish to encourage the development of Nepal, this was being resisted.

AGENDA ITEM 6 - STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

9. Copies of the audit board proceedings were distributed to members and the Secretary then drew members attention to the reasons for the reduced excess of income and the new arrangements for investments.

10. The Chairman commented that, whilst expenditure had increased, the fund was still run on the principle that subscriptions should be used to build up the capital value of the fund and expenditure should be covered by investment income.

AGENDA ITEM 7 - FUTURE EVENTS

11. Annual Dinner This would be at Minley on the 17 May 85. There was a suggestion that the dinner had outgrown Minley and that with the M25 opening and the availability of accommodation at Chatham, consideration should be given to holding future dinners in the REHQ Mess. It was agreed that, whilst the venue for 1985 would remain as Minley, the question of venue after that should be the subject of a postal ballot of members. Secretary

12. Shooting Party This would be similar to this years party and on a date to be decided when the shooting teams programme is known. QGELO

13. Dashera Party Again this would be similar to this year's party and would be held on the first Saturday after Dashera. QGELO

(Secretary's afternote: This is anticipated to be Saturday 26 October 1985).

14. GBA Functions The GBA dinner will be in the Cavalry and Guards Club on the 9 November 1984 and the Sandhurst Reunion will be on the 18 May 1985.

15. Entertainment Finance It was agreed that the following subsidies would be allocated to functions in 1985:

Annual Dinner - £250 including the cost of guests

Shooting Party - £75

Dashera Party - £75 Secretary

AGENDA ITEM 8 - THE NEWSLETTER

16. The Editor explained about the pressures to reduce publication of the Newsletter to once per year. After some discussion it was agreed that publication would be in March of each year and that the format would remain unchanged. Editor

17. Major Cronk requested that future Newsletters include a glossary of abbreviations used. Editor

18. The Chairman pointed out that with the reduced publication of the Newsletter greater use of the "Pickaxe" would in future be made for the circulation of information.

AGENDA ITEM 9 - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

19. Colonel Stephens proposed the following members of the WRVS for honorary membership of the QGEA:

Mrs Chris Gooch MBE

Mrs Marjory Whitcombe

Miss Joan Barker

The proposal was seconded by Major Turnham and carried unanimously.

20. Major Tuggey proposed Miss Barbara Walsh WRVS as an honorary member of the QGEA. The proposal was seconded by Major Spotteswoode and carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 10 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

21. The date of the next meeting is the first Saturday after Dashera 1985.

(Secretary's afternote: it is anticipated that this will be 26 October 1985).

19 October 1984

P W COOK
Lt Col RE
Secretary

Distribution: General Sir George Cooper GCB MC
Editor - for Newsletter
Commandant QGE

RSME NEWSLETTER

Life is as hectic as ever at the Centre of Excellence. At the time of writing there are frantic preparations being made for the visit of HRH The Prince of Wales to the RSME on 20 March. HRH will see a troop of 69 Sqn constructing an MGB, under Steve Evans with his QGO, Durgaparsad Gurung. 69 Sqn will provide an orderly for Prince Charles at lunch time. After lunch HRH will see the bricklayers' course and LCpl Gambahadur Gurung. Several people will remember Prince Charles' Equerry, Jack Stenhouse, who used to be SO2 at Gurkha Fd Force.

The course personnel continue to work extremely hard. It seems as though the three electricians will be here for ever, although they finish soon. The design draughtsmen are slaving away and LCpl Jagatparsad Gurung has just finished his Welders Course. Sgt Bhaktabahadur Rai is performing very well on his Fd Sgts Course and enhancing further the reputation earned by his predecessors. Away from the RSME, Milan Saheb is learning to be a QM and MTO, and two soldiers have done HGV, prior to their Dvr Spec RE course in April.

Although Gurkhas on courses often have trouble with technical English, it should not be forgotten that their British comrades also find the courses difficult, so the very occasional Gurkha failure must be kept in perspective. There is a great deal of good will towards the QGE students amongst the civil and military instructors at the RSME.

The QGEA Dashera Party was a great success and will be repeated this year; apologies for the bills being so late; an admin hiccup on QGELO's part. It is hoped that there will be more associate members and their wives present in 1985. Tom Langridge will chase.

Amongst the staff at RSME there have been some changes. Mike Stephens departed before Christmas to study the TA and was replaced as Col D & W by John Kitching.

Staying north of the Medway, Tony and Lorna Kerr thrive. The good news is that Lorna has had a completely successful hip replacement operation. Tony spends all his spare time at Stockbury where he is building his house alongside one being built by Philip Cook.

Terry and Sheila Mawhinney left PRA Wing before Christmas and were replaced by Robin and Pam Alexander. Roger Braybrook arrived in January to be AI Signals. His boss is Gerry Birch, who commanded the old HK Gurkha Signals Sqn. Roger's first child was born as soon as he arrived and so he joins Rob Newns, OC 24 Fd Sqn, whose first child was born last summer, as a B3 father.

At Brompton, Bill and Bimala Chesshyre are well, and preparing to indulge to Hong Kong in March; so that Bimala can buy some new shoes. Mike Reynolds has handed over his job in Civ Eng Wing and now works in Engr 5, though he, Gill and the children will continue to live at Brompton for some time. Brian Taylor remains in Civ Eng Wing until the end of the year. He has been short listed to shoot for the Army in Canada; a consolation perhaps. The Regiment now is represented in E & M Wing. Brian Cameron is the SO2 and Keith Harris has arrived from RBAF as an AI.

E in C's ADP Branch is located in HQ RSME and is led by Don Verschoyle with Alwyn Jennings-Bramly in close support. Tricia Jennings-Bramly is very busy raising money for St Margarets, Westminster.

At the nerve centre of the Headquarters, Andrew Tuggey battles on as SO2 G1/G4 (and QGELO). Clare Tuggey teaches batik in Gillingham, part-time, and the Tuggey boys and the Anderson boys continue to create mayhem between Sally Port and Inner Lines.

James and Rosie Anderson have 3 boys now. Alexander George was born in August, whilst James took 69 Sqn to Cyprus. As usual, Rosie rose to the occasion.

Down in the Ravelin Building, RHQ RE is about to lose its QGE representative. John Allen retires, for the second time, this year. Everyone wishes John and Maureen much happiness. He will be missed at ERLO.

One of the nice things about life at the RSME is that everyone, sooner or later, puts in an appearance. Of course we see a lot of the BOs and QGOs from 69 Sqn, and the Cooks are frequent visitors. The past 12 months have seen the Stuarts, the Gibbs and Gilberts come through, Peter Wall return on a Search Course, Ian Caws and Chris Kemp do their Tactics Refresher Course here and Chris Kemp take his PQS 2 at Chatham. James Hignett, another B3 father, dropped in after Rugby one day and John Murcot popped in in March to confirm details of his niece's stay in Hong Kong. The latest visitor was Nick Goodall en route to Mars in Slough, where he is going to be a shift manager; the more visitors, the merrier.

Three YOs have been posted to QGE from RSME during the period too; Andrew Cole, Nick Moody and pending the issue of his posting order; Chris Prowse.

The Associate members are present in some numbers. WO1 Compton is in Civ Eng Wing and has been selected for a commission, WO2 Owens is in Brompton and his son works in the Barracks. In the E & M Wing WO2 Preece keeps an eye on courses . WO2 Jordan has moved from PRA Wing to 61 Fd Sp Sqn at Maidstone on promotion to WO1. RSME Wksps REME has sent several fitters out to Hong Kong on the Lantau Project, and Sgt Artis REME no doubt gives his own briefing to them before they go.

STOP PRESS

1. NEPAL CUP FINAL 85

QGE 3 QG SIGNALS 1

(All from Sgt Dambersing Gurung)

2. Promotions. To be Capts (QGO) in January 85.

a. Lt (QGO) Milanchandra Gurung.

b. Lt (QGO) Hukumraj Thapa.

3. Commission. WO1 F Compton.

4. Movements. In July 85;

a. Austin Thorp to be Comd Engr BFFI.

b. Doug Humphrey to be SO1 BRITCON SINAI (and thence to CO 12 RSME Regt in March 86).

c. John Edwards to be Brig BG in September 1985 on promotion.

d. Mike Stephens to be Dep Comd Gurkha Fd Force 1985.