



QGE
2000.
Magazine

THE QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS' ASSOCIATION

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EDITORIAL

Colonel (Retd) HE Vialou Clark

This is a somewhat heavier magazine than usual due, in part, to my plea to the Regiment for more news and views. I hope readers like what they read.

The story of the Gurkha wives' volleyball match is a scream! The Obituaries section is depressingly full of sad news of staunch members, both young and old.

In my letter asking for family news I also asked for one liners and anecdotes. Some members responded most generously and amusingly. When they read what is here they will be disappointed to find neither, for which I offer my apologies. Space this year does not allow but I will keep everything on file and perhaps do better next year.

Considerations of space have also required me to slash some articles; I hope the authors will forgive me for taking the liberty.

It is clear that the Regiment is in fine form and is highly thought of. No wonder another squadron is being raised. We wish all who serve in it every possible success.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Lt. Gen

A.D. Pigott CBE



It has been a very demanding year for The Regiment in so many different ways. The Magazine will I'm sure reflect this from various perspectives. Working chronologically through the last year here are some of mine. In March 99 I took the salute at Minley for the new intake into The regiment. The standard was as high as ever. From now on we can expect our numbers on this annual parade to increase in line with the needs of the expanding Regiment.

Another change from next March will be that our soldiers will arrive at Minley from the Infantry Training Centre at Catterick rather than from Church Crookham as in recent years.

In May I attended the main meetings of The Gurkha Welfare Trust and the Council of Gurkha Colonels. Of the many issues discussed those surrounding the expansion of the Brigade, likely operations in Kosovo and the prospective and significant increases in welfare pensions founded by the GWT remain uppermost in my mind. The pension increases were later confirmed and a number of QGE pensioners are now the better for it.

It is worth recording that the GWT moved in August from Baker Street to another HSBC site in the Barbican - the good offices of Sir William Purves, former Chairman HSBC and a GWT trustee, being a key enabler in this.

In June 99 on a lovely summer evening many of us enjoyed a thrilling final of the Nepal Cup at Church Crookham. I'm sure more detail will be in the Regimental Report. 69 Squadron, by then with their eye firmly on Kosovo, did everything one could expect of them - short of actually winning. It must be a Year 2000 target to rectify this.

Kosovo will doubtless be chronicled in depth elsewhere. As President I cannot but echo our Chairman's words over the sadness across The Regiment at the deaths of Lt Gareth Evans and SSgt Balam Rai doing their duty. The Squadron provided the first troops into Kosovo and performed outstandingly well in difficult circumstances.

In late summer it was very good to get formal confirmation by The Army Board to raise 70 Squadron. Minister (Armed Forces) made an announcement to this effect in the House. A number of regimental officers have found themselves in key influencing positions along the way to this decision.

But the case for 70 Squadron was won squarely on the arguments. Not least the ability to form the new squadron so quickly and get it into the operational tour plot in very short order. As I write (March 2000) the Squadron is scheduled for Kosovo later this summer - a very major achievement for all concerned.

At the Gurkha Brigade Association Memorial Service and lunch at Sandhurst in June I am told that QGE had the biggest turnout. Our Chairman reports separately on our Association dinner at RMAS in September. It was a splendid occasion and not because it is only 300 yards from my quarter.

It is worth a few words on the East Timor operation of last Autumn. Not only to restate the obvious success that it represented for the Brigade as a whole and RGR in particular, but also I couldn't help noting in various post operational reports such potentially helpful comments as to the need for more sappers to balance such a force package in the future. Something to build further on perhaps? In early Feb 00, with the Gurkha Major, I was able to pay a quick visit to Nepal. We enjoyed excellent gatherings in Kathmandu and Pokhara. It was very touching to find many of the senior members talking with such affection about General Bill Jackson and asking after Lady Jackson.

In Kathmandu we were able to see Mrs Balam and witness at first hand the progress on her house, exQGE builders to the fore. My trek deliberately included passage via two Pahar Trust schools. It is amazing what Tom Langridge and his mainly ex QGE team achieve.

Robbie Burns' concert evenings at Chatham and 36 Engineer Regiment fundraising efforts, along with that of others, are all part of this inspiring story. Again it was very rewarding to see the Gurkha Welfare Scheme in action on the ground - with former members of QGE featuring so pivotally throughout.

By the time the next magazine comes round Mike Carter will have handed over as Commandant to Alistair Sheppard. So thank you, Mike, from all of us in The Regiment and The Association for your splendid contributions and achievements during your time in command.

COMMANDANT'S REPORT

Lieutenant Colonel M P Carter RE

1999 was a year to remember for The Queen's Gurkha Engineers. It was a year that saw a heavy commitment to operational deployments and the start of considerable change for the Regiment, as well as tragedy.

At the beginning of the year 69 Gurkha Field Squadron was tasked to provide the engineer detachment to Operation TOSCA, the UK contribution to the United Nations Forces in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

For six months the twelve-man detachment worked with 47 Field Regiment RA as the roulement regimental group and enjoyed an excellent tour. Early in 1999 69 Gurkha Field Squadron said farewell to Major David Caulfield on his handover to Major Andy MacLachlan, and we wish him and his family all the very best for the future.

In May the Squadron provided the engineer element of the South Georgia detachment, and retained the commitment for 8 months until early 2000. During the first half of the year, with the bulk of 36 Engineer Regiment committed to the Balkans, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron was terrifically busy with their own training as well as meeting a wide raft of Regimental, Brigade and Divisional training and other commitments.

The Kosovo crisis in the middle of the year provided the year's major event for the Regiment with 69 Squadron moving at very short notice to Macedonia grouped with 1 RGR as part

of the 5 Airborne Brigade deployment.

Within days of arrival men from the Squadron spearheaded the advance into Kosovo; they were to return 5 months later, having completed their huge and highly important contribution to Operation AGRICOLA.



*LCpl Ashok meets the Prince of Wales
on OP AGRICOLA*

As always, the men acquitted themselves extremely well in this very intense, unique and high profile operation, and won over many who had no previous experience of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers.

Hugely successful though the tour was the tragic deaths of Lieutenant Gareth Evans and Staff Sergeant Balam Rai cast a pall over the whole Regiment and both individuals are sorely missed by us all. As the year closes, the majority of the Squadron is now in the UK and focused on a year ahead where it can draw breath and conduct some high quality individual and collective training, play sport and adventure train, as well as enjoy Regimental routine.

Major Andy MacLachlan has written in detail about these activities and I will not dwell on them further.

Beyond the Squadron, activity

continues apace within Regimental Headquarters. The very welcome news that 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron was to be reformed as a SDR enhancement to the Royal Engineers was confirmed. It will be raised in 2000 at Invicta Park Maidstone as part of 36 Engineer Regiment, with soldiers transferred from 69 Gurkha Field Squadron, individuals on limited continuance and increased recruiting.

Early 2000 sees the creation of a planning team headed by Captain Sam Roberts, with an implementation team, comprising the bulk of the new Squadron command team and key personnel, forming in April.

Major Jim Crawford is to be the OC and Captain (QGO) Dalbahadur Limbu the Gurkha Captain. The Squadron will see its flag raised in July in time for them to deploy to the Balkans in September 2000 for a six-month tour.

The new Squadron will be at full strength in early 2004 when The Queen's Gurkha Engineers will number 325 Gurkha ranks. There is no doubt that this is a tremendous opportunity for the Regiment and that it is greatly welcomed by all ranks.

At the end of June we bade farewell to Major (QGO) Tshering Lama as Gurkha Major, sending him on pension with well-earned honorary rank of Captain (GCO) after two years dedicated service at a crucial time in the history of the Regiment.

His successor, Major (QGO) Damar Ghale is now firmly in the chair. The year saw the commissioning of two new QGOs; Lieutenant (QGO) Benuprasad Limbu and Lieutenant (QGO) Bhishmaraj Gurung.

Of particular note is that Lieutenant Benu was commissioned in the field in Kosovo by Major General Dannatt, GOC 3rd (UK) Division, and was also the well

deserved winner of the Durand Medal. At ERE our Gurkha officers and soldiers continue to make a disproportionately large contribution wherever they serve: in the Gurkha Training Wing, as combat engineer and trade instructors within the Royal School of Military Engineering, and in other units of the Royal Engineers.

Of particular note is Sergeant Rastra who won the Commandant's Trophy at the Gurkha Training Wing for his outstanding contribution to the Wing throughout the year. In particular his production of the first manual of Kukri fighting skills for the Brigade was a major success.

At the same time, our Gurkha Sappers still manage to achieve remarkable results on all courses they attend across the Army, thus spreading the word widely about their considerable talent and skills.

In summary, The Queen's Gurkha Engineers has enjoyed a tremendous year in all respects and has proved itself in every challenge it has been faced with. Our forebears can be justifiably proud of their legacy of tradition and excellence that is embodied in today's Regiment.

The Regiment is very strongly placed for the future and I know looks forward with relish to the challenges of 2000 and beyond. On a personal note this will be my last message as Commandant.

Without doubt it has been a unique privilege and a great honour to have been Commandant and I leave feeling immense pride in being part of a terrific family that made me most welcome two years ago, and gave me all the support I could possibly have wished for.

I would not have missed any of it and really feel a family member; thank you all for making it so. Jai QGE

69 GURKHA FIELD SQUADRON'S NEWSLETTER

The beginning of the year saw the Squadron deploying to Wyke Regis on exercise NARUM KHUTTA, a very worthwhile exercise taking in the basics of Combat Engineering before putting them to the test in the field in and around the Minley area.

The characteristic cheerfulness and determination of our soldiers was shown throughout some of the winter's most testing of conditions. In sunnier climes, Op Tosca in Cyprus continued for a time under Capt (QGO) Damar Ghale but he was soon to return, of which more later.

This exercise was followed by a two week live firing exercise in Sennybridge with the Squadron joining 1 RGR in our by now familiar role as D Company. The exercise also marked the start of command for Major Andy MacLachlan who took over from Major David Caulfield in February.

We all wish David and Dee the best for the future and thank them both for the tremendous work they have both put into the QGE.

With I Troop under the command of Lt Ian Moore taking over the responsibility of Spearhead Troop for the Division the rest of the Squadron trained for the Section Competition. Always chasing originality, and after the successful poaching of a rather delicious fish the year before, it was decided to have a fishing stand, closely scrutinised by Capt (QGO) Dalbahadur Limbu. No fish were caught, but Dal Saheb will insist the efforts put in justify

a similar stand this year - as long as he can run it! Cpl Mohan Gurung's section came out on top, but as ever the competition was very tight and maximum effort was put in by all.

Time for some adventure training and the Operations Officer, Capt John Ridge, aided and abetted by the then SSgt Prembahadur Ale, generously offered to take a party to the French Alps for a week's Alpine Skiing.

As always loads of enthusiasm and not much control (Josh chha, Hosh chhaina!) but the week was thoroughly enjoyed by all with more planned for 2000. Unfortunately the present SSM, now WO2 Prembahadur Ale, is far too busy to repeat his attendance.

With the exercise season now largely complete the Squadron looked forward to a well earned Easter leave and a calm summer, with the prospect of another Falklands tour over the millenium.

We deployed to Wyke Regis to complete some of our required engineer training and a composite troop deployed on TESEX in support of 1 Royal Irish Regiment (1 R IRISH). Mid way through this training the focus was switched to a far more exciting prospect, that of operations to regain and keep the peace in Kosovo in support of 1 R IRISH.

They continued to train on Salisbury Plain whilst 1 RGR, then on exercise in Scotland and also warned for deployment, went through the hoops trying to adapt that training to make it relevant to their next task. 69 Squadron escaped the maelstrom by quietly carrying out our own work up training whilst the QM, Capt Mick Berrill, and his staff got us loaded on the boats.

Political intent threw the wheels of the movers off track and plan B was implemented: that of flying forward in support of 1 RGR. A quick call to the QM at the port and it was off the boat and a rush down to Church Crookham to join our friends in QE barracks.

After all the changes of plan the Squadron was ready with 115 men and 12 vehicles in just 8 days, ready to deploy into the unknown as part of the NATO peacekeeping force.

After 2 days of orders and collective training in Surrey whilst accommodated in the luxurious surroundings of the 1 RGR gym, the Squadron moved to Birmingham airport on the 08 Jun to catch an Icelandic 747 to Macedonia.

Three days and several false starts later 69 Gurkha Field Squadron led the way into Kosovo, clearing the southern 8 km section of the entry route under the protective eye of 1 RGR. Lt Peter Helme and his troop forced their way through the world's press corps and led the NATO troops into Kosovo. G Troop, under Lt Gareth Evans, were flown forward to commence work further

forward in our sector.

Some 500 military vehicles crossed the border that day, overshadowed only by the number of media cars, caravans and jalopies that also moved through. The soldiers, unmoved by the chaos that always seems to surround the press, conducted themselves in a thoroughly professional manner and cleared our sector 45 minutes ahead of schedule, allowing 4 Armoured Brigade to lumber forward.

Remaining part of 5 Airborne Brigade and in direct support of 1 RGR we took up residence in a farm complex outside the southern market town of Lipljan. There we stayed for 5 weeks moving only later to the luxury of a paper-recycling mill, which under the careful control the QM was soon turned into a very comfortable home.

Indeed so successful was the clean up that the Squadron spent the tour fending off the locals who after 5 years of disinterest and dormancy, decided that paper making was a viable business. Although Mick was able to persuade the locals otherwise we did



Soldiers in Macedonia before the move to Kosovo

have to share our new found palace with both 1 RGR and 1 R IRISH, luckily at different times.

Once established in country we set about ensuring that all our units were settled into viable accommodation as well as clearing routes so that they could safely carry out their work.

It was during this stage that, on 21 June, Lt Gareth Evans and SSgt Balaram Rai were killed whilst trying to help the locals clear a school of spent NATO munitions. Their deaths were a tremendous shock to all of the Squadron and our thoughts then, as still now, go out to their families.

Thanks go out to all of you, the QGE family, for your messages of support and especially to David Caulfield for all his work here in the UK.

In testimony to the resilience of our soldiers we were quickly back at work and providing all manner of support to both the locals and to our parent Battlegroups. During the tour we worked to 5 Airborne Brigade, 4 Armoured Brigade, and 19 Mech Bde, came under command 36, 21, and 38 Engineer Regiments, and supported 1 R IRISH, 1 PARA, and 1 RGR.

In addition the boys worked alongside English, Norwegian, Canadian, French, and Dutch soldiers and communicated through interpreters to Serbs, Muslims, and the occasional Croat. The myth that Gurkhas cannot integrate in a multi national environment can most definitely be laid to rest.

The Squadron carried out myriad engineer tasks including water supply, operational survivability, route maintenance, all manner of minor trade tasks, the build of a 45 metre Mabey

Johnson bridge (opened by Commander KFOR and named the Evans Balaram Rai Bridge), and a major communications base.

Our Plant Troop were almost continuously detached in support of our parent Regiments and won high praise for the standard of their work and their commitment. Our drivers covered thousands of miles of difficult roads in the company of local suicide drivers and managed a safety record that was second to none.

The QM's department, and especially the Resources team, kept our tasks on schedule and looked after us exceedingly well. All in all it was, without doubt, an incredible team effort and by the end of the tour we were all in need of a break.



Children performing a dance during 69 Sqn welcome home party.

We were to wait a little longer in the UK whilst our kit was returned by ship before departing on leave, with most of the Squadron returning to Nepal for 5 weeks. No doubt the bazaars rang to the sound of war stories well told and the first new recruits are probably at this moment moving down out of the hills intent on a career as a Sapper!

Whilst the Squadron focus was in the Balkans we must not forget the other

operational tours that have also been completed in 1999. Capt (QGO) Damar Ghale handed over Op Tosca to Pete Helme who finished just in time to deploy to Kosovo. Capt Alex Brown bobbed down to South Georgia returning in Sep having handed the Governor's cloak to Capt Ian Moore. The Squadron is thinking of applying for ownership!

The rear party kept the flag flying in our absence under the control of Capt (QGO) Hombahadur Rana, and they completed the Squadron Conference Room during our absence as well as overseeing the redecoration of the soldiers' accommodation.

The period also saw the departure of Major (QGO) Tshering Lama as GM and welcomed the new incumbent Major (QGO) Damar Ghale. This was not the only change in personalities as 1999 saw the Squadron saying farewell to Capt Pete Smyth on retirement, Capt Alex Brown to 33 Engr Regt (EOD) and Capt (QGO) Chitrabahadur Gurung to Minley.

The SSM also changed, with WO2 (SSM) Dhanbahadur Gurung leaving on pension, WO2(SSM) Bhisma Gurung taking over for a short while, and finally WO2 (SSM) Prembahadur Ale stepping up to the firing line.

We have also welcomed a number of new faces namely Lt Peter Helme and two unique Troop Commanders. The first, 2Lt Charlie Wasilewski, unique in having the most difficult name in the QGE to spell or pronounce, and the second 2Lt Fiona Scotter, the first female Troop Commander in the Brigade of Gurkhas, a warm welcome to all three of you.

This year also saw the

commissioning of Lt (QGO) Bhisma Gurung who deployed for a short time to Kosovo before moving to GTW and Lt Benuprasad Limbu, who having taken command of G Troop in the most trying of circumstances during the tour, now moves over to Troop (QGO) in Support Troop.

1999 has been a busy, immensely rewarding and sometimes difficult year for all members of 69 Gurkha Field Squadron. The highlight has been the deployment to KOSOVO and all that goes with an operational deployment, but the Squadron finishes the year poised with the prospect of 70 Gurkha Support Squadron forming up and of a full and fun year ahead.

NEW GURKHA MAJOR



Maj(QGO) Damar Ghale was born in November 1957. He comes from the village of Nagidhar in Kaski and was educated in Paklihawa High School.

He was enlisted into the Brigade of Gurkhas on 3 November 1975 and on completion of recruit training, joined The Queen's Gurkha Engineers. During his career he has served away from the Regiment on many occasions.

He was commissioned in June 1993 and has held a variety of appointments. His last appointment was Gurkha Captain of 69 Gurkha Field Squadron QGE.

He has served in Hong Kong, Papua New Guinea, Germany, Canada, Cyprus, Falkland Islands/South Georgia and Bosnia. Maj(QGO) Damar Ghale assumed the appointment of Gurkha Major QGE with effect from June 1999.

His interests include Football, Squash and travelling. In particular he is a keen Squash player and still represents the Regiment.

Maj(QGO) Damar Ghale is married to Manmaya and they have two sons and a daughter.

THE REFORMATION OF 70 GURKHA FD SP SQN FOR THE THIRD TIME "EARLY NEWS"

70 Gurkha Field Park Squadron was raised at Sungei Besi in April 1960. In 1961 it moved to Kluang and absorbed the Gurkha Training Squadron, which had been there since 1948.

From then on 70 Squadron took over the functions of the old Engineer Training Centre Far East, training Gurkha, British, Malayan and many other Commonwealth Sappers in Field Engineer and Trades Training up to Class 2 Level, and many assault pioneers as well.

It became 70 Gurkha Park Training

Squadron in 1962, 70 Training Squadron in 1966 and 70 Support Training Squadron in 1968. It moved to Singapore in 1970. As a result of government defence cuts 70 Squadron was disbanded on 31 July 1971.

The Squadron was raised again in Hong Kong as 70 Support Squadron but the Options for Change in the British Army saw 70 Support Squadron again being disbanded in December 1993.

Due to the recognition of the important roles played by Sappers on operations, part of the Strategic Defence Review (SDR) plan sanctioned the implementation of the 5th Engineer Logistic Squadron. It was agreed that the 5th Engineer Logistic Squadron would be a Gurkha Squadron.

This formation plan was brought forward 2 years earlier than planned and will relieve the pressure and reduce the level of commitments for Engineer Logistic Squadrons.

This meant that 70 Squadron was to reform again for the third time. Like they say, third time lucky! The new squadron will be titled 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron and will be based in Invicta Park Barracks, Maidstone.

Although a new Squadron will be formed, only a few new faces will be seen around Invicta Park Barracks as the bulk of manpower for 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron will be the old and bold from 69 Gurkha Field Squadron.

Currently the target date for the Squadron to be fully manned is April 2004. The current planning team for the reformation of 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron consist of the following:

QM-Capt A P Roberts

SSM-WO2 Siriprasad Gurung

C/Clk-CSgt Birbahadur Gurung

The OC and 2IC will arrive in Apr 00 and the Gurkha Capt in Mar 00. The team is working hard to ensure that everything is in order (especially the QM who is scrounging all over England for equipment).

The team has recently acquired two offices (with few furniture) where they are now operating. The new Sqn will be ready by Apr 00 to welcome most of the manpower into 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron including all the vehicles and equipment.

The latest forecast of events for 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron is as follows:

Apr 00 - Implementation team in place/70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron to be formed.

Jul 00 - Flag to be raised.

Sep 00 - Deploy on operational tour (Balkans).

We have a very big task ahead, and its full steam ahead for the planning team. We would like take this opportunity to welcome all those personnel coming into 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron and, to quote the Commandant, "Challenging certainly, achievable definitely, though much work will be required!"

NEWS FROM MINLEY DETACHMENT

1999 has been a very successful year for the Minley Detachment of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers.

In 1993, this detachment was formed mainly to train Military Engineering (Combat) to all the Gurkha Soldiers of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers and basic Assault Pioneer course for

Infantry when the Training Wing in Hong Kong was closed down. The so called Gurkha Troop had 1 Oftr, 1 SNCO and 5 JNCOs attached to 57 Training Squadron, 3 RSME Regiment, Gibraltar Barracks. In the past the Troop used to teach one or two courses a year and the rest of the time was spent helping other Troops within the Regiment. This wasn't very satisfying for the members of the Troop as they had very little commitment.

In June 1998, their requests paid off and 3 RSME Regiment started allocating British ME (Combat) B3 courses and Infantry Assault Pioneer (Basic) Courses for the Gurkha Troop.

Then the concept of the Regiment changed in mid 1998, all the training troops amalgamated into Super Troops, this meant that a Troop Commander would be commanding two troops.

It was a tough and interesting challenge for Capt Dilprasad Limbu who was the Troop Commander of Gurkha Troop and then Curragh Troop (Curragh A and Curragh Bravo).

The first British ME (Combat) B3 course was run under SSgt Prembahadur Ale (SSM 69 Sqn) and half way through SSgt Yogprasad Thapa came along to take over the course. Since then the Curragh Bravo Troop has successfully run 3 Gurkha, 3 British ME (Cbt) B3 courses and 2 Infantry Assault Pioneer Courses.

The Troop Orbat for the Gurkhas at Minley dramatically changed between 1996-1998 and was cut down to 1

Officer, 1 SNCO and 2 JNCOs. Now days, the so called Gurkha Troop does not exist and the troop commitments have become exactly the same as the other British Troops.

In the past year it's been a golden gate for detachment personnel. Start with Lt(QGO) Dilprasad Limbu who was promoted to Capt(QGO), SSgt Prem was promoted to WO2, ASSgt Yog was promoted to SSgt and Cpl Deepak was promoted to Sgt when he left the troop. Towards the middle of the year Cpl Gun left the troop to join 69 Sqn in Kosovo.

To refill the JNCOs vacancies Cpl Ashok Gurung joined the Troop at the beginning of the year and later on Capt(QGO) Chitrabahadur Gurung came to relieve Capt(QGO) Dilprasad Limbu. In September 1999 Cpl Kamal came to replace Cpl Gun.

Above all, its been very good news for the troop and the Sqn that Cpl Kamal performed excellently on the JNCOs Instructor Course and came top on the course which is a tremendous credit for QGE and the Sqn. In addition to this, SSgt Yog completed EFP2, Cpl Ashok completed EFP1 and Cpl Kamal completed SLP3.

Now, the Minley tour has created a lot of opportunities for QGE personnel exchanging experiences and communicating in various aspects along with their British counterparts. In the past, the QGE seemed to be isolated but now that curtain has disappeared forever!!!

SENIOR SERVING OFFICERS OF THE REGIMENT

Brig J A Thorp CBE, MA, psc, reds
Brig Gen Staff HQ LAND
Brig D R Bill BSc(Eng), psc
Brig Gen Staff HQ LAND (Des)
Brig D R Burns OBE, BSc(Eng), psc
Comdt RSME
Brig J G Baker MBE, BSc(Eng), psc,
Q, I- DA Seoul
Brig P A Wall OBE, MA, I, psc
Comd 24 (Airmobile) Bde
Col J D C Anderson BSc(Eng), psc(n)
Col DDOR (Engrs & NBC)
Col C W Haskell BSc, psc, aic
ACOS G1 HQ UKSC(G)
Col J R Durance BSc(Eng), I, psc
Col Recruiting (A) HQ AG
Col M D Reynolds BSc(Eng), CEng,
Eurling, FIPlantE, MICE, C, sq
Comd MWF
Col M A C Hughes BSc(Eng), psc
Study Team Ldr DASD
Col G C Kershaw BSc(Eng), DipEM,
CEng, MICE, C, sq(w)
Head of Business Unit, DEO
Col R J Little BSc(Eng), sq
DA Kuala Lumpur
Col R C Hendicott MBE, MA, psc
CRE 3(UK) Div
Col A D Harking BSc(Eng), psc
I- Col Engr Ops HQ LAND
Col I M Caws OBE, BSc(Eng) (H),
CEng, MICE, I, C, Q, psc
Col MO1 DMO
Lt Col J A Ris BSc(Eng), psc
SO1 Manpower & Personnel
SHAPE (BAE)
Lt Col A S Tuggey BSc(Eng), osc(MAL),
sq DA Riga
Lt Col G J Whitty MBE, sq Ch Instr
CTS Wg, Const Engr Sch

Lt Col J F Wheeley MBE, psc
 SO1 Engr Resources HQ ARRC
 Lt Col A P Burnside BSc(Eng), CEng,
 EurIng, MICE, C - CO CRE (Airfield)
 Lt Col P A H Poole BSc, psc SO1
 Implementation Team DIPT
 Lt Col G K Gibbs psc
 CO 33 Engr Regt (EOD)
 Lt Col A M Mills BSc(Eng), psc
 CO 28 Engr Regt
 Lt Col N H W Fern sq, jsdc
 Ch Instr Comd Wg, Const Engr Sch
 (Des CO 73 Engr Regt (V))
 Lt Col J W Shanahan MBE, psc
 SO1 RE Offr MCM Div
 (Des CO 33 Engr Regt)
 Lt Col A C Sheppard MBE, psc
 SO1 CJPS, SHAPE
 (Des CO 36 Engr Regt)
 Lt Col J R White MBE, Bsc (Eng), psc
 SO1 (W) Engr Sys Sp IPT

OFFICERS OF THE REGIMENT

Lt Col M P Carter BSc, MBA, psc, jsdc
 Comdt QGE
 Maj A J A MacLachlan OC 69 Sqn
 Capt R C D Fawcus BSc 2IC 69 Sqn
 Capt M D Berrill QM 69 Sqn
 Capt J H Ridge M Eng (Hons)
 Ops Offr 69 Sqn
 Lt I Moore B Eng Fd Tp Comd 69 Sqn
 Lt P M Helme B Eng Fd Tp Comd 69 Sqn
 Lt C T J Wasilewski BA (Hons)
 Fd Tp Comd 69 Sqn
 Lt F J Scotter BSc Sp Tp Comd 69 Sqn

SHORT SERVICE COMMISSIONED (GURKHA) OFFICERS

Maj(SSC(G)) Mahendraprasad Gurung
 Ops Trg Offr 73 Engr Regt

Capt(SSC(G)) Hombahadur Limbu
 Garrison Engineer, 12 (Air Sp)
 Engr Bde

QUEEN'S GURKHA OFFICERS

Maj(QGO) Damar Ghale -Gurkha Major
 Capt(QGO) Hombahadur Rana
 Gurkha Capt 69 Sqn
 Capt(QGO) Dilprasad Limbu
 Gurkha Capt 69 Sqn (Des)
 Capt(QGO) Chitrabahadur Gurung
 Trg Tp Comd , 57 Trg Sqn Minley
 Capt(QGO) Dalbahadur Limbu
 Gurkha Capt 70 Sqn (Des)
 Lt(QGO) Dudhprasad Gurung
 Tp Comd 69 Sqn
 Lt(QGO) Dhanbahadur Chand
 Sp Tp Comd 70 Sqn (Des)
 Lt(QGO) Benuprasad Limbu
 Tp Comd 69 Sqn
 Lt(QGO) Bhishmaraj Gurung
 Pl Comd, Gurkha Coy ITC Catterick

PROMOTEES

January - December 1999

PROMOTION TO MAJ(QGO)

Maj(QGO) Damar Ghale

PROMOTION TO CAPT(QGO)

Capt(QGO) Dalbahadur Limbu

PROMOTION TO LT(QGO)

Lt(QGO) Benuprasad Limbu

Lt(QGO) Bhishmaraj Gurung

PROMOTION TO WO2

21166747 WO2 Prembahadur Ale

21166753 WO2 Krishnabahadur Gurung

PROMOTION TO SSGT

21165312 SSgt Bhaktabahadur Basnet

21165330 SSgt Haribahadur Roka

21166294 SSgt Gangabahadur Gurung

THE EVANS BALARAM RAI BRIDGE

Capt J H Ridge MEng RE

21166748 SSgt Ekbahadur Gurung
21166966 SSgt Himal Pradhan
21167305 SSgt Uttamkumar Sherchan
21168197 SSgt Ashokkumar Khanal

PROMOTION TO SGT

21166955 Sgt Deepakkumar Joshi
21166987 Sgt Karnakumar Rai
21167606 Sgt Tarabahadur Pun
21167607 Sgt Tulbahadur Ale

PROMOTION TO CPL

21166900 Cpl Jasbir Pun
21167514 Cpl Giriraj Limbu
21168012 Cpl Sureshkumar Rai
21168189 Cpl Jitbahadur Thapa
21168280 Cpl Dirgha Khatri Chhetri
21168510 Cpl Khilbahadur Thapa
21168533 Cpl Badrikumar Rai
21168728 Cpl Narbahadur Sunar
21168762 Cpl Purnasingh Tamang

PROMOTION TO LCPL

21167723 LCpl Arju Rai
21167867 LCpl Yamprasad Damai
21168002 LCpl Khadgabahadur Gurung
21168078 LCpl Balbahadur Thapa
21168449 LCpl Gokulman Rai
21168450 LCpl Jhapatsing Bhujel
21168753 LCpl Durgabahadur Chand
21168757 LCpl Tekbahadur Gurung
21168814 LCpl Rajendrakumar Rai
21169000 LCpl Bilbahadur Gurung
21169127 LCpl Prakash Rai
21169131 LCpl Bhimbahadur Saru
21169270 LCpl Deepakkumar Shrestha
21169283 LCpl Govindabahadur Rana

PENSIONERS **1999/2000**

RC 2/98 (18 - 26 May 99)

21163220 WO2Dhanbahadur Gurung

RC 4/99 (20 - 28 Jul 99)

540276 Maj(QGO) Tshering Lama

RC 8/99 (14 - 22 Dec 99)

21169140 Spr Premkumar Lama

The original Milosevo Bridge spanned the River Lab just North of the town of Milosevo. It was a three span concrete bridge and supported the road which linked the capital city Pristina, in the south, with Mitrovica in the north. The bridge was targeted during the Allied air campaign and destroyed by a single munition which severed the northernmost span.

As an interim measure the French Engineers created a bypass to the west, spanning the river with a combination of culverts, local rubble and an articulated, armoured over-bridge. At this stage 26 Armoured Engineer Squadron was tasked with providing a more easily trafficked and durable solution - this was to be a Mabey Johnson bridge, three of which were held by KFOR.

In August 26 Squadron began work by removing as much of the remains of the old bridge as possible. By late August it became apparent that 26 Sqn were going to be unable to carry out the whole task before their return to the UK; the project was, therefore, handed over to 69 Gurkha Field Squadron.

527 STRE and Mabey Johnson Ltd had carried out the preliminary design of the bridge sub and super-structure respectively. The proposed design was for a Mabey Compact 200 bridge with a 4.2m road width.

It was designed routinely to carry MLC 80 loads and be capable of a caution crossing by an MLC 110 load.

The bridge was to sit on a reinforced concrete bank-seat beam which was, in turn, to be supported by 4m high, rock filled gabion walls. Both of the approach roads had been badly damaged so it was necessary to cut them both back. On the north side in particular this necessitated the construction of a 30m concrete slab road to tie in with the existing black-top.

Preparations for the build began in earnest at the beginning of September. Because of the excessive distance from our base in Lipijan we detached the majority of the Field Troops to a site by the bridge. This was later named Bowring Camp.

The plant was then able to begin work excavating the banks in preparation for the gabion walls.

We then had to wait for the arrival of the gabion baskets which were due to arrive on 7 September. It soon became obvious they wouldn't! Cutting a long story short we traced them to Thessaloniki, fruitlessly searched traffic queues and contractors' offices in Bulgaria and finally discovered them in the German Sector.

By that stage they were 7 days overdue. Added to this there was the problem of stone to fill the baskets and to backfill to the required road level. In the end the stone came from both Macedonia and Kosovo!

Having finally received all stores, the Troop began to build the gabion walls. Through a Herculean effort and a number of very late nights, they managed to bring the project lag down to 4 days. The next phase was to cast a reinforced concrete bank-seat beam on the top of the baskets.

Once again materials became the bug-bear. We had planned to use Readimix concrete delivered to site by a

contractor. In Kosovo, at that stage, there were no contractors available and all those in Macedonia refused to take on a contract that required them to deliver over such a distance.

It happened that the French Engineers had a concrete batching plant about 30 minutes north of the site. They did not, however, have any spare materials or any means to transport the mixed product.

Eventually a rather complex, but eminently British compromise was reached: we would buy the cement in Greece, the sand in Macedonia and the gravel in Kosovo. We would then mix the concrete at the French batching plant and deliver it to site in a mixer truck, hired by KFOR from a firm in Macedonia! Contrary to contemporary expectations all the ingredients came together on time and the concrete was poured.

During curing the Troop travelled to Macedonia to carry out vital training on an, as yet unfamiliar, bridging system. The training was co-ordinated by QMSI Devine from 38 Engineer Regiment. He was ably assisted by Mr Al Pierson, an ex-Sapper who now worked for Mabey and Johnson Ltd.

The Combat Engineer Tractors were now busy clearing debris from the river bed to ensure a smooth flow of water.

With training completed the Troops returned to site to begin setting out the construction rollers on the north bank. The bridge was built on the rear rollers and only boomed out onto those that rested on the bank-seat beam once it had properly cured.

Construction then continued aided by Canadian Engineers from 12 Sqn CME. The superstructure was in place after only 3 days. Jacking down the bridge onto its bearings was a delicate

process and was successfully completed after overcoming a number of associated problems. The carpenters then began to construct the somewhat complicated form-work for the back wall. Once again the convoluted concrete production sequence was put into action and the back walls were poured.

The Royal Military Police decided on the necessary road signs, 15 Sqn fabricated them and 69 Sqn was invited to name the bridge.

The tragic deaths of Lt Gareth Evans and SSgt Balam Rai, who had been killed clearing munitions from a school near Glogovac, hung heavily on us all. Naming the bridge in memory of both of



General Klaus Reinhardt, Comd. KFOR, about to open the Evans Balam Rai Bridge.

The concrete road slabs were then poured. We knew that the standard of local driving made accidents in the narrow confines of the bridge highly likely, so we began casting a set of concrete speed-bumps to supplement the protection provided by eight fearsome looking "Dragon's Teeth".

The speed bumps were carefully spaced and sunk into the surface of the road close enough to the bridge to cause the traffic to slow down but far enough away that, after inevitable high speed take-offs, cars would not land on the bridge deck itself.

them seemed the proper thing to do.

With all works complete, the bridge was opened on the 14 October by General Reinhardt, Commander KFOR. After carefully choreographed marches, speeches and press statements almost every Gurkha rank shook the General's hand and retired to Lipljan for a well earned half day.

In summary the bridge took five and a half weeks to construct and used 1200m of crushed rock and 300 bags of cement. The total budget was in the order of 1/2 million deutschmarks.

MEMORIES OF A CLERK OF WORKS COURSE

SSgt Ashokkumar Khanal

Every Sapper, at one time or another during his career, passes through the Royal School of Military Engineering at Chatham. Some stay for a short spell, others remain for a considerably longer period, while the odd few it is rumoured spend their entire service there.

To the outside world the imposing steel and glass face of Denison Block in 1RSME is something of an enigma. To every Sapper though, this facade leads to the inner temples of the Corps of Royal Engineers.

It was in 1996, a few days before leaving the United Kingdom for Hong Kong; I stepped inside Denison Block for Maths and English exams as part of the selection procedure for clerk of works course.

Two hours long exams were followed by interviews with the instructors. I still have a vivid memory of an hour-long interview with the chief instructor in an air-conditioned room and of my incoherent explanation... and the sweat drops trickling down my cheek.

The result of which came to me in Hong Kong with a congratulation from OC 67 Independent Gurkha Field Squadron (sadly the squadron got disbanded later that year).

Having finished three courses (Junior Commanders course, Section Commanders course and Education for Promotion 1) consecutively, I arrived at 1RSME to attend a Clerk of Works

(electrical) course in May, 1997. I was somewhat weary after my previous three courses, rather bewildered, and very apprehensive. As in every new positing, settling in can be both a time consuming and bureaucratic process - a combination of seemingly endless form-filling, to equally endless lectures; what to do, and when, what not to do, and the dire consequences should one attempt to buck the system and get caught.

Nevertheless, even amongst a group of total strangers there were a few tentative welcoming smiles - or perhaps it was an instinctive attempt at group sympathy for what lay ahead. I was rather reminded of my first ever day on course - eight of us huddled together, and not one of us yet daring to show a spark of individuality. The herd instinct you might say.

The first three months were spent on computer lessons, maths and science. Fourier series, Laplace transformation, Differential and Integral calculus were not the usual terms that I knew of, but to overcome the problems, mental keenness was a must unless someone had a very good foundation of higher mathematics.

After almost a year, the whole course was sent to Scotland for two weeks on leadership training. It was my first time to visit Scotland and I much enjoyed the walk on the Scottish mountain which reminded me of my country Nepal.

The course lasted a total of 22 months, during which the students were taught every aspect of electrical engineering, from basic ac,dc principles to lighting design, transmission and distribution of overhead lines, power

station design etc... The course was divided into several phases, and each phase was appropriately balanced between theory and practical works. The other parts of the course were RE SNCO course, Site Safety Supervisor and a six weeks attachment to different civil companies.

It would be untrue to portray the course as one of unending toil, but to keep ahead of the game one certainly needed to burn the midnight oil.

Alas, in retrospect, 22 months seems all too short a time. Months dwindle to weeks, and then down to days before graduation. After so long with one group of people, and after sharing together all the diversities of such a strenuous course one feels suddenly dispossessed when the final examination is over, and when the postings have been published.

Even with the sense of personal achievement, and bolstered by the thought of moving to pastures new, there is an inner loss -akin to being deprived of a purpose in life.

Looking back on those 22 months what in fact did I experience? First and foremost of course I survived what will possibly be one of the most mentally demanding periods of my life. Secondly, my ambitions have been fostered, and my horizons have widened.

I think my most lasting impression will be that affording me an insight into the British Army system of training. This has both impressed me, and renewed my previous conception of the Corps of Royal Engineers, namely a body of men I am proud to be associated with, and with whom I am proud to serve.

- Jai Gurkha.

SOUTH GEORGIA

LCpl Dipkumar Rana

South Georgia is one of the most southern parts of the world. It is situated in the remote Atlantic sector of the Southern or the Antarctic Ocean. The island is roughly 100 miles long by an average of 20 miles wide and looks something like the Himalayas emerging straight from the ocean.

This place is a jewel to be treasured with extremely beautiful mountains and glaciers. In winter the weather is rigorous but in the summer there is said that it is the greatest concentration of Antarctic and Sub - Antarctic wild life on the planet and it is becoming a popular tourist destination.



SSgt Ganga admiring the scene in South Georgia

South Georgia is most frequently linked with Sir Earnest Shackleton's epic rescue bid in 1916 when, after his ship *Endurance* was crushed in pack ice, he and five companions sailed a 23 foot life boat 800 miles from Elephant Island to South Georgia in Sixteen days. Three men crossed the Island to reach an inhabited whaling station and get help for the other men marooned on Elephant Island.

Captain James Cook was the first man to land on the Island in 1775 and claimed it for Britain. There was no permanent habitation until 1904, when whalers from newly formed Compania Argentina de Pesca constructed the first whaling station at Grytviken.

There was a British magistrate and administration centre in the Island from 1908. Whaling in South Georgia operated until 1965 when there were too few whales left to make it economic.

Since then the British Antarctic Survey operated a base for scientific studies until 1982 when the Argentine armed forces invaded and occupied the Island for three weeks.

A British task force sailed south to liberate it. Since then there has been a British Garrison or Logistical support Detachment maintaining a presence.

69 Gurkha Field Sqn comprising nine of us (one officer, one SNCO and other JNCO's) and one attached from 20 Fd Sqn with our various trade skills went to South Georgia for four months tour. Our mission there was to protect, secure and to maintain the Island so it could run smoothly.

As its a magnificent Alpine Island, to explore around you needed to be qualified with a mountain movement survival course (MMSC) and Novice skiing survival course (NSSC). We had a week on each course and experienced a lot of things like climbing on Glaciers and sleeping in a Quincy (snow shelter).

We also had a week of moral course in " Advanced First Aid " run by a doctor in the Island. We had to inject on each others veins, the purpose is to give fluid and this requires " intravenous cannulation " of a large vein usually in

the arm. It was really scary letting someone use you for his first attempt and with his shaky hands.

Looking back at our four months stay at South Georgia - We gained a lot of experience and had a very successful tour which we will treasure forever.

SPEED RIDERS NIGHTMARE RAMPS

Spr Romendra Ale

The lack of proper traffic rules and uncontrolled speed limit is the main cause of the accidents in Lipljan, Kosovo. 69 Gurkha Field Squadron, based in Lipljan was tasked to establish the speed ramps in several places within the town in order to reduce such accidents or risks.



*Sappers constructing speed riders'
nightmare ramps*

Under the command of Second Lieutenant Wasilewski one section from G Troop and one section from I Troop managed to build five ramps and laid them across the road, which had been marked.

On a hot summer day, it was not easy to work on the middle of the road with the mad traffic passing beside our bodies continuously. Two of our men were on either side of the road trying to control the traffic.

Although we had safety supervisors on the site, it was also necessary for all of us to be alert and vigilant. As the work began; the road was cut to its required shape and size with our combat engineering tools.

The crowd gathered to watch what we were up to. The ramp, which was prepared in the camp, was placed on the appropriate place with the help of LWT. Sand and water was put in to make it stable and then it was painted so that it could be seen from a distance.

Now the town, more or less, is safe from the fast driven vehicles including KFOR soldiers who patrol the area 24 hours. The entire job was completed in a single day and no injury occurred.

This was only possible due to the skill, team spirit and hard labour from all the boys. We hope that the speed riders will enjoy their drive, especially when they find a ramp just a few meters ahead and remember the Gurkha Sappers.

GURKHA WIVES' VOLLEYBALL

Mrs Nina Gurung

Things have certainly changed for better with a little bit of effort. The very place felt more warm and

welcoming with the support from all that was much needed. Like our men at QGE, we the Gurkha wives at Invicta Park, always strive to achieve and excel in our set targets.

Having unanimously decided to organise a QGE ladies volleyball match in our monthly coffee gathering, the QGE wives' committee announced that it was to be held between the wives of SNCOs and above Vs wives of the JNCOs and below.

Talk about the spirit of QGE ladies! No sooner had the announcement been made, the team lists were filled up with eager and willing participants.

Even more inspiring was the fact that non-participants always made it at the Practice Hall to encourage their team-members, although not denying to have felt sorry for the participants' swollen and bruised hands.

Amateurs though they may have been at volleyball, but champions they already were in our eyes for showing such determination to make the match worthwhile.

8 Dec 99 - when the big day arrived, short welcoming speech was given by Mrs Usha Khanal after which, Mrs Tina Rana declared the match open. The ladies already knew all the rules of the game by then, and hence, the match started. It was to be a best of five.

The first match was won by the SNCOs and above wives, followed by two consecutive winnings from the opposite team. The Juniors team was receiving rapturous support from QGE's "Bhais" whereas the G/Capt's wife was leading her team's cheer-group with claps and hoots. The whole scene was

electrifying, with the thunderous cheers becoming increasingly pandemonium. Then, within all the fervour of the game, the JNCO's team started showing strains and lost the two remaining matches to the rivals, beyond everyone's expectations. The fantastic game couldn't have come to a more dramatic ending.

After the game, every participant congratulated and thanked each other for joining in and making the game an experience hard to forget. The QGE wives and their committee were overwhelmed with pride for organising such a successful game, enjoyed by everyone.

Our honorable Gurkha Major dai had (within a limited notice allocated to him) generously arranged a variety of prizes for both teams and as a gesture of his goodwill, surprised all present at the game by titillating their tastebuds with container full of aloodum and soft drinks.

May we take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support, the referees, PTIs, all the contestants for their spirits of sportsmanship and the spectators at the game for making this a successful day. Jai QGE



QGEA CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Brigadier (Retd.) J H Edwards

There was no major celebration last year to compare with the reunion in 1998, but a good deal happened. There have been all sorts of news, some exciting, some good and some tragic.

Let me deal with the tragic news first. On behalf of the Association, I would like to express our sympathy to the families of Gareth Evans and Balaram Rai, who were killed in Kosovo.

The other great loss to the Association was the death of General Bill Jackson, the Regiment's most distinguished member. Our sympathy goes to Joan and the family.

Balaram's funeral in Nepal, at which the Gurkha Major was present, was extremely well attended. Gareth's military funeral in Chatham and General Bill's Memorial service at the Royal Hospital, were both moving events. Obituaries appear elsewhere in this publication.

It is good to be able to report that Balaram's widow's financial situation is better than anyone could have hoped. The improved death benefit and pension, reported in the Press, (*See Gurkha Pensions on page 28*) are part of the story, but there have also been funds raised on her behalf.

Our own appeal within the Association has raised a considerable sum and is still open. Donations to the Secretary please. A house is being constructed for her in Kathmandu by a team composed entirely of ex-QGE and she is being assisted with the

management of her money by British Gurkhas Nepal.

In accordance with the wishes of the majority we are continuing to alternate annual reunions between lunches and dinners. Last year a most successful dinner was held in the Officers Mess at Sandhurst. It has the same geographical advantages as Minley, but is big enough, and has a good ambiance - I do not know why we have never used it before. It was a great pleasure to have once more our own QGE piper.

This year there will be a lunch and Open Day at Maidstone in September, the details of which will be circulated in due course. There will also be a flag raising ceremony for the re-raising of 70 Support Squadron at Maidstone on 17th July, at which members will be welcome.

The Regimental Association in Nepal is finally off the ground. I look upon our relationship with it as that of daju/bhai, and intend to retain very close links with it.

Thanks to John Worthington, who appears to be the only person who has retained all past copies of the newsletter and magazine, we are binding them into suitable sized volumes. The originals will be lodged with the Gurkha museum and photocopies with the Corps Library.

Sales of Hank Bowen's regimental history have not gone as quickly as we had hoped. The marketing team is investigating new channels, but it would be a help if members could try to sell copies to their friends and acquaintances. To any member who

has not yet bought at least one copy, I can only say *!#!*!#!*!#!. Copies are available from Lt Col RF Wilsher, Regimental HQ RE, Ravelin Building, Brompton Barracks, Chatham, Kent ME4 4UG. Telephone 01634 822355.

It is excellent news that our President has been promoted to Lt Gen - I have always been of the opinion that the men prefer a very senior officer as Colonel, to someone who has simply spent a long time with the Regiment. The other good news is that Alastair Sheppard is to be the next CO 36 Regiment.

The Perowne Trust's accumulated funds stood at around £63,000 at the last audit. The Trust is currently supporting nine students at universities in Nepal, India and Hong Kong. A system has recently been instituted by which all current Perowne scholars write letters to the Trustees each year. The letters are illuminating and a considerable help to the Trustees in deciding whether to continue their support.

I would like to finish by paying tribute to my committee for all their hard work. Jim Stuart as Secretary keeps you informed of what is happening, distributes the magazine, keeps the membership list up to date, and does everything else that does not fall within anyone else's province. Roy Wilsher keeps the accounts impeccably. Harry VC continues to produce an excellent magazine each year and Bill Chesshyre maintains our links with Nepal during his annual visits.

FAMOUS SONS OF THE REGIMENT - No.3.

**Major (QGO) Hon Capt (GCO)
Kalusing Limbu**

Col (Retd) MJW Wright

Sadly, Kalusing is no longer with us and so it has been difficult to get details of his service with 10GR on the NW Frontier and in Burma, but many officers who served with him, and his son Captain Hombahadur Limbu, still serving, all gave lots of information about this remarkable man.

In all the contributions the same descriptions keep on appearing - 'great soldier', 'wise', 'courteous', 'intensely loyal', 'patrician', 'charming man', 'outstanding Gurkha Major', 'a simply wonderful man'.

My own experience of him was from December 1960 to December 1963 when he was my Gurkha Captain while I was OC 67 Sqn. These were not easy years but Kalusing was always there as my guide, mentor and friend.

He was born in Tembe near Taplejung on 1 November 1919, the only son of Hajursing Limbu who had been an RSM in 7GR. He joined the IA (10GR) on 1 November 1938 at Jalapur (Darjeeling) and after training at the 10GR Depot at Shillong he joined one of the two regular battalions of 10GR on the NW Frontier. Two stories have come down from these early days - one, 'Biggest angry Ever' was told by John Elderkin in the 1999 Magazine. The other Kalusing told me himself after a few beers one evening in Borneo. As a young L/Nk he was in charge of a picket



*Major (QGO) Hon Capt (GCO)
Kalusing Limbu*

on a high hill on the frontier. Down in the valley below was a dusty track.

Each morning at the same time a lorry came down the track and then disappeared behind a small hill. Shortly afterwards, rifle fire was directed on to the picket from the hill. After a few minutes, the firing stopped and the lorry re-appeared from behind the hill.

After a few mornings of this Kalusing waited until the lorry re-appeared and then opened up with his Lewis gun. He had no more trouble after that! He was a tough man, even as a L/Nk!

With regret, I can find no tales about his service in Burma in the war but he was still serving with 10GR at the time of Indian Independence. He opted for the British Army at that time and went to Malaya as a Cpl with 10GR early in 1948.

He was one of the first NCOs to join the embryonic QGE, being posted to the ETC at Kluang in December 1948 and being promoted Sgt the following month. He was posted from the ETC to 67 Sqn when it was formed in September 1949.

There are many stories of his early years in the regiment, especially when he became SQMS of 67 Sqn. Tom Spring-Smyth recalls as Adjt receiving a call from HQLF asking if we had any soldiers over 100 years old. Tom said, 'probably - we are a long-serving regiment but I will have to check!' It turned out that Kalusing had submitted an indent for medal ribbons including one for the 2nd Afghan War! Malcolm Campbell also has a memory of him in Lowu Camp as SQMS in late 1950 when there was a crush at the SQMS store; Kalusing restored order by calling in perfect English, 'One face at the window at a time, please'.

In 1951 the first cadre to train potential QGOs was held at Kluang and Kalusing attended this, doing very well and being commissioned on 28 July 1952. After Nepal leave, he rejoined 67 Sqn in Hong Kong moving with them to Malaya in December 1954.

In September 1955 he flew to UK to attend a YO course at Chatham, the first QGO to do so. He was in UK for 10 months and then returned to 67 Sqn as troop QGO of B Troop. Malcolm Campbell, OC of 67 Sqn on the Kedah Road project says, 'he was probably the only QGO capable of carrying out a fairly complex engineer task on his own'.

Charles Spottiswoode found him to be a tower of strength in his early days as B Tp commander - he tells the first of several stories of Kalusing's intense loyalty. B Troop were camped near the

beach at Usakan Bay, Borneo, building a road to the Tempasuk River (late 1959).

One afternoon Charles went out in a small prahus he had bought. He got into severe trouble when it filled with water and he only just managed to keep afloat. After several hours Kalusing noticed he was missing so organised search parties in assault boats.

Eventually, after dark, Charles was found and rescued. Later, Charles found out that Kalusing had sworn the whole troop to secrecy so that Charles would not be embarrassed by the telling of the tale. Two years later, when Kalusing had been promoted to Gurkha Capt I too (also in Borneo) saw his amazing loyalty - this time to someone who did not deserve it.

67 Sqn was living in Paradise Camp with the Tempasuk River between us and the fleshpots of Jesselton, 2 hours drive away. A Sqn of a famous cavalry regiment with its tanks had been in the training area but most of the tanks had been taken back to Hong Kong.

There were still a few tanks and soldiers in the training area commanded by a young 2/Lt. One evening he decided to drive a Landrover down to Jesselton but, when he arrived at the ferry over the Tempasuk, he found the river was in flood and rapidly rising.

The Sqn Duty Officer (G/Lt Sherbahadur Limbu) had closed the ferry and withdrawn the ferry crew. The thwarted cavalry subaltern, determined to get to Jesselton, turned back and drove to Paradise Camp where Sherbahadur was taking evening rollcall parade. He stormed up to Sherbahadur and demanded that the ferry be opened at once. It was explained to him politely in English why the ferry could not be opened. The subaltern hit Sherbahadur with his swagger cane!

Sherbahadur was a very popular QGO and the subaltern was lucky not to have been assaulted by the enraged parade.

Luckily Kalusing arrived at that moment, took the subaltern away and explained to him that this was not the way a British officer behaved. I knew nothing of this until about a week later when we were chatting over a beer. Kalusing asked 'Have the tank pultan gone?'. 'Yes.' He then told me the story.

He knew how angry I would be and so he protected a foolish young British officer of another unit against his own foolishness and my rage. Greater loyalty hath no man than this!

In 1964 Kalusing became Gurkha Major and moved back to Kluang, but before that, he had been honoured in 1960 by being the first Gurkha Engineer to be awarded the Durand Medal. The full citation for this is given in Lance Perowne's book.

Terry White as Commandant in November 1966 had the difficult problem of dealing with the rundown of the Regt. Lance Perowne covers it well, but Terry in his own words described the part Kalusing played - loyalty again being the keyword. Terry was at a party in Singapore when the key signal came - to be announced all over the brigade at 0645 the next morning.

The Adjt got a message to Terry who left for Kluang at once and told Kalusing to meet him at his quarter at midnight. Terry and Kalusing discussed the matter at great length and spent most of the night making sure Terry got it completely correct.

Lance Perowne describes how Terry was heard by the QGOs in complete silence; when he had finished, several QGOs started to get to their feet to ask questions. 'Kalusing, wise old man that he was, spoke up and said no questions

should be put until the CO Sahib has had time to find out some of the answers. I blessed him for that.'

Kalusing had a great sense of fun and did not mind having his own leg pulled. In February 1961 67 Sqn were deploying for an exercise on the East Coast. The Sqn moved down a few days early to get them out of camp together as a Sqn and was camped by the sea near Mersing. Kalusing was a great fisherman and so was out on the beach fishing as soon as he could.

Robin Jordan and I decided to pull his leg - we went to the fish market and bought the biggest fish we could find - a whopper about 3 ft long. We smuggled it back into camp, got it down to the beach and went through the motions of fishing, finally in triumph bringing the fish up to Kalusing's tent.

'Look, sahib, what the OC's caught'. Kalusing looked at it, a little hurt, and then, with his wonderful smile, said, 'How much did it cost you in Mersing market?'

Kalusing went on pension in September 1968, having served for just under 30 years, including well over 10 years on active service on the NW Frontier, Burma, Malaya and Borneo. Before he retired, in May 1968, he was made an Hon Lieutenant and later in March 1975 an Hon Captain.

Part of his testimonial on his retirement said, 'His outstanding loyalty and wisdom and his exceptional flair for understanding the problems of others, and dealing with them fairly, has endeared him to all with whom he has served'.

He returned to his village of Tembe and set about bringing his high standards of doing things into his village. Many officers of the regiment were able to visit Tembe over the years

and they all received a great welcome from Kalusing.

Mike Stephens describes how, as he got nearer and nearer to Tembe, the whole standard of cultivation, maintenance of paths and so on increased until Tembe itself was reached. Hank Bowen in his book describes some of the work and improvements carried out by Kalusing in the area; in particular, his good works were recognised by the district authorities in Taplejung and the King of Nepal awarded him the Nepalese Sewa Pedak in 1980.

Sadly he died in 1990 in Taplejung, aged 79. He had two sons, the youngest, Hombahadur, is well known in the Regiment and is till serving as a Capt in 39 Regt. The older son, Udaiya, became a school teacher and ran the school for 2GR in Hong Kong. He is now a school teacher in Kathmandu. Kalusing would now be very proud of his two sons.

What is there to say in conclusion about such a remarkable man? Only, I think, that it was a great privilege to have known him and to have served alongside him.

GURKHA PENSIONS

Colonel DG Hayes

Colonel, Brigade of Gurkhas

(The message reproduced below was published recently in Parbate. As it contains remarkable news I have decided to include it unabridged. There are approximately NCR 112 to £1.00 - Ed)

I am delighted to be able to advise readers of the result of the Minister for the Armed Forces' Examination of

Gurkha Pensions and Gratuities. Although details of the Minister's announcement have been passed down the Chain of Command, I am keen to ensure that the very good news gets the widest publicity possible.

On 23 December 1999 the Minister announced changes that will at least double the current Gurkha Service Pensions through the addition of a welfare related cash uplift to British Gurkha Pensions.

The announcement followed a wide ranging and detailed examination of pensions and gratuities which explored a number of options following discussions with the Nepalese and Indian Governments.

The increase which will benefit all British Gurkha pensioners, will be paid from 1 April 2000. All pensioners will receive a minimum 100% increase but some will receive considerably more, reflecting further increases arising from the Indian Government Fifth Pay Commission's recommendations.

The pension rates from 1 April 2000 will range from NCR 7043.55 per month for below Corporal and NCR 23612.80 per month for a Major (QGO). Pensions will continue to be paid immediately after 15 years service and where appropriate, passed on to Widows and then children up to the age of 25 years.

The Minister's announcement followed the Prime Minister's announcement on the 27 October 1999 that Gurkha Death in Service Gratuities would be adjusted to be brought in line with those of British Servicemen, and to be awarded for all deaths attributable to service. The new rates range from a minimum of NCR 2621846 for below Corporal to NCR 6572426 for a Major (QGO).

The new pensions and gratuities

package arising from the Minister's examination is a substantial enhancement for our ex-Servicemen and their widows, and will, I am sure, be welcomed by the majority of pensioners, and indeed the Brigade as a whole.

The process has been a very full and fair examination, and the level of interest and commitment at the highest levels of Government and the MOD towards achieving this excellent result should not be understated.

Never before have Gurkha pensions and their delivery been scrutinised, reviewed or developed in such depth.

From now on Gurkha pensioners can be confident that they have not only a very beneficial pension package, but one that will be delivered by a new modern computerised payment and enquiry system (Nepal Pension Payment System) designed specifically to provide an efficient service that they rightfully deserve.

I wish to acknowledge here the considerable advice and detailed analysis that Colonel Mark Dowdle, Commander British Gurkhas, Nepal and his staff provided to assist the Minister's Examination, and in addition the very valuable advice provided by Brigadier Mervyn Lee as the Defence Attache in Delhi. Their contributions were essential to the success of the work undertaken.

With our previously introduced new Terms and Conditions of Service and now with the pensions issue behind us, I am confident that the interests of both our serving and retired Servicemen have received the degree of British Government support that they deserve.

As a Brigade, we now have increased confidence with which to continue to move forward and to ensure that we focus on the operational dimension in order to deliver the military capability required of us.

"PROFILES FOR PERPETUITY"

Colonel J P Cross OBE

Colonel John Cross OBE 7 GR, who will be well known to everyone who served in Malaya and Borneo, and many who have visited Nepal in the past twenty or so years, has been asked to carry out an oral history project of what the Gurkhas themselves have to say about their war service. He has travelled over vast distances in Nepal interviewing over 200 people and recording their memories and comments. He is about halfway through his data collecting and has produced a paper setting out his thoughts. He has named the paper "Profiles For Perpetuity". He hopes to publish his preliminary thoughts in the Kukri.

He has very kindly sent me a copy of his first draft. It runs to seven pages and would take up too much space in our magazine. John has agreed that I may précis his article.

Brig. Hank Bowen

Recording the stories was not easy, remnants of the 1939-45 war were aged between 74 and 93 years of age and memories of the Middle East, Burma and Malaya/Singapore are remembered only by those from the very junior end of the rank spectrum, the more senior died years ago.

As to the language used, Nepali as spoken in the Hills while being very good for onomatopoeic ululations is not so effective for grades of description.

Rather than definite "black" and "white", "shades of grey" are used; rather than prime colours pastel shades, "just a little" is said when "a whole lot" is meant.

So it is that "word for word" translations are vapid compared with the thought behind them. Many wartime men, apart from suffering from 'selective amnesia', are now deaf, toothless, sometimes almost voiceless or even suffering from a stroke - or all four - so are difficult to understand.

For some story telling is essentially a "liquid" affair with friends, not a "dry" performance into a microphone.

(John Cross is a most marvellous linguist and he had the help of his surrogate son Bhuddiman Gurung, but even they had difficulty in understanding and interpreting the words of some of the old soldiers. DHB)

Names, of officers and places, particularly in Italy and Burma, are infernally hard to reconcile. Many have a wonderful memory for the mundane - 'we were on the quayside from 0700 hours until 1630 hours'; 'we were 14 days and 13 nights in the boat'; 'we were fed with three chapattis only' - the actual details of battle have become confused and evocative descriptions are rare.

The differing tempos of the various campaigns are reflected in the stories, whose qualities vary from fascinating, through frightening to frivolous. For example the closeness of the fighting at Fort Dufferin in Mandalay when Japanese and Gurkhas were so intermingled that every man, Gurkha

and Japanese, felt the shape of the steel helmet the other was wearing before killing the wearer or not.

One man claimed that his Japanese captors had sent him on Nepal leave: he had gone and reported back. There were few complaints of British inefficiency or bad tactics or such events as the blowing up of the Sittang bridge when so many men were still on the other side of the river, nor any lack of rations, ammunition stores as such.

Sure it was dukha but it was not seen as anyone's fault. Retreat through Burma? Capture at Tobruk? Defeat in Malaya? Privations in Singapore? All were seen as there not being enough Gurkhas. Apart from having taken the Government's salt and their oath so "never complaining, never explaining" they showed a pathological dislike of making adverse comments.

They were so used to incompetence and inefficiency that any deviations from normal within the army were seldom as bad as had happened at home or were accepted with the fortitude of fundamental fatalism.

Asia presumes an obligation of citizens to obey governments, Western democracy regards government as representing the citizens. This difference colours, clouds and distorts conceptions of one about the other.

One common complaint was the dukha of and in service. Dukha stretches from "pain" and "grief" to "trouble", "distress" and "suffering" to "a hard time". Active service conditions, let alone in battle, or when wounded or hungry, thirsty, cold, wet, outnumbered, far from base, or far

from home in a prisoner of war camp are natural conditions for dukha.

It could also be discomfort and boredom; the fretful, nagging constant of inescapable duties as line sentry, inlying piquets, fatigues; broken sleep for one reason or another in the line and out of it; also, perhaps, a reaction to the lack of female company.

The name and fame of the Gurkha is beyond dispute. However, the Gurkhas are mostly reticent about their own achievements and they told their stories dispassionately and, for the most part, modestly.

Fear before an action was understandable but 'stage fright' would be more apt. After shot and shell started to fly and the enemy charged at them, 'we had nothing to lose by risking our lives as we had lost them already' with the unsaid rider that they gave their all to master the situation.

Strangely most men did not talk about the more horrendous events, until, at the end, one of us asked them if there was anything else they would like to add. Then came personal details, from the more prosaic, 'I had my hat shot off twice': 'I was wounded', to the unbelievable 'As a prisoner of war in Singapore I refused to join the I(ndian) N(ational) A(rmy) so, to try and force me to, I was made to strip in front of the parade and a whole bucket of the nightsoil bucket was poured over my body and not allowed to wash': 'we were fallen in and threatened with being killed if we did not join the INA.

We refused and three men were taken and shot in front of us. We still

refused.' A soldier of the Indian Pioneer Corps was a prisoner of the Japanese for three or so months.

"Was there nothing else?" I asked him after a banal story. Yes there was "We were rescued by Habsis (Africans) who crucified six Japanese, cut off their member and stuffed it in their mouth, castrated them and put their testicles into their by then empty eye sockets, pierced their eardrums, hacked pieces of flesh off their bodies, rubbed salt into their wounds and then watched them die which took about two hours.

The Habsis cut off their thigh meat and cooked it. They invited us to join them but we refused." When pressed for more details as to why this macabre event had happened, he only then explained that, when they had been captured and used as forced labour by the Japanese, the Japanese had done exactly that to five of their number, except eat their flesh. Apart from telling his wife, he said that this was the first time he had spoken about it. He wept as he told his story.

Medals have their own fascination and decorations for glory play a big part in a Gurkha's psyche. The British give awards for 'collective action' or 'sustained effort over a period'.

The Gurkha soldier's "holy grails" are based on efforts being rewarded, whether by promotion or a bravery award. For such not to happen is seen as a negation of trust.

The confusion of the army's love of initials is exacerbated by Gurkhas being given British Army awards, such as the MM, when serving in a British division

but Indian Army awards, such as IDSM, when serving in an Indian division.

The number of times disappointment in not being recognised by not having a medal is a recurring theme in soldiers' stories. What really has upset Gurkhas was not getting an award for something achieved when others were rewarded for seemingly, often in the mind of the unawarded, doing far less or nothing at all.

A 1/2 GR man, reliving his times on operations in 1951, said 'I saved the lives of most of my section by eliminating a bandit group the others had not seen. I was told I was bound to get an award. When I came back from leave a man who had not been on operations had been rewarded, I missed out.

Gurkha Captain Lambahadur Limbu DCM, MM, told this story: 'I led a bayonet charge. I never asked for it but I was given it. I was a naik then. At the end of the war I had the chance of going home but I thought I would try and earn a naik's pension so I stayed on. The regiment was chosen for the British Army. I was told that, as I was not very clever I would stick at naik if I went across to the British.

Fine I said. 'I'd never asked to be a naik either. 'It's up to you' I said. I went across to Malaya and was immediately made a sergeant. 'You've got a decoration so you have been promoted' said the major 'but you won't go any higher'.

Trouble broke out and I took a platoon into the jungle. Had a brush with the enemy. I was awarded the

DCM, not that I had given it much thought. I was called into the office one day and told that, although I would go no further, as I had another decoration, I was going to be promoted to warrant officer.

So there I was, a sergeant major! I had never asked for either. 'That's as far as you will go' said the Major Sahib, not the first but another. Then a third major was posted in and, quite why I don't know, but he recommended me for commissioning.

'You'll have to stay as a Gurkha Lieutenant, but you won't mind that' I was told. I just said that I'd never asked to be commissioned and that I was very satisfied. Here I am going home on a maximum Gurkha Captain's pension.

I was rewarded twice, for two battles I fought. Neither lasted very long, but for twenty years I've been rewarded for having been rewarded. You British are a strange lot' he finished up with a smile.

One man claimed that a certain British officer so disliked him that he had been unfairly treated: he had been a leading scout for months on end without a relief and no automatic weapon, had had his arm jogged when about to kill an enemy so that he could not hit his target then not allowed to lob a grenade into a slit trench where an enemy LMG was, and ordered, on another occasion, to cut his lance-corporal's tapes off his sleeves in front of the assembled company.

True, false, exaggerated or what, who can tell? Obviously the man believed it and if the book is to allow

Gurkhas to speak for themselves then it has to stand.

But if memories of awards are inaccurate, lesser matters are even more so. 'I know that Field Marshall Auchinleck's wife was Queen Alexandra', 'I tell you Sahib that the Irawaddy does not flow into the sea in Burma as you said but it comes out in Tokyo', 'How can you say that planes damaged in Italy did not have to go to Calcutta for repair'

Regimental officers work at a lower level than do our Lords and Masters in Whitehall but the regimental officer is the one who has his finger on the pulse. It was Winston Churchill who wrote that "the further backwards you look, the further forward you can see".

Current regimental officers need to heed that maxim more than ever before. Let the next edition of "Gurkhas at War" as seen by the Gurkhas themselves be just as interesting reading as that written by their British officers.



FAMILY NEWS

BILL & JAN BRANFORD 1955-58

We have sold our Brancaster Staithe house, Westward Ho, and are permanently at Little Eastcotts, Brockley Green, Hundon, next door but one to The Plough Inn and between the villages of Kedington and Hundon in Suffolk. We still operate a squash court and tennis court, weather permitting. Jan still strongly supports the RNLI with particular interest in the boat station at Wells. Jan's labrador and Bill's spaniel get exercised with an all terrain buggy by Jan and on foot by Bill.

GEOFFREY & JUNE BENNETT
1948-51



Since '97 we have been living the life of Larry in Penang after my joining the OCTO Club last June. We have a cosy apartment overlooking a semi-golden beach in a Resort Building. I have been fortunate, as a Permanent Resident, to be allowed to work without having to struggle for a Work Permit. Two recent projects have been as project Co-

ordinator on a 5 star hotel which suffered the axe in the devastating crash of the economy in late '97, and stands today as a skeleton with only 7 of the 30 floors as testimony. As an 'expat' I was classified too expensive to keep on!

Lady Luck smiled on me and I continued to work in 1998 on the tearing down of a scruffy, unhygienic, cockroach infested 20,000 sq ft main kitchen at the University of Petaling Jaya Hospital.

We rebuilt it to a state of the art ultra modern food factory turning out 10,000 meals a day. All mouthwatering and mainly exotic

Eastern dishes. June and I managed to fit in visits to our children and grandchildren in Australia; one set in Sydney and the other in Perth.

I had the pleasure, and mournful engagement, of attending the demise of 67 Sqn at Sek Kong in September 1997 where with the late David Mayhew we were representatives of the formation of the Squadron in Kluang.

A sad and proud occasion to witness an immaculate march past with Alistair Sheppard in the lead. A poignant moment came when the Colour Guard handed over the flag to Maj Gen Tony Pigott. Maj Gen Dutton GOC Hong Kong took the parade and gave a stirring speech.

David Owen was our guest 2 weeks ago with Marita to a good old beer and bhat lunch and a long session of reminiscing. David and Marita have now returned to Ranchi, Orissa.

MIKE AND GILL CALVERT 1964-69

I retired from BT on 31 January 2000 after 2 years working on a Y2K project. Just off to the USA for 3 weeks to prepare myself for retirement. Gill is joining me for the Southern California part of the trip. Eldest son Tom is doing a Gap year.

He has just got a place at Nottingham and goes there in September. Twins Matthew and John are doing their first year of A levels. Both are doing music and are established members of the prize-winning Aylesbury Dance Band.

The three of them play drums, guitar and bass, the ideal background for a relaxing retirement.

JEREMY & SARAH CHAPMAN 1967-72

Jeremy is still working for the Federation of Master Builders covering the West Country and also runs their Warranty scheme from London, thus not leaving a lot of time for home works of the electrical, plumbing, woodwork or masonry nature.

Sarah has been caring for her 80 year old mother who had her leg amputated last year. Joanna now owns her flat in Wimbledon and is a keen gardener when she has the time.

James, our youngest, is an archaeologist with Wessex Archaeology and finds himself digging in the strangest places like Stanstead and Heathrow!

Alastair got married in 1998 and left the Irish Guards over a year ago and now works as Project Manager for a London IT company.

All 4 of them spent New Year's Eve near Geneva, the bonus of having in-laws living in France, lucky them.

DAVID AND JANE CORSELLIS

1962-65, 1971-74

David Corsellis is still working as Assistant Under Treasurer at Lincoln's Inn. He loves the job and also plays golf a bit. Home is still 8 Horbury Mews. Jane is painting away spending quite a lot of time in West Wales.

Will have an exhibition in London in November 2000. She is writing a book about her work to be published by David and Charles later in 2000. Nick is married to Anna.

They have a son William of one and a half with another due in June. Nick is a practising barrister in Middle Temple. James runs an internet company called icollector.com. A paper multimillionaire, hopefully one day it will convert into real money.

TONY AND AUDREY CRONK 1956-63



Audrey and I both retired at Christmas 1988, although I continued in private consultancy for a few years. As everyone does, we cut down some earlier activities to concentrate on those which we really enjoyed. Last year we were both presented with long service awards for ten years on the team of Stewards and Guides at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford.

This has proved a huge interest as

we can attend so many lectures and join visits to other Cathedrals, which has been fascinating. For about ten years I have been Chairman of the Friends of Dorchester Abbey, Oxon, and we both enjoy the opportunities this gives us.

We also Guide and Steward there sometimes. I help with NADFAS and local schools working projectors and using the knowledge acquired when lecturing myself.

The British Legion, WI, Phyllis Court Club and regular visits to London to see our six grandchildren keep us busy. We have now been in this house for 33 years, with its lovely views and walks from the end of the lane.

Audrey insists I include my greatest achievement, getting my name on a cup at Phyllis Court for being the most promising newcomer, at Association CROQUET!! We both play, in a wonderful setting by the Thames.

It is a good game; when tired you can lean on the mallet. Sarah is now Director of UBS and she and her husband, who heads a company for Imperial College, travel worldwide and manage to cope with four children, two girls and two boys. Simon is still Vicar at Cinderford, Forest of Dean.

He has two churches, a tin chapel and a lady curate. He and Cathy and their two little girls live in a time-warp 6 bedroom Victorian vicarage, which is fun to visit, in the summer!

We are slowing down now and ending a few memberships but, if anything, doing more travelling than ever. It has been good to read news of friends of former times.

JOHN AND JANE EDWARDS
1957-63, 1969-71, 1973-75, 1978-80
(DA Kathmandu), 1984-87 (Brig
Brigade of Gurkhas)



We still live in Westerham, but moved 18 months ago into a beautiful Queen Anne town house. Looking after it occupies a good deal of our time.

I am completely retired, but Jane keeps her hand in by spending about a month in China and Southeast Asia every Autumn, taking tours for the Hong Kong travel company of which she was General Manager. We are both involved in local affairs.

I am Chairman of the Parish Council, and Jane is a Trustee of the Almshouses, and Treasurer of two organisations within the town. We both play golf at Tandridge, and keep our 28ft sloop at Upnor.

Apart from other trips, it has become our practice to spend at least a week in St Katharine's Dock, by the Tower, every summer.

Matthew is a self employed interior designer and lives quite close to us at Seale. Rebecca continues with her hairdressing and riding in San Diego, California.

JOHN AND MAVIS ENGLISH 1955-60



Our Wedding in 1959.

Tony Cronk (in background) was Best Man.

John, who said that the best soldiers he ever met were all peasants, aspires to achieve this status by working the land. Apart from the vegetable and fruit garden 40 trees were planted last Spring to celebrate the relevant wedding anniversary. They are now being followed by a further 70 marking John's three score years and ten. Not to be outdone by his children he has obtained a delightfully flowery certificate acknowledging that, following a year long course, he has passed the examination in Basic Apiary, better still there were 30lbs of honey from our bees.

A variety of vegetables displayed at the local garden show elicited 3 firsts, 2 seconds and a third prize.

Who says the competitive spirit fades with age!! After some years of being sent out to work, Mavis will retire in November and stake a claim on at least part of the house during the day, this could have a restrictive effect on cricket and racing viewing.

Paddy married his Alison in 1997 and is a Specialist Registrar in Endocrinology in Liverpool at present. Alison is a Public Health doctor.

James is to marry the delightful

'sporty' Mel in July. They are, at present, both anesthetists at our local District Hospital.

Cathy married her artist in 1998 and gave us the gift of our first grandchild on St Valentine's Day, a delicious little girl called Maisie.

We are the proud owners of a genuine stone circle, erected after a somewhat alcoholic lunch round about the Eclipse last year.

Operations were directed by the County Architect so we know it is genuine. The secret of the stone circles is that there were a lot of boozy parties in those long ago days and some village idiot stood up and suggested that they use the rocks lying around after the volcanic period to build a circle around which to dance.

No charge for visiting ours.

DAVID AND TRACEY FRANCIS

1984-86

After leaving the Army in 1987 I taught for 2 years at Reigate Grammar School before joining Guinness Brewing in 1989. Seven years at Park Royal managing the flow of 'The Blackstuff' to pubs, clubs and supermarkets was enough to drive anyone back to the sun. The opportunity to work in South Africa for a few years seemed too good to miss so the entire family of three embarked for Durban in 1996, to be joined by twins, Lucy and Pip in mid 1998. I was working for GKN as Marketing Executive. We are now settled back in Somerset, enjoying the peace and quiet of rural life. I'm now working for GKN Westland Helicopters as Process Training and Education Manager. We just hope we will get one full night's sleep before the year is out!

DICK AND PAM FRANCIS

1950-56, 1960-63

We are still living in the house bought in April 1969 after Dick left the Army. Pam is in remission from cancer and seems to have made a complete recovery, so we can keep open house again for any dear pals who may be passing by.

Daughter Cara was working in the Venezuelan littoral before Xmas, and moved on to Buenos Aires just two days before those dreadful mud slides came down. On arrival in BA she collapsed with appendicitis.

This was dealt with by micro surgery in a splendid clinic in BA run by splendid Argentine staff. Cara tottered in through our door at noon on Xmas Day, JIT as they say of the Japanese car industry. The family as a whole now includes five grandchildren, all boys, and another due in May. Our recent holidays have been in Western Canada, Nepal and before that in USA and South Africa. Plans are afoot to go to Australia in October, after the Olympic Games are over.

JOHN & TRICIA GETLEY

1956-61, 1964-66, 1968, 1971, 1973-79

Your great magazine and courteous request make it a pleasure to help. We're now three years into retirement and still finding it impossible to fit in all that we had put by for this lovely period in life.

Mostly our days are filled with friends and family. We've three daughters in law and two grandchildren now, and the house is full of people. We now have Andrew and Alice with their two children just down the road whilst the other two families are further

afield namely Norfolk and Bombay.

There are also dogs, poultry and four and a half acres of garden and, yes, I had two new plastic knees fitted last Summer which are a great success. James has introduced us to the wonders of e-mail and we were thrilled to be asked in one of our Gurkha Christmas cards for our e-mail address!

PETER AND CATHERINE GILBERT
1982-84

We returned to the UK in July 1999 after 2 very enjoyable years in Singapore. The time in Singapore flashed past so quickly; an indication of how much we enjoyed the true 'ex-pat' lifestyle. Louisa (12) and Jessica (9) attended Tanglin Trust School while Catherine became a professional lady of leisure! Peter spent much of his time travelling round Asia and even managed to time one trip to Hong Kong to coincide with the last night that Kai Tak was operational. The highlights of our all too brief time in the Far East were holidays in Thailand, Australia and Bali, and a number of short trips to nearby Indonesian islands and Malaysia.

Louisa was also fortunate enough to go on a school trip to Sarawak. Now we are back in the UK, Peter has swapped an airliner for a car and is in the routine of weekly commuting from Monmouth. He is still working for the 'Warburg' part of what is now the UBS Group.

He is now managing a global IT project and has recently been promoted to Executive Director. Catherine has returned to her former job as the secretary to the Town Clerk and is an amused observer of small town politics from the inside. Louisa and Jessica attend Haberdashers' Monmouth School

for Girls where they are extremely happy. Both have taken up music so the house is filled with the sounds of the piano, flute and French horn produced with varying degrees of skill!

We have no plans to move and are busy doing things to the house. New heating, windows and a kitchen have been added in the past 6 months and an extension is planned for later this year. If you are passing, please don't hesitate to drop in and see us.

TONY AND LYNDA HARKING
1980-83, 1986-88

Since the last news in 1997, we have returned to the UK from Osnabruck and command of 21 Engr Regt. We have now had two years in Wilton with HQ Land Command and the prospect of a further two years here lies ahead. With the children (Philippa and Alexander) at school in Lymington and Lynda working at Odstock Hospital, the family are very well settled. With regards to work, it was with considerable satisfaction that we were able to gain agreement to the early formation of 70 Gurkha Fd Sp Sqn.

As to the future, Marlborough beckons for Philippa in September and so I think Wiltshire will continue to be the focus for our attentions for some time to come.

IAN AND ANNETTE JONES
1975-78

Our only time with the Regiment began 25 years ago, and to mark that (and our 30th wedding anniversary) Annette and I are spending a holiday in Hong Kong around Easter this year. On leaving the Army in 1990 I spent the next 9 years working for a Japanese company in the

printing industry, based next to Heathrow. I travelled widely in Eastern Europe setting up distributor networks and frequently went to Japan. I took the plunge in June 1999 and set up my own company, still in the printing industry, but importing a range of German-made equipment. The emphasis is on label printing, primarily for the Scotch whisky industry.

Working from home has tremendous advantages. Nicholas, our elder son, who was a toddler when we were with the Regiment, is half way through his PhD at Nottingham, working in the field of nuclear physics (nuclear resonance imaging?). Annette has taught full time since we settled here, and travels daily to Thame. Our younger son, Timothy, is now 21 and in his 4th year of work with a small local company making carbon fibre parts for Formula 1 cars, which he thoroughly enjoys. Until I left the Japanese company I had quite close connections with the Gurkha Museum in Winchester, since we took on the regular printing of their small brochure.

It is wonderful to see how the museum has developed in the past 10 years. I enjoy reading news of others with whom we served, so my thanks and admiration to the Editor! *[Nice one Ian, thanks! - Ed]*

ANDREW KEIR 1989-91

Andrew left the Army in August 94 and started work with the investment bank BZW, now Barclays Capital, in the Facilities Management and Corporate Services department as Senior Project Co-ordinator.

He has worked on construction fitout projects in the UK, New York, Singapore and Sydney and is now the head of

Security and Logistics Operations for the bank. He is engaged to a lovely Belgian lady, named Valerie, and they are getting married on 3 June this year in Brussels.

JIM AND JANE KENNEDY 1952-54



Since last writing for the QGE magazine in 1997 nothing seems to have changed very much, or does life go round in circles? New roses climb over a new porch over a new front door and a new conservatory gives us even more space for new plants, gardening is such a tyrant!

We have lost our faithful old labradors but we are thinking of another, Jane still sings and gardens when she can. Andrew was married here and is now back in Perth again at UWA.

Pippa works for the Wembley Arena in London. Welford Chapel nears its 200th anniversary (although its origins are lost in the first millennium). If only life was a sunny beach on a Greek Island...

JOHN & CAROL KITCHING 1959-65

Retirement is finally in sight. After 10 years (it will be to the day!) with Salisbury Health Care Trust, they have concluded I am now unhealthy enough to transfer from the 'employees' to the

'patients' roster. Carol, however, continues in the summer months to guide at Wilton House along with Ann Jordan. End of July is the time, until then I am trying to get two mental health hospitals built, I may need them!

ANDY MACLACHLAN

Andy is currently OC 69 Sqn - Ed.

Well, well, time flies when one is having fun! Times they most certainly are a-changing. In 1997 I remained in civilian street and worked in South Africa until March when I returned to become Chief of Staff to an Event and Athlete Management company in Cambridge.

Still ruing the day I ever left the Army. I asked nicely and was let back in. The penalty included no shot at Staff College and I was sent to Tidworth as Ops Officer. There I completed a 6 month tour of Bosnia as a UN mines expert before returning for Xmas 98. Having spread the word that 69 was 'my squadron' the gods smiled on me and my wish was granted.

I am now in command (many thanks to Jerry Williams for his inspired decision to leave the Army) and have recently returned from Kosovo. More in the newsletter. I have a lovely girlfriend and have visited the jewellers recently !!

TERRY AND SHEILA MAWHINNEY 1977-79

Terry and Sheila have settled in the Medway towns. Terry left the Army in '97 to take up the post of Bursar at Alleyn's School in Dulwich and readily admits to finding it difficult (and unusual) to have to work for a living!

Driving 70 miles each day in N Kent and SE London adds to the stress but the school is unquestionably one of the top independent schools and is a good place to work, so the positives outweigh the negatives.

He sits on the Medway Bench as a JP and although it can be quite harrowing and frustrating finds that the rewards of putting something back into the community makes it all worthwhile. He has to be slightly more selective in his choice of pubs! Sheila teaches Maths at Rochester Girls Grammar School and is head of middle school.

She keeps in touch with some of her old cronies from St George's School in Kowloon and she and Terry called in to see Chips and Marge Rafferty in Chepstow last year. Chips is recovering from his second knee replacement operation. Sean is getting larger (something to do with Strongbow Cider) and is in his second year at Cardiff University where he is reading Astrophysics. He is talking about going to work on a fishing boat owned by distant relatives in Perth, WA and then travelling the world for a couple of years.

Ellen is in her first year at Queen's in Belfast reading Medicine. She has joined the University parachute club but N Ireland weather being what it is has only managed one jump so far. She has just passed her first semester exams and is sharpening her scalpel in preparation for dissection.

Terry and Sheila always have plenty of room for visitors and are well placed for booze cruises to Calais so don't be afraid to pick up the phone.

DOUGLAS AND BETTY MILLER
1953-63



Betty and me, still in Glasgow, are looking forward to two more grandchildren. Following a heart bypass last year I have recovered a lot of lost energy and now lead my dog on walks instead of trying to keep up with her.

I recommend the operation to anyone offered it! I much enjoyed Hank Bowen's 'Queen's Gurkha Sapper' and was astonished and delighted at the progress made since the '50s.

DEREK AND PRUE MOORCROFT
1952-58, 1963-65

Derek and Prue continue to play a fair amount of golf; they even play together now and again but not at bridge!

Prue is out and about all the time whereas Derek is quite content to spend a lot of time in the garden, undisturbed! Having just been re-thatched they have no plans for expensive holidays.

Joanna was over from Fremantle for Christmas. She graduated with a BA two years ago and is now teaching youngsters, playing a lot of tennis and enjoying a very active carefree life.

Their eldest, Simon, now has a second adopted child, a boy and the actual brother of their daughter. Toby

and Michael remain very much unattached as does Joanna, they think!

BRIAN AND PASCALE OLLEY
1979-82

Brian and Pascale Olley have been delighted to announce the arrival, on 3 August 1999, of Charles Alexandre, a brother for Christopher who is now 4 years old.

Charles' arrival was well timed being some 2 months after Pascale had finished a PGCE to become a French teacher.

Now, despite the odd sleepless night with the young baby, Pascale is back on the golf course with an 18 handicap.

Brian's time outside the office (as CO 1 Regiment) is taken up ensuring that his handicap remains below his wife's and keeping the RE Saddle Club solvent (as Chairman of the Club).

RICHARD AND LIZ PECK

Richard never served in the regiment and so it came as a great surprise to be invited to be Colonel of the Regiment after General Sir George Cooper. The appointment was an enormous privilege for him and he looks back on those five years (1991-96) with affection and pleasure.

The news that 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron is to be reformed is most welcome and justifies the decision in 1991 (Options for Change) to retain a Gurkha Field Support Squadron in 36 Engineer.

He spent five and a half years as Director of The Churches Conservation Trust before retiring in November 1997.

Richard has served on the Council and Finance Committee of the Lord

Kitchener National Memorial Fund since 1992 and has recently taken over as its Treasurer and Chairman of the Finance Committee.

We continue to enjoy our house in Provence, where we have transformed the land into what we think is a beautiful home and gardens. It has given us pleasure to share this home, and the adjacent golf course, with Tony and Lorna Kerr (QGE 1965-70) and Harry and Alison Vialou Clark (QGE 1964-66 1974-79) in the last two years. We named the house 'Jirikimpti' after the village where we stayed during our trek in Eastern Nepal in 1990. The French find the name unusual, if not obscure!

Richard is President of The Old Wellingburian Club this year and has decided to take the Annual Spring Dinner out of London to Minley Manor. Roger Morton (QGE 1993-95 and Nepal Cup medalist as goalkeeper in 1993) will be Vice President for the evening.

Damar Ghale, whom Richard commissioned at Minley in 1993 is providing a piper from 69 Squadron for the evening. Golf continues to bring enjoyment to both of us, in spite of periodic bad form. It has been a pleasure to share time on the golf course with John and Jane Edwards, home and away.

It also provided the catalyst for another mini-reunion (Kerrs, VCs & Pecks), this time in Kenya in January 1999. Although we played on five courses, we appreciate that our other experiences in this beautiful country were more important than the golf.

We saw at first hand the results of Harry's impressive charity work in the schools around Gilgil, where we were enchanted by the children's dancing

during assembly. We travelled far and wide to see wild life and were well rewarded. It was a memorable two weeks.

Perhaps I should not mention VC's 60th birthday party, which he decided to hold in 60s fancy dress. The VCs, Kerrs, Worthingtons, Cooks and Pecks, amongst many present, were almost unrecognisable and so, thank goodness, no photographs are available!

Our young are prospering, having flown the nest.

GRAHAM AND EMMA PHILLIPS 1983-85

A lot has changed since we last wrote, I gave up teaching in July 1997 and we moved to Bristol so that my wife could study for 2 years at Trinity College.

She was ordained deacon in June 1999 and we now live in Sharnbury near Shrewsbury where she is curate in a rural parish. Matthew (9) and Thomas (7) go to the local school, and have settled well. Matthew is currently being assessed in Oxford at a National centre for epilepsy, and we hope for some progress in controlling the seizures.

Thomas will be getting extra help in school as we discovered he has dyslexia. Frances (4) is enjoying full time school and is a bundle of fun and laughter. She is proving to be quite a character. I am full time Dad at home and after two and a half years in the job I am beginning to get to grips with it.

Learning to relax about the children's progress, or lack of progress, adjusting to our swap of roles and settling into a village community have kept us busy.

In April 99 I had an outstanding time with Tom Langridge (see 1999 QGE

magazine) and Dr Tim Mitchell (he was the family doctor for QGE in 1983-85) trekking east of Pokhara in the Gurung villages.

It was wonderful to meet Capt (QGO)Upendrabahadur Gurung and be amongst Gurkhas again. I was sad to leave.

GEORGE AND MARGARET PHILP
1950-53, 1973-76



Chastised for 'no news last time' I am not too sure how far to go back. So I'll start in 1980 when I popped the question to Margaret whom I had met in York while doing a stint as SO2 RE in HQ NE District running up for retiring. A phone call in early 1980 led me to the enjoyable post of an Assistant Secretary at the Sport Control Board looking after Sailing and Hockey.

Margaret was working in York University till the end of the Christmas term and end of December was set for the wedding. We were lucky, some sunshine and no rain in North Yorkshire at that time of year!

The ASCB job was based in Aldershot so we based ourselves in Ash Vale 'til 1994. I did the ASCB job till 1986 and became retired, retired! Margaret had a job with Charterhouse 'til early 1994 and a discussion on where to live saw us on the way to Yorkshire.

We settled near Thirsk at Thirkleby where we still are. In my retired-retired years I have helped run regattas for the REYC and the ASA and so see quite a few folk. This last year saw a new hip become necessary.

Done in October 99 and working so I hope to be able to get to QGEA events in 2000. If any old friends are passing through North Yorkshire think about calling in (tel 01845 501223). We are not far off the A1M and A19.

KEN AND SANDRA READER
1988-90

This will be the last Reader family news penned in uniform. Ken's current post, his last as he retires in June 2001, takes him all over; last year he has been to Belize (x2), Brunei, Gibraltar, Kenya, Kosovo (x3), Macedonia and Nepal.

The new suitcase may just outlast his time in the job. Sandra hasn't said but she must be dreading having Ken under foot every night and at weekends. It will be like being married again instead of having an occasional lodger!



Natasha now works as a receptionist at a large veterinary practice in Watford. She enjoys the work, meeting people and their pets including some very antisocial specimens (pets that is). Nicholas has moved into the communications world working for NTL. Knowing on which side his bread is buttered he remains at home and keeps his Mum company, he says!

However, he is currently buying a house.

Time has flashed by and they, like the career, will have gone leaving us wondering which pursuit to take up next, that is until grandchildren come along.

MIKE & GILL REYNOLDS
1967-69, 1981-83, QGELO 1975



Mike has commanded the Military Works Force in Chilwell for the last four years and MS have said that that's enough and will move him on in June. He will then have only eleven months left before retirement and there have been mutterings about gardening leave or a study.

He waits with baited breath. He still runs and plays squash, but not as vigorously as before. Gill has a permanent job in a local primary school and is thoroughly enjoying it. She is well established in the local community and is on the committee of the Nottingham Flower Club. Mark is in his GCSE year at Ampleforth.

He plays rugby for the school and is also keen on tennis, swimming and shooting. He flies with the RAF Section of the CCF. He will try for an Army Scholarship this summer, and is very keen on joining the Army Air Corps and wants to fly Apache attack helicopters. Louise is in her third year at Exeter

University reading Spanish and French. This year is being spent in France teaching English. She spent a gap year in Mexico after school on a Jesuit scholarship and so her Spanish is fluent albeit with a Mexican accent.

Gill and Mike are buying a cottage in a village outside Nottingham and intend to settle there for the medium term. Mike will be in no rush to find a job and is looking forward to being a househusband.

How long that will last until he is bored is anyone's guess! PS. Visited Hong Kong and Singapore last June. It was sad to see Perowne Barracks and Gordon Hard looking so run down.

AUSTIN AND JENNIE THORP
1969-74

JAT Handed over as BGS Land (not the sinecure we wanted as one's last job in the Army!). On resettlement. Shelf life expires 10.05.00. What then? Any ideas? Last perk was to visit Nepal officially and trek from Dharan to Bhojpur and back in October. Mohan Saheb was in fine form and has the best solar powered shower East of London.

JMT Teacher Governor and Teacher of English at Laverstock Girls School, Salisbury.

EKT In Lhasa for Tibetan New Year as I write. Plans to take a 6 month sabbatical from job as a researcher with firm of headhunters (GKRS) from May to travel in India and China. "Daddy, you'd be surprised how many of your friends are on our data base and what it says about them". It is the second bit that worries me.

JECT Now BSc in Marine Biology. Packing as I write to go to Australia for a year. Well, I suppose it is surrounded by water. PS EKT came on trek too!"

HUGH AND SUSIE VIVIAN

1988-90

Hugh and Susie Vivian continue to enjoy life in London, with the anticipated arrival of two new family members in July 2000; Susie's having twins!

Hugh left the Army in 1996 and is really enjoying working for an international management development consultancy, Kranthammer International. His work involves new business development and highly interactive behavioural training in management, sales negotiation and communication skills.

Susie continues to work in the 'direct marketing' world and is enjoying the recent reduction to a 3-day week. Hugh fought off an attack of the mid-30s and completed the London and New York marathons last year; both times (within a minute of each other) 3 hours 47 minutes; now given up that lark.

CHARLES WALKER 1948-51

Although nearly blind he remains available for military duty as this Remembrance Sunday picture shows. Our thanks to the Andover Advertiser. Ed.



[An error in the 1999 Magazine occurred under Charles Walker's entry. He married Betty in 1938 not 1928 as inferred. My apologies - Ed]

BARBARA WALSH 1983



It was a great honour to attend the Gurkha Association Dinner at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst on 25 September 1999.

I have served with the WRVS for over 25 years and some of that time was spent working with the Gurkhas in Hong Kong and Belize.

I invited a WRVS colleague to accompany me to the dinner, and it was with some pride to myself that WRVS and the work they achieve was acknowledged by General Tony Pigott.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank him. The nature of my job with WRVS has meant that I have not attended the reunion dinners as often as I would like, so this was an excellent opportunity to meet up with serving and ex-serving officers who I have had the privilege to work alongside over the years.

Piped into dinner, an excellent meal and such stimulating companions. Our thanks. I am presently into my 5th year of retirement!

However, I am still fully occupied standing in for WRVS members who are sick, etc, and at the present time serving in ATR Glencorse.

JOE AND MAUREEN WALSH
1959-61



Since the last update, I have given up all work except Tribunals and on my reaching pensionable age Maureen retired from nursing, but still does Tribunals.

The powers that be agreed with me that we should never sit on the same tribunal, thus avoiding a potential source of gross marital disharmony.

My shooting has improved slightly and my dog's field abilities tremendously. Maureen has become very interested, and is now a dog handler. Younger son beats, and sometimes shoots, on one occasion bagged more than I did!

He and his wife have blessed us with two grandsons. Elder daughter still intensive care nursing in London, and getting married in July 2000. Elder son is a lawyer in Madrid and is still a bachelor.

Younger daughter is an accountant in Boston, married in June 1999, very romantic setting by a beach in New England. Local bank manager now a cause for evasive action.

I plucked up courage to give a talk to the local Probus club on 'Me, the Gurkhas and Malaysia', from which the Gurkha pension fund benefitted.

Best wishes to anyone who remembers me.

JOHN AND MOIRA WHITE
1982-86, 1992-94 (1995-98 with 1 RGR)
We returned to the Sapper fold in 1998 after a very enjoyable 2 years with 1 RGR. Despite an intensive period of bone jangling by the Pandit, in order to produce a male offspring, Grace was born in June 1998 and joins her two sisters on the Barbie trail.

After a lifetime spent mocking logisticians and other 'non-core' groups, John was sent to HQ QMG in Andover and now confidently talks in a language few others, least of all himself, understand.

This is due to be followed by command of CVHQ, and, if all goes according to plan, back to proper soldiering in Kathmandu after being approached with a view to taking up the DA post in 2003.

JERRY AND FIONA WILLIAMS
1988-90

After leaving the Regiment at the beginning of 1990, I served a total of 4 years with 59 Indep Cdo Sqn before attending Staff College and then going on to spend two and a half years in the MOD.

Much to the surprise of my fellow (1988/89 vintage)"Troopies" I am now married. My wife, Fiona, and I met whilst I was on the Shrivenham phase of the Staff course. I made the decision to leave the Army at the beginning of 1999, after 12 years service.

The first 8 months of last year were then spent looking for second career opportunities in the Management Consulting sector.

During this time I was pleasantly surprised by the number of ex-military (including ex-QGE) personnel who

were prepared to give up their time to offer advice on the 'transition'.

I finally left the Army at the end of September last year. Fiona and I decided that the best way to celebrate would be by using my gratuity to fund a 10 week global tour.

We arrived back just before Christmas, refreshed and ready to throw ourselves into our respective jobs.

I started work for a small project management consultancy firm in January this year.

As time goes on I increasingly realise what excellent preparation an Army career offers for consultancy-based work.

We moved into a flat in Clapham at the end of last year, where I am rediscovering the joys of DIY.

PETER AND SALLY WHITESTONE

1953-59

We celebrated our Ruby Wedding in December 1999 with all our family present, 3 daughters, 3 sons-in-law, 3 grandchildren, and acquired another grandchild in January 2000, making us a round dozen. Peter's the roundest!

We greatly enjoyed the November 1998 Reunion in Nepal which was so skilfully organised by Dom Verschoyle, and last year we returned to the Maldives where daughter Lucy lives with her family and works for Voluntary Service Overseas and local schools.

Having lived in the same house for over 30 years and shed the offspring, we feel we should downsize and move, but where to?! We continue to enjoy involvement in village activities and occasional expeditions to London for theatres and lectures etc.

Peter particularly enjoys his

membership of the Britain-Nepal Society*, which has an interesting programme of talks and social functions, and he commends it to QGEA members.

**Details of Britain-Nepal Society are available from the Honorary Secretary: Mrs Pat Mellor, 3(c) Gunnersbury Avenue, Ealing, London W5 3NH. Tel 020 8992 0173*

TIM AND BARBARA YATES

1955-61, 1966-69

Tim and Barbara continue to enjoy retired life in Scotland to the full. We wonder how we ever found time to go to work!

We both enjoy golfing, gardening, country pursuits and seeing friends and family, which all seems to take up a lot of our time. Daughter Amanda lives in Surrey with three little girls, great fun but tiring! We visit each summer and Barbara uses the train for Granny Time. Son Andrew is now a qualified gamekeeper and is working locally.

We had a super holiday in South Africa last year, what a wonderful country. Celebrated Tim's 70th birthday with a good 'bash' in October and we are really looking forward to visiting Sri Lanka in February - the country of Tim's birth and early years.

We shall be flying the Gurkha Engineers flag within the Brigade of Gurkhas block of seats at the Royal tribute to mark HM The Queen Mother's Centenary Year at Edinburgh Castle in July.

We would love to see any 'old' friends who venture to God's own Country, bed and breakfast, supper and a good natter, warm welcome guaranteed - just telephone 01356 647308.

SALESMEN WANTED!

We have some 600 copies of Hank Bowen's first class book 'The Queen's Sapper' left to sell. We are asking all members of the QGEA to put on their salesman's hat and go out and sell two copies each to their friends, in the pub or wherever!

The retail price is £30, including postage and packing. For each book sold we will make you an expenses allowance of £5. It is an excellent book. Very few books reviewed by Chris Bullock get the accolade 'a good read and a must for collectors and researchers of military history'.

Please send the cheques (made payable to The Queen's Gurkha Engineers Association) to Lt Col Wilsher, Treasurer QGEA, RHQ RE Ravelin Building, Brompton Barracks, Chatham, Kent ME4 4UG.

Please include the names and addresses of the purchasers to enable Roy Wilsher to send the books out.

OBITUARIES

GENERAL SIR WILLIAM JACKSON GBE KCB MC*

Lieutenant Colonel WGF Jackson succeeded Lieutenant Colonel JHS Bowring OBE MC as Commanding Officer 50 Gurkha Field Engineer Regiment and CRE 17 Gurkha Division in Malaya, in May 1958.

Bill Jackson was the first commanding officer of the Regiment who did not have previous experience in the Indian Army or of Gurkhas and approached his tour of command

without any pre-conceived ideas and could assess what he saw without prejudice - or favour!

He came with an impeccable pedigree; starting at the Royal Military Academy Woolwich (The Shop) where he won the King's Medal, a gallant war record resulting in an immediate MC and, later, a Bar to the MC, he had been an instructor at the RMA Sandhurst and at the Staff College Camberley.

The Gurkha Engineers recognised that their new Commanding Saheb was a leader of undoubted talent. He for his part recognised the qualities of the men he was to command. He wrote in the RE Journal 'My arrival made me realize that I was joining a unit which wanted to soldier for soldiering's sake. The Gurkha sapper has all the virtues of the Gurkha infantryman. ... He is strong, adaptable, has tremendous stamina and personal pride and is prepared to accept lower standards of comfort than his British counterpart.

He is much better with his hands than would be expected and once trained can produce extremely accurate work. Above all these fine qualities he has an overwhelming desire to learn and excel in anything he does.

My impression is that the Gurkha sapper will master any field engineering task provided he is given adequate training. It may take him twice as long as his British equivalent to master it; but he will do it as well, if not better, once he understands what he is doing.'

The Malayan Emergency was coming to an end and as the Army's preoccupation with Emergency operations abated so did a new impulse manifest itself in training for more orthodox forms of warfare and exercises of every sort began to fill the programme.

The half-forgotten techniques of amphibious operations and air portability became the subjects of concentrated experiment and practice. These gave Bill Jackson the excuse he

needed, if indeed he needed any excuse, to give The Gurkha Engineers the training and experience they required to develop their combat engineer skills in support of all-arms.

Amongst other troop and squadron training "bridging gallops" were a new experience. After the initial shock everyone enjoyed the experience. Bill Jackson had bigger projects in mind. The training of a Strategic Reserve in the Far East could not be effective without a proper training area. A suitable site was identified in the North West corner of Sabah (North Borneo), however, this 'magnificent training area' had one major drawback - accessibility.

There was a narrow one-way road from Jesselton and a water route via the Sungei Abai. Here was a challenge for The Gurkha Engineers. Bill Jackson saw this as the opportunity he required to train and extend his Gurkha sappers and give them a higher profile in the upper echelons of the Army.

He flew to Singapore, with his Adjutant, Tony Cronk, and en-route worked out the operational requirement and the full movement and support plan to deploy engineer squadrons, in turn, to develop the new training area.

GHQ were convinced, 67 and 68 in turn were deployed, and the Kota Belud operation became the largest operation on which The Gurkha Engineers had been employed. The squadrons showed themselves to be competent and reliable in independence and the variety and number of engineer tasks they undertook gave all ranks the opportunity to demonstrate their ability, versatility and capacity to take on a variety of engineer tasks.

With the squadrons gainfully employed Colonel Bill could devote his considerable intellect and energy to the build up of the Regiment to its full strength. The Gurkha ceiling was raised in 1958, the year he took command.

It was now possible to plan the formation of 70 Gurkha Field Park Squadron and the raising of third field squadron, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron. The cadre of 70 Field Park Squadron was to be raised in October 1958 and having operated within and as a part of 74 Field Park Squadron, it was to be ready to replace 74 in 1960.

One hundred and sixty recruits were recruited in 1958 and following recruit and basic combat engineer training joined the field squadrons in 1960 thereby releasing trained tradesmen to 70 Squadron.

Large recruit parties were enlisted and trained in 1959 and 1960 against the raising of the third field squadron in 1961. There was a further load on the Commanding Saheb; the long term plan was for The Gurkha Engineers to take on the training role of the Engineer Training Centre, and this would require the identification, training and development of a large number of instructors and administrative staff.

Bill Jackson was insistent that this period of growth was not to interfere with the development and consolidation of the combat engineer role of the two field squadrons, neither was the new HQ Gurkha Engineers to become the repository of the failures from the field squadrons. High standards were required of everyone.

Life was not all work. Colonel Bill and Joan took a very close interest in all Regimental matters, sport, the mess, the families and were kind and generous hosts. They attended a Chinese cooking course in Kuala Lumpur and were always ready to show off their newly acquired skills. Officers of the Regiment became friends of the family and remain so today, remembering them with affection.

Bill Jackson saw his own period of command essentially as one of consolidation in which he strove to

build up a sense of achievement and the self-confidence of the squadrons at each stage of their progression. The North Borneo training area project was, in his terms 'an investment in experience that would pay major dividends in future.'

To the Regiment his efforts revealed themselves more in the planned growth, development and training that enabled 69 and 70 Squadrons to take their places in the order of battle on time and in good order.

The proof of their preparation was shown when 69 Squadron deployed on operations in Borneo within a year of its birth!

On 2 April 1960 50 Gurkha Field Engineer Regiment disbanded and HQ Gurkha Engineers was raised. On the same day Bill Jackson handed over command to Jumbo Thomas. As a result of his endeavours the Regiment was in good heart and ready for the next stage of its development. The final culmination of this growth was not to come for a few years, but the foundations were laid by Colonel Bill.

Lieutenant General Sir William Jackson KCB OBE MC became Colonel of The Gurkha Engineers in 1971, once again relieving General John Bowring. One of his first actions was to try and regain the "Royal" title that the Royal Engineers (Gurkha) lost when they became part of the Brigade of Gurkhas in 1955.

He was advised that the title of "Royal Gurkha Engineers" was inappropriate. He realised that an acceptable solution may be the title "The Queen's Gurkha Engineers" with its historical association with the ancient title of "Kings Engineer". He held his hand until he became QMG and put in a case for the Regiment to become a 'Royal' regiment. There was legalistic and bureaucratic opposition but the General continued to fight the

case.

He was disappointed that he could not announce success at the 25th anniversary of the Regiment in 1973. He continued to push. Sadly success did not come in his time as Colonel. General Sir Hugh Cunningham had that honour but General Hugh acknowledged that it was entirely due to the efforts of Bill Jackson.

General Sir Bill took a very close interest in the Regiment throughout his time as Colonel, visiting no less than four times in five years. His first visit in 1972 marked the end of the run-down of the Brigade of Gurkhas, so he visited a Regiment that was the same size as the one he had taken over eighteen years before, one of two field squadrons only.

In November 1976 he handed over as Colonel to General Sir Hugh Cunningham. At his Farewell nautch in Hong Kong it was announced that he was to be The Governor of Gibraltar, exactly 100 years after his illustrious Sapper predecessor the Lord Napier of Magdala.

General Bill and Lady Joan also paid a private visit to the Regiment in November 1983. This was supposed to be a quiet and unofficial visit but on his arrival at the Peninsula Hotel he was met by a piper and "piped" through the crowded entrance hall, to the surprise of the residents, but giving great pleasure to Bill and Joan!

Colonel Bill went on to be a Colonel GS at Staff College (Minley), and thence via Deputy Director Army Staff Duties as a Brigadier, DCDS(Unison Planning Staff) and ACGS(OR) as a Major General, GOC Northern Command as a Lieutenant General, and Quarter Master General as a full General, to be His Excellency The Governor of Gibraltar.

He was appointed KCB in 1970 and GBE in 1975. His later career, and his

success as a writer, have been well chronicled in excellent obituaries in The Times, The Telegraph and The Independent, but he and Joan always looked back with affection to their time with the Regiment.

He had a Gurkha soldier as one of the supporters of his coat-of-arms. Everyone who served in the Regiment with General Bill will remember him with gratitude and affection.

He gave the Gurkha sapper reason to be proud of his engineering skills and reinforced the pride the Regiment had in being Gurkha. He died aged 81 on 12 March 1999.

Our love and condolences go to Lady Joan, Nigel, Rosie and the grandchildren.

CAPTAIN SIDNEY DUTTON ex RE

Nick Tomlinson sends news of the death in Canada of Sidney Dutton in August 1999. Captain Dutton was a 2nd WW Sapper and latterly a civil engineer of some renown. For over ten years he was a trustee of the Gurkha Welfare Appeal (Canada).

During that period the Appeal contributed more to GWS than all other funds added together. It was they who provided all the Area Welfare Centres which now form the backbone of both the present GWS and of hill recruiting.

GARETH EVANS

Lt Gareth Evans passed out of Sandhurst in December 97 and, having attended Royal Engineers Troop Commanders' Course No. 120, joined 69 Gurkha Field Squadron in July 1998.

He was killed on operations a year later, on 21 June 1999. The impact that he made in that short time will be felt for years to come. As all our new Troop Commanders do, Gareth travelled to Nepal early in his career to learn the

language and understand something of his soldiers' native culture.

Fiercely competitive as always, he did very well on his course but above all impressed the staff with his efforts to get to know what makes a Gurkha tick and to understand their fears and ambitions. On return to the Squadron he began commanding his troop and did so with flair and imagination.

His confidence and rapport with the men allowed him to gain their respect quickly and he was soon supporting 1 R IRISH during their major exercise on Salisbury Plain. During that time the Squadron was warned for deployment on operations in the Balkans and Gareth found himself in Macedonia on Jun 7, in command of a different troop in a very different environment.

He revelled in it and the troop was quickly imbued with his confidence. After helping to clear the only route into Kosovo, the Kacanik Defile, of mines and explosives his troop moved up to an area in the north west known as The Dresnica.

There, amongst the devastation caused by the retreating Serbs he was responsible for engineer support to the Imjin Company 1 R IRISH. It was here that Gareth was killed whilst attempting to clear unexploded munitions from the local school.

Service with the Gurkhas had suited Gareth immensely. He had all the time in the world for "his boys" and was never without a quiet word or joke with any of them.

His natural style, combined with his incredible enthusiasm for all things Army, endeared him to them and ensured that he was liked and respected. A keen sportsman, Gareth used his knowledge of Rugby to train the Squadron team. Gurkhas are not renowned for their understanding of the game but his patient insistence saw them to second place in the Regimental Sports Competition.

Although the Squadron habitually wins many of the competitions it was this second place, won in the face of adversaries twice their weight and size which pleased them most!

Gareth will be remembered for his flair and passion but mainly for his regard for his boys and theirs for him. He died in the service of his country but above all in trying to assist strangers to get their lives back to normal.

It was typical of him that he should do his best for anybody and his death was a tragic loss to the Regiment and Corps.

BALARAM RAI

21167255 SSgt Balam Rai was born in Bhojpur, East Nepal on 28 Dec 63. He enlisted into the Brigade of Gurkhas in 24 Jan 1985 from Dharan, East Nepal.

Having completed his Basic Infantry training at the Training Depot Brigade of Gurkhas in Hong Kong, he joined the Queen's Gurkha Engineers on 14 Dec 1985.

SSgt Balam Rai was involved from the very beginning with the entry in Kosovo. He first flew into Macedonia at short notice with the remainder of the Squadron in order to begin preparations for the entry operation.

During the first few days, with the rapid pace of change and movement beginning to take their toll it was his, and others' like him, steady hand that guided the soldiers and their young officers through, and enabled clear and calm thought.

During the initial KFOR entry into Kosovo, and the advance up an exposed main road littered with the debris of war and with an extreme likelihood of mining, SSgt Balam led the way.

His task, to recce and classify bridges for the advance of NATO armour meant that he spent most of the time at the forefront, calmly going about his business, ever alert to the very real

threat.

A successful entry into the country having been achieved, SSgt Balam and his troop were rapidly deployed into The Dresnica, a notorious region that had seen some of the worst of the atrocities committed by the Serbs.

It was in this area on 21 June 1999, whilst attempting with his officer to clear a local school of unexploded munitions, that he was killed.

SSgt Balam Rai was a conscientious, industrious and willing individual, who diligently approached all his duties. He had exhibited all the exemplary qualities expected from a Gurkha Soldier and was set on a excellent career.

He was very proud to serve in the British Army. SSgt Balam always took his duty very seriously and was a very cheerful and popular SNCO in the Regiment.

During his tenure of service, he had served in Hong Kong, Brunei, Great Britain, Norway, Bosnia, Falkland Islands, Canada, Kenya and Kosovo. SSgt Balam Rai was married and has a son (6 yrs) and a daughter (5 yrs).

CORPORAL DAVID MAYHEW

(Major Geoffrey Bennett has sent from Penang this moving tribute to one of our proudest old soldiers - Ed)

David Mayhew was one of a kind. A devotee of the legendary Nepalese warrior who, sadly, had never been to Nepal but yearned to do so.

He was one of a handful of British NCO's who were sent as instructors in 1948/49 to set up the Engineer Training Centre in Kluang, to convert them from infanteers and raw recruits into Sappers.

It barely got off the ground before the Communist Terrorists struck in Malaya, thus causing the Emergency. We became instant Infantry, a role

which the new and the retreaded Gurkhas relished. The rapport between David and the hitherto unknown men of Nepal was magical and lived on long after his stint in Malaya and Hong Kong.

His hands-on approach in training and jungle sorties won him friends and respect. At sundown, in the jungle, as we set up our defence ramparts, he regaled the manchee haru in his Kentish accent, with his stories of home.

His winner, which sent the men into fits, was how his Father, absentmindedly, imprisoned his Mother's cat in the Aga oven which was his winter retreat and set the fire for breakfast.

End of poor Tibbles and father sent to Coventry for many many months. His zenith was the day that the local Kentish Messenger reported with pictures the 'special' presentation by a QGE contingent to him of a splendid kukri, a Gurkha topi and a Sqn plaque.

This went further in the form of a BA ticket to Hong Kong to be an honoured guest at the Sek Kong disbandment of 67 Sqn. I, too, was an honoured guest and filmed the parade ceremony on my Handy Camcorder.

Standing beside me at the lowering of the colours David wept. His devotion to the QGE knew no bounds and his letters to me echoed the proudness he carried as a torch bearer. The acme of perfection was to be made a member of the QGEA. His daughter, on his passing, penned these words to me "He left us smiling and with no fuss - peacefully. I'll wager he was dreaming of those halcyon days." A gentlemen and a firm believer in the efficacy of the honourable Gurkha soldier.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**OF THE QUEENS GURKHA
ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION
HELD AT RMAS ON
FRIDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 1999**

Present

Major General A D Pigott CBE
President & Colonel of the Regiment

Brigadier J H Edwards
Chairman

Lieutenant Colonel R F Wilsher
Treasurer

Six members of the Association

Colonel J N B Stuart
Secretary

Apologies had been received from many members all of whom had sent good wishes for the day.

ITEM 1 - OPENING REMARKS BY THE COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT

1. The Chairman opened the meeting and invited the President to give the Association his perspective on the year.

2. The President made a number of points:

a. The Brigade of Gurkhas had had a good year with operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, and East Timor. The East Timor deployment was particularly significant as the contingent had given an Asian balance to the United Nations Force. The Infantry reinforcement companies were doing very well and the decision to expand The Queen's Gurkha Engineers and the Queen's Gurkha Signals by another squadron each was confirmed.

b. The build up of 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron Queen's Gurkha Engineers would take some time: some members would come from 69

Squadron, which would then reflect the smaller field squadrons of the future within the Corps, and some would come from the new recruits with British soldiers making up any deficit for the time being. The Regiment was taking a large number of recruits this year.

c. Lieutenant Colonel Alistair Sheppard was confirmed as the next CO 36 Engineer Regiment; he would be the first QGE CO at Maidstone.

d. The Gurkha Welfare Trust was going from strength to strength and had a most successful year.

ITEM 2 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

3. The Minutes of the previous AGM were passed as a true record: Proposed: Colonel Croft. Seconded: Lieutenant Colonel Wilsher.

4. Honorary Membership. The Chairman stated that the Committee recommended that Captain GA Wood BEM RE(ex RSM of 36 Engr Regt) and Mr Dick Fuller (ex Senior Instructor, Bricklayers and Concreters Department, RSME) for Honorary Membership. There was unanimous approval for this. Action: Secretary

5. Annual General Meeting and Reunion 2000. The Chairman confirmed the provisional arrangements agreed with the Commandant at the last AGM, that 36 Regiment would host an open day at Maidstone for the Annual General Meeting and Reunion 2000. Captain Fawcus stated that this would have to be before September 2000 as the Regiment was deploying then; he also mentioned that there was to be a flag raising ceremony for 70 Sqn in June 2000 and that the Commandant had extended a welcome to the QGEA for that occasion.

It was agreed to leave the date for the AGM and Reunion open until the programme for 2000 became clearer.

ITEM 3 - ACCOUNTS AND BUDGET

6. The Treasurer presented the report and financial statements for the year ending 31 December 1998; he drew attention to a number of points:

a. The AFN 1514 had been audited by Major Wardlaw and the Gurkha Major. The AGM gave thanks to those officers. A copy of the AFN 1514 is attached to the Minutes.

b. The 1998 Nepal Reunion had not spent the full £4000 allocated and the balance of £584 was shown as a sundry debtor. The Treasurer confirmed that he had now received a cheque for that amount from BG Pokara.

7. The accounts as presented were accepted by the AGM: Proposed: Lieutenant Colonel Cook. Seconded: Colonel Croft

8. The Chairman thanked the Treasurer for his hard work.

ITEM 4 - THE REGIMENTAL TRUST

9. The Chairman stated that the history sales were poor and that the marketing of them was continuing. There were a number of members of the Association who had not bought a copy and they would be contacted in the near future. Action: President and Secretary

ITEM 5 - PORTRAITS

The Chairman stated that the negatives of the current and previous President were with the Regiment and in time the portraits would be completed.

ITEM 6 - THE MAGAZINE

11. The Secretary made a brief report from the Editor who was abroad. Colonel Vialou Clark was happy to continue as Editor whilst he continued to enjoy the job. He would commit himself a year at a time and would continue the formula he had started three years ago. This year he would be writing to the batch of members whom he contacted when he had started as Editor.

12. The Chairman thanked him and the contributors for their work.

ITEM 7 - NEPAL MATTERS

13. The Nepal Member was not able to attend; an extract from his report to the Chairman is attached to these minutes.

14. The Nepal Association is working with Hon Lt Lakpa Bhotia and Hon Capt Hukumraj Thapa both happy to continue as Chairman and Secretaries in Kathmandu and Pokhara using the computers and equipment available to them in their work. They therefore did not need anything from The Queen's Gurkha Engineers Association although they had been grateful for the offer.

They were not in favour of a more formal structure with an elaborate set of rules for the Nepal Association as they considered that approach would not work. They agreed to keep in touch with the Association.

ITEM 7 - NEPAL REUNION 1998

14. The Chairman wound up the Nepal Reunion 1998 matters by mentioning the various articles which had been written and stating formally what a huge success the occasion had been. In particular he thanked Colonel Verschoyle and Hon Captain Hukumraj Gurung for all their hard work during the Reunion. He stated that the Association owed them a considerable debt of thanks, not least that they had achieved their aims within the budget.

ITEM 8 - KOSOVO

15. The Chairman stated that the formal condolences of the Association to the Squadron for the casualties suffered in Kosovo had been sent. He further stated that there has been an appeal for funds for SSgt Balaram's widow within the Brigade of Gurkhas.

It was planned that this would be used to build the family a house in Kathmandu. He further stated that the

Secretary would be sending an appeal for SSgt Balaram to members of the Association which could be added to this fund. There was unanimous support for such an appeal.

16. Various members of the Association asked for clarification on the method of payment - whether charitable status could be achieved. In particular, Maj Parfect asked whether the Millennium Gift Aid Scheme could be used: the Treasurer agreed to look at that idea. Action: Treasurer

ITEM 9 - GBA FUNCTIONS

17. The GBA dates for 2000 were not yet published: the Secretary would publish the dates in the magazine. Action: Secretary

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

18. The next meeting would be held at Maidstone at a date to be selected later.

SECRETARY'S NOTES

1. GBA REUNION 2000. The GBA Annual Reunion will be held on Saturday 3rd June 2000 at RMA Sandhurst. The format is unaltered: drinks in the Indian Army Room and lunch follow the Memorial Service in the Chapel starting at 1100 hours. The cost will be in the order of £30 per person; applications forms will be available from me - they have to be with HQ BG by mid May 2000.

2. QGEA AGM AND REUNION 2000. At the time of going to print details of the AGM and Reunion 2000 are not clear. As the Chairman has stated in his message, we plan to hold an Open Day at Maidstone in September: I will let you have further information as soon as I can.

3. GBA VISIT TO THE GURKHA MEMORIAL GARDEN. The GBA sponsored visit to the Gurkha Memorial Garden at the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens and Arboretum at Ampfield, near Romsey will be held on Sunday 7th May 2000. This date coincides with the peak of the rhododendron flowering and so the gardens should look great. The cost is £12 a head covering entry to the Gardens and Arboretum, and a light buffet with wine. I have the forms and will send them to those who ask; the forms must be with HQ BG by 4th May 2000.

4. GBA ANNUAL DINNER. The GBA Annual Dinner will be held in the Army and Navy Club on the 9th November 2000. Details of the event are under discussion but Secretary GBA advises us that the cost will undoubtedly increase if the Army and Navy Club continues to be the venue. Those who do wish to attend should contact me; given recent movements about the dinner, I would advise that anyone wishing to attend arranges to go with a few friends.

5. WREATH LAYING AT THE GURKHA STATUE. The laying of Wreaths at the Gurkha Statue takes place after the Ceremony at the Field of Remembrance - Westminster Abbey on Thursday 9th November 2000. Association members working in London might like to be present.

6. REPLICAS OF THE GURKHA STATUE. At the AGM in November 1999 the Chairman of the GBA circulated details of a replica of the Gurkha Statue outside Old War Office. The statuettes will be 11½ inches high and copies of one made by Philip Jackson, the sculptor of the Gurkha Statue; they will be produced by Peter Hicks Associates in resin bronze

mounted on a wooden base. Each statuette will be numbered and will cost approximately £100 plus p&p. A silvered version is being investigated which, it is thought, will cost about £300. Would members please let me know as soon as possible whether they are interested.

7. GURKHA MUSEUM. The Museum remains a great venue for a visit: we, as a Regiment seem not to provide many supporters. I plugged the idea of becoming a Friend of the Museum in last year's Magazine but sadly my message fell on deaf ears. With the MOD withdrawing their financial support, ours is ever more important. This year's Annual Meeting and Tea for members of the Museum's Association of Subscribers is on Saturday 21st October 2000: you therefore have lots of time to join!

8. COLONEL JOHN O'HANLON. The Appeal for SSgt Balaram received a generous cheque from Colonel John O'Hanlon on behalf of the Tavistock Branch of the Royal Marines Association. John was a TA doctor who did his annual camps at Sekkong; he states that he had a short tour with the Regiment in 1983, visiting Perowne Barracks regularly. In his letter to me he enquired about membership of The QGEA; because he could not provide names of those who might sponsor him, I ask any member who knew him to let me have details of their association with him.

9. ADDRESS LIST. The latest version of the Address List is attached; I know that it is incorrect but it reflects all those changes of address which the Committee has received from you all. Please keep me up-to-date by adding my details to your change of address list - then all will be well and you will receive the correspondence!

