

The Queen's Gurkha Engineers



2014

The Queen's Gurkha Engineers

Affiliated Colonel in Chief:

Her Majesty the Queen

Colonel of the Regiment:

Major General T R Urch CBE

Regimental Headquarters

Lt Col E G Robinson RE
Maj Ekbahadur Gurung
Maj A E C Benn MBE RE
Capt J Charlton RE
Capt Bishnubahadur Ghale

Commandant
Gurkha Major
Deputy Commandant
Adjutant
Gurkha RCMO

Field Officers

Maj M D Hendry RE
Maj M A S Barker RE
Maj Rajen Gurung
Maj Bishnubahadur Ghale
Maj Devkumar Gurung MVO

OC 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn
OC 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn
Ech Comd 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn
SO2 J5 Op Plans HQ ARRC
SO2 G7 170 (Infra Sp) Engr Gp

Captains

Capt H H Crosby RE
Capt H Engelbrech RE
Capt Buddhibahadur Bhandari
Capt Kamalbahadur Khapung Limbu
Capt Bishwabahadur Rai

Capt F Rizzuti RE
Capt Dirgha KC
Capt Yambahadur Pun
Capt Ashokkumar Gurung
Capt Ganeshprasad Gurung

Capt S A Mayland RE
Capt Meenjang Gurung
Capt Mohan Gurung
Capt Purnasingh Tamang

Subalterns

Lt D Waddington RE
Lt T S Redding RE

Lt C J Marris RE
Lt J Hawkes RE

Lt R B Richardson RE
2Lt J Bass RE

RSM

WO1 (RSM) A R Ashley



The Queen's Gurkha Engineers Association

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Editorial

Andy Gooch



Having read through the submissions for this year's edition of your Journal I hope you will agree with me that there are some thought provoking articles as well as those that remind us where the Regiment has come from and all

it has achieved along the way. Ian Slack's epic challenges on two wheels is inspiring and anyone with a love for Nepal and the Himalayas will not fail to read in awe of Doc McKerr's account of his 64 day, 1500km solo traverse on Nepal.

The serving Regiment remains a shining light in the Brigade of Gurkhas and it was a real wrench to handover command of 69 Sqn last year to Mark Hendry. However, through the means of the magazine I, and I hope you, can get a real sense of what the Regiment is currently up to. With the drawdown in Afghanistan The Queen's Gurkha Engineers do not appear to be resting on their laurels as the various articles pay testament to.

Sadly this year it seems the obituary section is significantly larger than usual and everyone will be aware of some of the great father figures of the Regiment who have recently passed away. Can I thank everyone who answered my plea for memories and articles as I believe it is important their lives are properly remembered. It was not just the Buro Wallahs who turned to the left for the last time this year and the serving Regiment was sad to hear of the death of two of its former soldiers through illness; Spr Yogya Raj Khebang and Pte Rajat Gurung. I personally knew Rajat and I was in

Pokhara when he passed Central Selection. I was then his 2IC and later OC in Maidstone, before he transferred to the AGC(SPS). His death cut short a life full of promise and my heartfelt condolences go to his family.

Before finishing with a few requests could I express my gratitude to all who have had a part to play in the production of this magazine. Firstly everyone who has put pen to paper; without your work there would be no magazine. I am very grateful to the stalwarts of Hukumraj Saheb and Ravi Saheb in Nepal along with Sgt Top who has done much of the donkey work with the printers. In the UK the work done by GM Saheb and GRCMO Saheb in Maidstone has been second to none. I would also like to give a special thank you to our outgoing Colonel of the Regiment, Commandant and Association Chairman, all of whom have been an invaluable source of advice and I am under no illusion the product you receive as a result is much the better for it. Also for Harking Saheb's persistence in insisting I become the Editor while I was one of his Cpts at the RSME nearly 6 years ago.

Finally, as ever I want to thank my ever understanding wife who allows me to keep doing this work. With a move to Minley last Summer to take up post Regt 2IC 3 RSME Regt and more importantly the birth our 3rd child, William, in January the past 12 months have been as hectic as any and Charlie has quite simply been incredible. Jai QGE

Editor's Plea. I am currently undertaking to convert all old editions of the Regtl Newsletter/Journal into electronic format so they can be hosted on the Association Website and used as a reference for years to come. Because of the way they are bound the 1991, 1992 and 1993 editions will be irreparably damaged when scanning occurs and I cannot do this to Museum copies I have. If anyone has copies they are willing to donate please contact me.

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Message from the Colonel of the Regiment

Major General T R Urch CBE



As you will know, this is my first 'message' as the new Colonel of the Regiment, having taken over at the end of September 2013. My first duty, on behalf of everyone in The Queen's Gurkha Engineers is to thank my predecessor Lieutenant General Sir David Bill KCB for seven years of outstanding support; we have much to thank him for.

It hardly seems possible that it was twenty years ago since Gilli, Lauren, Tim and I were living in Perowne Barracks, Hong Kong; I was the Adjutant. So much has happened since then, particularly with the Regiment (and indeed the Brigade of Gurkhas) proving itself on so many occasions that I have lost count. Operational pedigree of course remains the most

demanding standard, and The Queen's Gurkha Engineers has absolutely delivered everytime the call has come. From my vantage point in the Army HQ as Chief of Staff Land Forces, I see the outstanding efforts of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers on a daily basis. Professionalism, dedication, hard work, fitness and loyalty; some things haven't changed in the twenty years I have been away.

The last year has seen you all deliver outstanding results on operations, in barracks, during training, on courses and whilst competing on the sports pitch, but it has not been without its difficulties. 2014 will be no different; the challenge will be significant not least will be the final tranche of redundancy coming at the same time as the Regiment gets to grips with its new role as part of the Army 2020 structure. I look to all of you to play your part in this complex transformation programme. If in doubt, drive-on with what you know to be the right thing to do; take the initiative; look after those who you have the honour to command.

Before I close, could I say a heartfelt thanks to all on the Committee of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers Association, but in particular to Brigadier (Retired) Tony Harking OBE who has recently retired as the Chairman, and to the Secretary John Wheeley, without whom we would not be in the strong position that we currently are. Finally, 'give it up' for Major Andy Gooch for yet another cracking magazine; in my view the exemplar amongst the Brigade of Gurkhas.

I very much look forward to catching up with you all as I travel around. It was superb to visit Brunei recently and also to meet so many old friends in

East and West Nepal when I trekked with the Gurkha Major in March. Thank you for looking after me so well. Please also give your utmost support to the QGEA and all the upcoming G200 events; what an exciting prospect the latter is shaping up to be.

Finally it is no exaggeration when I say I have waited 20 years to be your Colonel; it is genuinely a honour and privilege.

Jai QGE!



REGIMENTAL NEWS

THE COMMANDANT'S REPORT

Lieutenant Colonel E G Robinson RE



I was appointed Commandant The Queen's Gurkha Engineers over two years ago. I have prepared for, and commanded, QGE soldiers on operations in Afghanistan in a Counter-IED role and visited them on many exercises in the UK and construction deployments to Kenya and Canada. I have

been thrilled by their tales of adventurous training exploits and enjoyed with them their sporting successes. Together, we have championed the interests of QGE and I have maintained a weathering eye on those serving in small groups or singleton posts in various locations in the UK and overseas. Within the past year, I've fitted in a short trek to Nepal with Gurkha Major Saheb and met many members of the Regimental Association; a true delight. I also spent three days with our Boat Section in Brunei! All are making a significant contribution and during my many visits, I am forever delighted to hear of the high level of praise they receive. The opportunity to command such fine soldiers has been a huge privilege and honour.

A real highlight of my tenure has been to personally command QGE soldiers as a part of the EOD & Search Task Force on Operation HERRICK 17. The Regiment's presence in Afghanistan has been uninterrupted throughout my tenure as Commanding Officer and Commandant in the Counter-IED role with each Squadron taking their turn. The last of our Advanced Search teams are now deployed from 70 Gurkha Field Squadron with current plans expecting them, and the Regiment's involvement, to conclude by June 2014; safe home!

Beyond operations, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron has completed a very arduous and successful adventurous training exercise in Nepal. They also led for QGE in the Nepal Cup, TRAILWALKER, and all of the main social events, including the birthday celebration and Dashain, in 2013. In early 2014, 69 have also deployed for three months on a construction exercise to Canada during an extremely cold winter; this has presented plenty of opportunity for winter sport enthusiasts! In 2013, 70 Gurkha Field Squadron led the Regimental Shooting team and retained the title of Corps of Royal Engineers unit champion at CORPSOSC. They have also deployed on a challenging construction exercise to Kenya, which presented fantastic adventurous training opportunities with most of the Squadron summiting on Mount Kenya. In early 2014, 70 have followed

in 69's footsteps with a large expedition to Nepal; this is part adventurous training and, in a new initiative, part refurbishment of some of the Gurkha Welfare Trust facilities. This has presented a brilliant opportunity for our Gurkha Sappers to give something back to those who have gone before them in Nepal.

In the past year with Army 2020 and Basing announcements, some organisational changes for the Regiment are being implemented. With QGE's future secure our size, with an RHQ and two Field Squadrons embedded within 36 Engineer Regiment, remains little changed. Thankfully the Regiment's home also remains Invicta Park Barracks, Maidstone, Kent, where very strong community relations have grown since the early 1990s. Presenting many opportunities, the Regiment's role is transforming to Force Support and all have been re-focussing on our core sapper skills as we step back from Afghanistan and the Counter-IED role. This was marked and initiated with vigour by a fabulous parade on the occasion of the Regiment leaving 29 EOD & Search Group to join 12 (Force Support) Engineer Group on 1 October 2013. Synchronised with this, QGE temporary manning at 24 Commando and 26 Engineer Regiments has now returned to Maidstone.

Since 2008, a good number of QGE soldiers have transferred to the Corps of Royal Engineers on promotion and some have level transferred to other Corps. This has reduced the numbers that might have been made redundant and has been very good for our young and enthusiastic Gurkha Sappers who now promote the QGE brand serving in the wider Army. QGE has been fortunate to weather redundancy better than most: Tranche 1 took 13, Tranche 2 took 22 (including 5 volunteers) and Tranche 3 will see the departure of a further 9 (including 4 volunteers). The final Tranche 4 is expected in 2014/15. Although this has been very difficult, I am very pleased with the dignified and positive attitude that everyone has taken towards redundancy. All will forever remain a much-valued part of our QGE family. The Regiment's full support will always be provided to any that choose to transfer, or to those who are selected or volunteer to leave the Army. I am also very grateful to the ex-QGE who've offered support and advice to those in transition to civilian life.

Such great times always pass far too fast; I finish as Commandant in 2014. Ek Saheb finishes too; he has served QGE fantastically, with great dedication and utter loyalty as Gurkha Major. There have been too many other post changes to mention here, however, all take with them our most sincere gratitude. I conclude on the QGE soldier: they have a versatile and legendary work ethic, and take great pride in their professionalism and achievements. I now know the QGE soldier very well - they will continue to seek and exploit every opportunity; they know this matters and it will, as it has in the past, continue to safeguard their future. Their kaida and unique strength of brotherhood is something that can never be removed; it is as spiritual as it is physical. I will forever be touched by having served in the Brigade of Gurkhas and will always be a part of the QGE family. Having made so many close Gurkha friends and had the very great



privilege to command such a unit, I will always follow QGE's future with close interest. Jai QGE!

THE GURKHA MAJOR'S REPORT

Maj Ek Gurung



Certainly time has flown by and my tenure as GM QGE is coming to the end. I am handing over to Maj Dev Saheb in July 2014 when I will be moving away from the Regiment. I have had the privilege to serve

as the Gurkha Major for almost 3 years and I managed to achieve all the goals I had in my mind before I took over the post in mid 2011. I have now spent almost five years in RHQ QGE and I have seen many changes including the Regiment's role changing from General Support (GS) to High Risk Search (HRS) and then moving into the Force Support (FS) role from 1 October 2013. A wrongly held perception by some people of the ability of QGE Sappers has been blown away following many successful Op HERRICK tours in the HRS role.

Having established our reputation in both the GS and HRS roles and set ourselves the benchmark from which to operate, QGE soldiers are now rising to the challenge the FS role brings which is not much different from the previous GS role. Therefore I am fully confident of our future success in this new role which will see both Sqns will remain as Field Squadrons, operating from Invicta Park Barracks, Kent.

Over the last two decades I have seen on countless occasions the adaptability of QGE soldiers, their strong work ethic, pride and professionalism even when we faced severe challenges. During my tenure there have been both high and low points, but I can say that the low points are eclipsed by all the good work and achievements; the numerous operational successes being the main ones. My priority has not only been to ensure success on operations but also to ensure the safe return of all QGE soldiers and this has happened on every operational tour and I would personally like to pass my huge well done to every QGE member for their hard work and professionalism on the ground in achieving this.

In addition I wish to thank our Religious Teacher, Pundit Prem Prasad Gaire who performs the daily Puja with dedication and dignity and his support to the Regiment is highly appreciated. Further, a newly enhanced temple is now well used by all and my sincere thanks go to all the families who support this and ensure our culture and kaida is kept alive.

In my role as father figure for QGE it has been a great privilege to visit the boys overseas wherever they were deployed including Afghanistan during Op HERRICK 17. I have witnessed first-hand, with great pride, their outstanding work and achievements and I am very confident that future generations of QGE will continue this trend in the future.

As result of the recent Defence White Paper and 30 Day Review the Corps of Royal Engineers has reduced by almost 25% yet QGE remained unchanged in size. However, over the past 4 years a number of redundancies have had to be made to remove our surplus manpower in order to meet our actual liability. There is no doubt the shadow of redundancy has made the past 3 years stressful and highly demanding but I have been immensely pleased with the practical and positive approach our personnel have adopted and the support we have managed to receive from various organisations in smoothing the transition to civilian life for those selected for redundancy. In this regard I am clear that we will not forget those who have chosen to transfer or indeed leave the Army; they will remain part of our wider Regimental family and continue to receive full support from QGE.

All in all, it seems that the Regiment has faced a myriad of challenges which have brought some difficulties but with our close management, a forward leaning approach and the depth of talent of our soldiers they have been resolved and I am confident QGE will continue to deliver our style of high standards well into the future.

Jai QGE!

RHQ QGE NEWS

Capt Buddhibahadur Bhandari (GRCMO)



After two and half years in Nepal I arrived at Maidstone on 4 Jan 13. New faces, a new role and with partial G1 knowledge I took over the post of GRCMO from my predecessor Bishnu Saheb. A new working environment (no more G4 acronyms.) and its lightning pace kept me amused initially but soon (when Bishnu Saheb deployed to the Falkland Islands) I realised that life in RHQ is full of activity and everyone here means business. Every day is a learning day - new challenges and full of surprises. Regardless of the month or the day, the rhythm of RHQ work never changes and the output expected from this office is always extremely high! Quite rightly I had to ditch some of my hobbies (golf included) to balance the centre of gravity of my new job. Alas, despite my keenness to become slim and trim again all four sides are growing rapidly. Perhaps this has to wait till for my 2015 new year's resolutions.

As expected it has been another busy but extremely rewarding year for QGE as it continues to add new chapters to its history. Op HERRICK continues to be a high priority commitment for QGE but in a much smaller scale. Throughout all operational deployments QGE Sappers have maintained their high standard of work ethic, renowned Gurkha team spirit and successfully achieved their mission as indeed they have been doing for many years. As I write this the Adv Search role is coming to the end with just 8 personnel deployed in theatre under the command of Sgt Evans RESA and Cpl Dekraj Thapa (REST Comd) and by Jun 14 all deployed personnel will have recovered back to the UK. This will mark



the end of QGE success in the Adv Search role. A succession of role changes has always kept QGE Sappers and RHQ continuously on their toes and I am sure this will continue to be a norm for QGE until their role is fixed and the Army 2020 structure is comprehensively tested and approved. Our role changed to a Force Support role in Oct 13 and final structural changes (for the time being..) have been ratified and new PIDs have gone live. Transition to this new role is happening smoothly and Sqn personnel are already enjoying the training and exercises this brings: Back to Basics.

Since last year QGE elements have deployed worldwide on exercise and operations: 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn deployed to Kenya on Ex SAILFISH (construction tour) and Nepal on Ex HIMALYAN SAPPER (construction followed by a Level 3 AT exped). 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn is deployed on Ex WARPAINT in Canada and as I write both Sqns are in the course of returning home for a well earned Easter leave. A High Risk Search team from 70 Sqn is operating in theatre and a few individuals are fulfilling the responsibility of RSOI instructors in Camp Bastion. The Back to Basic principle reminds me of my days conducting Infantry and Combat Engineer exercises and we are now slowly starting to get the hang of our new role. Having deployed on a few exercises in this new role, QGE Sappers are now eagerly waiting for the Regt FTX (Sect Competition) in 2014 to confirm their performance.

Despite Redundancy Tranches 3 and 4, QGE's liability has remained unchanged and is expected to grow... As at 1 Apr 14, QGE is 324 strong and this includes 15 Trainee Sappers who are busy acquiring their new skills at 1 RSME. The current manning is as follow:

Liability: 291 + 8 (ReM)	= 299
Held Strength (trained)	= 307
Under training at RSME	= 17
Total QGE Strength	= 324

Sadly I have to inform you that the presence of QGE Commandos in 24 Cdo Engr Regt came to an end in Jan 14. Sgt Prithi Chhantyal was the last person to leave and quite rightly his name will go down in history as the "*First in... last out QGE Commando*" unless we get another opportunity to serve with them in the future. I must mention the opportunity to serve with 24 Cdo Engr Regt has developed QGE's operational output immensely. Those individuals who served with 3 Cdo Bde have matured significantly and their contribution in developing their counterparts in the Regiment has been even more influential. QGE Sappers' overall qualities have not changed in any way or shape but the way of doing business is now completely different. Results show that every event in the Regiment has developed a more competitive nature and the appetite to WIN has become the norm for everyone. Despite no liability at 24 Cdo Engr Regt, QGE will continue to train new blood in the hope that the opportunity to serve in the Commando role will come again for these thrusting individuals.

Although currently fulfilling the Adv Search role in Afghanistan, the Regiment officially lost its "SEARCH" suffix on 1 Oct 13 and was re-titled as 36 Engr Regt and the Queen's Gurkha Engineers.

Redundancy. Thankfully this is coming to the end soon. Out of 9 selected for Tranche 3, 4 have already left the Regiment and already settling into their new jobs while another 4 will be leaving the Regiment by 17 Jun 14. LCpl Amit Gurung has been successfully transferred into the RAMC as a Combat Med Tech and starts his new career with them on 28 Apr 14.

The final tranche, (T4) was announced in Jan 14 and along with other BG cap-badges, QGE has also felt the impact and will lose 21 Cpl's and below. The initial T4 yield for QGE was 28 but this was reduced to 21 recently. RHQ QGE is doing its level best to minimise the actual numbers leaving the Army through redundancy via means of transfer. There has been some success in transfer into other Corps but ultimately all 21 selected individuals will have to leave QGE. However I am confident many will transfer out successfully to the Wider Army.

Suffice to say QGE has become an integral part of the Royal Engineers and the wider Army and will always maintain these standards in the years to come. Its versatility has been proven time and time again and no doubt whatever the future holds for QGE and its families it will always move forward with the same enthusiasm, pride and spirit. There have been some ups and down, achievements and disappointments but this has not eluded the capacity to demonstrate our operational effectiveness in all kinds of environments. The Gurkha Ethos and Kaida which ties us together is continually getting stronger and the willingness to explore new avenues and opportunities remain high in the agenda of QGE Sappers. Jai QGE!

Honours and Awards

Bowring Trophy 2013

21171806 Cpl Santosh Goley	-	Winner
21170994 Cpl Lilaram Rai	-	Runner Up

Selection for Intermediate Regular Commission

21168756 Capt Kamalbahadur Khapung Limbu

Selection for promotion to WO2 – 2013/14

21169347 SSgt Krishnakumar Pun

Promotion to SSgt – 2013/14

21179976 Sgt Prithibahadur Chhantyal

Promotion to Sgt – 2013/14

21169828 Cpl Sherbahadur Chongbang
 21169982 Cpl Bikash Shrestha
 21169990 Cpl Lalbahadur Rana
 21170082 Cpl Devbahadur Pun
 21170105 Cpl Ramprasad Phago
 21170282 Cpl Bishnuprasad Gurung
 21170758 Cpl Ganesh Rana Magar
 21170376 Cpl Premkumar Jagebu Limbu
 21170630 Cpl Ekabahadur Rai



Promotion to Cpl 2013/14

21170655 LCpl Ashokkumar Limbu
 21170761 LCpl Shivakumar Rai
 21170828 LCpl Bhesbahadur Gurung
 21170898 LCpl Deepak Rai
 21170920 Cpl Nissan Lama
 21170992 LCpl Rakesh Tamang
 21170994 LCpl Lilaram Rai
 21171042 LCpl Prakash Gurung
 21171155 LCpl Bhimkumar Parangden
 21171806 LCpl Santosh Goley

Promotion to LCpl 2013/14

21171370 Spr Rabin Thapa
 21171564 Spr Pankaj Rai
 21171742 Spr Ujjwalkumar Glan
 21171930 Spr Amarsing Gurung
 21171964 Spr Mirak Kandangwa
 21172026 Spr Ganesh Khatri
 30047618 Spr Rusal Thapa
 30047635 Spr Kulbir Sapkota Pariyar
 30048330 Spr Yuwaraj Lungphunwa Limbu
 30048420 Spr Victor Fombo
 30085132 Spr Dhaniprasad Ghale
 30085135 Spr Amit Pun
 30085150 Spr Manoj Gurung
 30085152 Spr Roshan Budha Magar
 30085664 Spr Deviram Rai
 30085720 Spr Kiranpratap Rai
 30085728 Spr Samir Thebe
 30085687 Spr Dharmendra Dewan
 30085777 Spr Topjang Rai

RETIREEES 2013/14

558455 Maj Yogprasad Thapa
 21167921 Capt Mohankumar Tamang
 21168928 LCpl Pendulal Rai
 21168981 WO2 Bhesbahadur Thapa
 21168984 WO2 Manjitsingh Gurung
 21168989 WO2 Jangabahadur Singjali
 21168991 A/SSgt Kamal Gurung
 21168992 WO2 Semanta Rai
 21168995 SSgt Manbahadur Ale
 21168999 SSgt Balam Pun
 21169986 LCpl Dambahadur Pun
 21170043 A/Cpl Karnabahadur Rai
 21170085 Spr Indraprasad Subba Limbu
 21170269 LCpl Dilbahadur Gurung
 21170289 LCpl Hombahadur Gurung
 21170330 LCpl Deependra Gurung
 21170584 LCpl Lokendra Tumbahangphe
 21170615 LCpl Prakash Rana
 21170689 LCpl Amardip Thebe
 21170776 LCpl Dayabahadur Gurung
 21170918 Spr Prasan Rai
 21170976 LCpl Bishnukumar Tamang
 21171170 Spr Yogyaraj Khebang
 21171531 Spr Bikash Gurung
 21171642 Spr Narayan Thapa

21171656 Spr Ashok Ale
 21171698 Spr Nitesh Gurung
 21171762 Spr Samarpan Lawati
 21171782 Spr Hemchandra Lingthep
 21171794 Spr Joshan Rai
 21171907 Spr Dilip Gurung

TRANSFEREES 2013/14**Royal Engineers as Clerks of Work**

21170220 Cpl Dilbahadur Ringjali

Royal Engineers

21169635 Cpl Surendra Gurung
 21170108 Cpl Mohan Thapa
 21170251 LCpl Suryabahadur Gurung
 21170548 LCpl Santosh Rai
 21170973 LCpl Maniram Thapa Magar
 21171096 LCpl Santosh Gurung
 21171465 LCpl Dilbahadur KC
 21171568 LCpl Santoshkumar Rai
 21171127 Spr Binod Rai
 21171599 Spr Kiran Shris
 21171683 Spr Binod Gurung
 21171885 Spr Shekhar Gurung
 21171899 Spr Pradeepkumar Ale
 21171911 Spr Sanjiv Gurung
 30047706 Spr Sagar Pajja
 30047715 Spr Tejbahadur Giri
 30048361 Spr Sanjay Maharjan

Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps (Health Care Assistant)

21171152 Spr Hemraj Rai
 21171918 Spr Bishnubahadur Pun

Royal Army Medical Corps

21171298 LCpl Amit Gurung

BEST STUDENTS**RE Field Sect Comd**

Cpl Prakash Gurung

PNCO CADRE (36 Engr Regt)

Spr Topjang Rai





Standing: WO2 S Rai GSPS (GSA), Capt B B Bhandari QGE (GRCMO), Capt J Charlton RE (Adj't)
Sitting: Maj A Benn MBE RE (Dept Comdt), Maj E Gurung QGE (GM), Lt Col E G Robinson RE (Comdt), WO1 M Ashley RE (RSM)

69 GURKHA FIELD SQUADRON

Capt Fran Rizzuti RE, Sqn 2IC

Introduction

2013/2014 has been a busy time for 69 Gurkha Field Squadron with a hefty commitment to QGE social events, support to training, conducting a plethora of exercises and a key deployment on a Sqn level Joint Force Enabling Exercise (JFEE) to BATUS, Canada. All this, whilst transforming from Search to Force Support and coming under command of 12 (Force Sp) Engineer Group.

Sqn Personality Changes

2013 saw a number of personality changes in the Sqn, most notably was the successful completion of two and half years as OC for Maj Andy Gooch and 2IC for Capt Ed Thompson; both having served in the Sqn with a distinct quality and were instrumental in the Sqn's successes over their tenure. We were immensely privileged to welcome back Maj Mark Hendry as the new OC, having previously served in QGE as a Tp Comd, the Projects Officer (in Nepal) and as Sqn 2IC. On retirement, WO2 Manjit Gurung handed over SSM to WO2 Govinda Rana.



Farewell golf tournament for WO2 (SSM) Manjit Gurung

On posting; Capts Purnasing Tamang, Bishwa Rai, Dale Luttig and Dave Snook handed over to Capt Hugo Englebrecht (Ops Offr), Capt Dirgha KC (Sp Tp Comd), Lt Chris Marris (I Tp Comd), Lt Tom Redding (H Tp Comd) and Lt Rob Richardson (G Tp Comd).





Back-to-basics, revising infantry skills on Ex BASIC KUKURI

Ex BASIC KHUKURI

The transformation to Force Sp started in earnest with a back-to-basics exercise; Ex BASIC KUKURI, a Collective Training Level 1 exercise conducted on Pippingford Park Training Area with the aim being to revise and hone low level infantry skills. The exercise was conducted in two phases; a learning demonstration phase and a knowledge cementing practical phase. Like in Basic Training, all the field craft lessons were conducted by the *Gurujis* and afterwards the emphasis was placed firmly on the junior boys to apply them in practice.

The Guard of Honour to the Nepal Army Chief of Army Staff (CoAS)

Following a request by HQBG, 9 Sep 14 saw a very privileged 69 Sqn provide the Honour Guard for the Nepal Army CoAS, Gen Gaurav SJB Rana on his official visit to the UK; in particular Lt Marris with assistance from WO2 (SSM) Govinda led 32 personnel from the Sqn and presented the Guard of Honour in true QGE fashion next to the Gurkha memorial at Horse Guards Avenue, London.

The diplomatic relations between Nepal and the UK started in 1816AD and ever since regular visits from military leaders from both countries have fostered a strong mutual understanding and friendship. The guard of honour, representing the Brigade of Gurkhas, served as a perfect opportunity to play a part in further strengthening Nepal – UK relations.

Ex THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE GURKHA WAYS



Climbing the 'Three Peaks' with a 25kg Doko!

Despite hectic Regtl, life WO2 (SSM) Govinda led a team of four and took part in Ex THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE GURKHA WAYS, a charity event he dreamed up himself with the aim of carrying 25kg in a Doko (a bamboo basket) and climbing the three highest mountains in the UK; Ben Nevis (Scotland), Scafell Pike (England) and Snowdon (Wales), all in under 36 hours. The event was to raise money for the Gurkha Welfare Trust and to promote the Gurkha 200 celebrations in 2015. The team completed the challenge over the weekend of 21 Sep 13 in a time of 26 hrs and 35 mins, raising £3650 as they went. It was a huge privilege to present the cheque to Maj Gen T R Urch CBE, a trustee of the Gurkha Welfare Trust and Col of the Regt.



Gen Gaurav SJB Rana, the CGS and Col BG inspect the Guard of Honour





The team and support crew helped to raise £3650 for the Gurkha Welfare Trust

Ex WARPAINT 14

The Sqn has just completed a 3 month deployment to the British Army Training Unit Suffield (BATUS) in Canada on Ex WARPAINT 14, a JFEE. They have carried out essential repair, maintenance and construction tasks in support of BATUS. The exercise has tested the artisan and combat engineer skills within the Sqn while improving the infrastructure around camp and on the prairie for future Battle Group level exercises.

In mid-October the pre-advance party deployed to Canada to begin works at the EXCON facility on the Prairie. It was identified early that the Canadian winter could seriously hamper ability to carry out ground works. As the winter began to rear its ugly head, the team of POMs worked hard to complete a new drainage system around an existing building, a car park extension and a route upgrade.

With an already healthy task tracker, the advance party, comprising of the Sqn key enablers, deployed ahead of the main body in January to set the stage. After a week of collecting stores and taking over vehicles, the main body arrived. Stepping off the plane was a shock as temperatures reached lows of -46°C. With no time to adjust, the RSOI package began and preparation was soon underway, ready to step out the door the following week. As the extreme cold posed new challenges to the Sqn, the REME attachment were finding out first hand it would be a never ending battle ensuring the Troops had the vehicles and equipment they needed each day. Embedded within the Construction Troops were 6 Reservists from 107 Fd Sqn (V), 75 Engr Regt who integrated well, worked hard and quickly learnt what 'Saheb' and 'Guruji' were.

No overseas deployment would have been complete without Adventure Training and as the Rocky Mountains and Trails End Camp were only 4 hours drive away from BATUS many members of the Sqn took up the opportunity to conduct skiing, ice climbing and dog sledding courses.

Rear Operations Group

The Rear Operations Group commanded by the Sqn 2IC and assisted by SSgt Khelendra, was a small party left in the rear to help support those deployed during Ex WARPAINT 14 and keep the Sqn ticking over. With lots still going on back in the Regt it was a busy 3 months ensuring the OC and majority of

the Sqn were kept up-to-date; booking career courses, MS, planning up-coming collective trg etc.



The ROG. Sqn 2IC and Acting SSM busy at work

Achievements and Promotions

A team of seven led by Lt Richardson and assisted by Cpl Bhim took part in the Army Operational Shooting Competition (AOSC). The team won Best Corps Unit and Best Engineer Unit. There were some great individual achievements with Spr Bijaya and Spr Minkumar securing 19th and 34th positions in the Army 100 and they have both been selected for the Army Shooting Team. Other events included a 36 Engr Regt team competing in Ex SNOW STAG, the Corps Snowboarding Championships in Neustift, Austria; led by Lt Redding it saw the novice team come third overall. Lt Redding also came first in the Doko race whilst on his Nepali language course.

Finally we must publicly congratulate a number of key individuals for their promotion;

Cpls Bikash, Dev and Ganesh for their promotion to Sgt. LCpls Ashok, Lilaram, Nissan and Rakesh for their promotions to Cpl and Sprs Dharmendra, Ganesh, Mirak, Rabin, Ujjawl and Yuwaraj for their promotions to LCpl

During yet another busy and testing year the support the Sqn receives from all of it's associated families continues to be extremely humbling and we must once again offer our thanks to our families. The deployment to Canada was indeed challenging for all but we can hold our heads up high with the tasks completed and proudly look forward to fully engaging in the Force Sp re-role. Jai 69 Sqn. Jai QGE.



Ex SNOW STAG, Austria



EX WARPAINT Snapshots



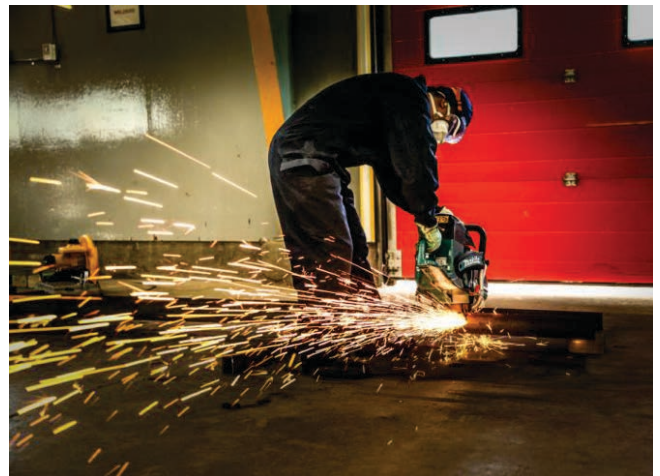
The MWT moves representative bridge concrete blocks



Clearing the razor wire fence at the resources yard



The Commanding Officer being back-briefed on the task in hand



Fabrication Troop working hard, putting their trade skills to good use



The Bobcat - the real Troop work horse



Sqn Officers' and Seniors' Ski team with CO Saheb



EXERCISE FOUR POINT TIGER



The 4 teams in British Gurkhas Nepal along with Khil Thapa, ex QGE and owner of Gurkha Adventures who supported all 4 expeds

Before joining the British Army, we were asked why we wanted to join and one of our answers was to see the World. Our recent return from Afghanistan on Op HERRICK 17 gave us the opportunity to see this part of the World but it would be an Adventure Training expedition that would provide us with the chance to see a different area of our home country. As part of the reintegration to Sqn life, Ex FOUR POINT TIGER was born. The aim of the expedition was simple; each group would be made up of people not from that area, and as such they would be exercising in the opposite cardinal points to that of their birth place. This was in order to experience and understand the cultural and geographic diversity of Nepal whilst undertaking a physical and demanding level 3 Adventure Training expedition. In total 56 members of the Sqn took part.

Jiri Trek (Everest Region - East)

The East is dominated by the Sherpa, Tamang, Rai and Limbu people with a large Buddhist, Kiranti and Limbuwan influence that migrated from Tibet to this region. The actual trip took us from Jiri to Lobuche (140km) via the famous market town of Namche Bazaar and the Buddhist Monastery at Tengboche.



The Eastern Team outside Namche Bazar

The expedition was extremely demanding with lots of uphill and downhill interspersed with slippery trails and all of this had to be achieved whilst trying to avoid mule trains on narrow cliff paths as we crossed our way through the valleys. We had the opportunity to visit a Buddhist Gumba and watch the Monks in prayer on 'Buddha Jayanti' (Buddha's Birthday) and were also fortunate enough to celebrate with the runners of the Tenzing-Hillary Marathon at the finish point in Namche. Unfortunately we did not make it to Labouche (4910m) due to the poor weather but we were fortunate to witness some majestic views of Lhotse, Ama Dablan and Island Peak from Dingbouche. Due to the weather our return plane could not land at Lukla, so as a fitting finale, we chartered a helicopter, which offered a different perspective of the terrain that we had just crossed.

Mountain Biking (Central)

This part of the expedition was always going to be a very challenging and ambitious undertaking with the proposed route expecting to cover over 500km in 12 days! With legs covering up to 70km a day over arduous ground and elements of the route following the toughest mountain biking challenge, the 'YAK ATTACK'¹, the realisation of the route soon hit home. Day 2 of the trip was extremely difficult with a 6hr climb to the top of a so-called 'hill', which resulted in our first casualty and severe heat exhaustion for many members of the group. The highlights of the route were the AMA SAMUHA, dancing groups, who entertained us with their traditional dances and the visit to the Gorkha Palace; the birthplace of Nepal and the town the Gurkhas get their name from. Due to the nature of the terrain the trip had to change and the remaining days were spent camping next to Phewa Lake in Pokhara. We made the most of day trips out to the local riding spots and had the opportunity to catch glimpses of the famous Annapurna Range and the iconic Macchapuchre (Fishtail) Mountain.

¹ See article in 2012 QGE Magazine by Doug Brain





Mustang (North)

The Northern part of the expedition was to the 'Forbidden Kingdom' of the Upper Mustang. This region is an area dominated by an arid mountain landscape and as such anyone that owns a large quantity of wood is regarded as a rich man! We started off with a bumpy ride to Jomsom that proved to be quite painful; however this provided us with beautiful views of the countryside which is something we would have missed if we had flown. From Jomsom we started our trek to Lo-Mantang. It took our team 3 days to get from Jomsom to Lo Manthang as we covered 65 Km and gained 3000m of elevation. Throughout we stayed in tea houses where the locals were always welcoming; sometimes mistaking us for a Korean trekking group. At times the trek was quite painful and tiring but a twice daily replenishment of Dhal Bhaat gave us the morale and energy needed to get through it. On reaching Lo-Mantang, which means, "Flat bed of land in the mountains" we had the privilege to meet the local King and share a cup of tea with him.



Jumla (West)

This western leg of the expedition would see us travel to the remote area of Jumla in the mid-west region of Nepal to visit the country's largest lake, Rara Taal. The route was to travel north to circumnavigate the lake before returning back to Jumla. The journey begun with the flight to Nepalganj from Kathmandu and overnight stay at the one of the hottest places of Nepal. A special thanks to the hotel which provided air conditioning. However, we had to leave for a week or so when the group flew to Jumla, a remote air strip surrounded

by big hills. The lack of a monsoon season in this area caused the weather to be extremely hot. Due to extremely remote area and without any tea houses, the group set up it's own tented camp each night. Sometimes this was by a river with sandy beach tracks and sometimes woodland tracks. We reached the lake in four days and we were immediately stunned by its clarity and peacefulness. Choosing to climb up the Chuchumare Danda (4097m) on our return leg was a great decision as we were rewarded with a bird's eye view of the lake and the snow capped Himal to the north. Being in an area that has no shops we took it upon us to buy a goat and chicken which gave us a great morale boost by having meat for 2 days running. Before we left the area we had the opportunity to view the traditional Deuda Dance and songs of Sinja which highlighted the difference in traditions to ours. The next day we made our way back towards Jumla so that we could make the 2 flights required in order to return to Kathmandu.



70 GURKHA FIELD SQUADRON

Capt Henry Crosby RE, Sqn 2IC



70 Gurkha Fd Sqn Ex SAILFISH 13/14

This year the Squadron's focus was initially split between the joint goals of Op HERRICK 19 and Ex SAILFISH 13/14. For a week at least there seemed to be some boys in camp before they started heading off on the next round of training... Clearly Op HERRICK 19 was the Squadron's main effort, force generating and deploying three High Assurance Search (HAS) Teams and A/Cpl Sunil Rana into the Reception Staging and Onward Integration (RSOI) training team. However, that only accounted for one Troop and so the rest of the Squadron were instead focussed on deploying to Kenya, on Ex SAILFISH 13/14 a Joint Force Enabling Exercise (JFEE) to provide the Military Construction Force (MCF) to build the next stage of the Laikipia Airbase (East) (LAB(E)) Infrastructure Plan.

The HERRICK 19 toli had completed their HAS courses and in January formed the newly ORBATED K 'HERRICK' Troop. Mission Specific Training (MST) kicked off immediately with the main element seeming to be driver training; inevitably it wasn't the main event just the most difficult to juggle. At the same time individual courses were booked to get the guys up to speed on radio equipment and appointments with men in white coats to get everyone's biometric data to ensure they wouldn't end up being arrested by the Afghan Police.



Ex HERRICK 19 Adv Search Team undergoing training

After Easter things spiced up on the searching front a little more with a myriad of training serials to get the teams working together and honing their Search skills. All this built up to their deployment to Jordan on Ex PASHTUN LINKS 6. A return to Jordan for some but this time in the role of exercising troops: out in the heat of the sun doing demanding Search training whilst others worried about keeping the camp running this time! Whilst out in Jordan the teams were put through their paces on Search tasks in as realistic a training environment as possible, culminating in a short exercise working out of Patrol Bases.



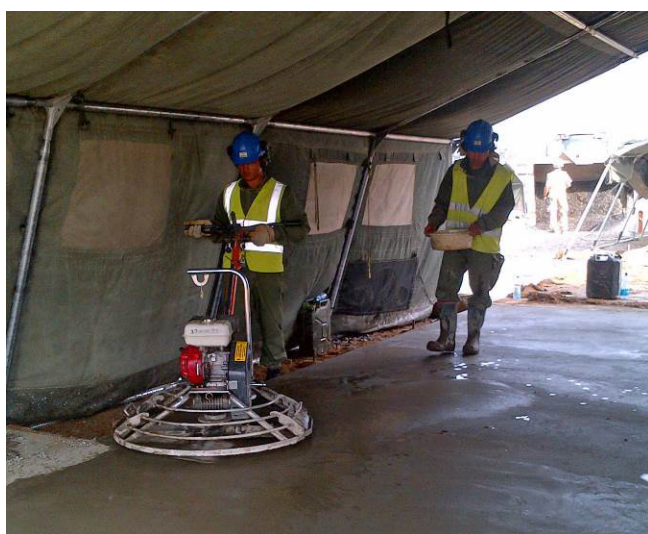
Because of the drawdown of forces in Afghanistan the EOD & Search Group was due to be reduced in line with this and as such the teams from 70 Squadron were to be cut from the ORBAT. Thanks to the teams' performance, as the best three teams on the exercise the OC EOD & Search Group applied to cut teams from his own Squadron (17 Fd Sqn (EOD)) instead, allowing the boys to deploy in their place. After more training with the Brigade Reconnaissance Force (BRF), Lt Waddington's team deployed on Op HERRICK 19 in late August to support the BRF in theatre for 6 months. Shortly after, Sgt Sanman and his team deployed on their 4 month



tour whilst Sgt Evans and his team manned the Battlefield Casualty Replacement (BCR) commitment back in camp and waited for the rotation when they could deploy.

Meanwhile, the bulk of the Sqn were gearing towards deploying out to Kenya to play cricket... I mean contribute to the build of the British Training Camp out there. Again, before Easter this involved plenty of individual refresher courses to get the boys who hadn't touched their trade for a while up to speed. The main focus in Kenya was going to be concreting and so some collective training was planned to build a small concrete pad on camp as a camp improvement. Meanwhile the HQ were busily producing Gantt charts and tomes of paperwork to plan every detail. Then from Easter, Ex SAILFISH personnel deployed and the offices in Maidstone were bare again.

After a brief familiarisation of the surroundings in Kenya the boys tucked into the two tasks the Sqn had been given. The main effort was a secure building to house radio equipment and act as a control centre; with a concrete ceiling this was what kept WO2 Wilman, our tame Clerk of Works, up at night. The concept being essentially to build a reinforced concrete pad 7 feet in the air: a real test for the tradesmen! The second main task was to build an accommodation and welfare facility for the Locally Employed Civilians (LECs). Obviously it would be too easy if the buildings were similar in any way and this was started from scratch involving all of the foundations being measured, dug and set. This involved LCpl Rashon 'powerfloating' a lot of concrete! (below)



Whilst deployed the Sqn also managed to complete a number of community engagement tasks, the most significant of which was the construction of a cricket ground for the Maasai Cricket Warriors team. After constructing the cricket ground it was only fitting that the Sqn should play the Maasai Warriors team in the inaugural match of T20 Cricket. The Sqn narrowly lost however by a stroke of luck the Maasai Team toured the UK later in the year and a rematch was held at Invicta Park Barracks where the Sqn won in good style.

The second half of the year has been predominantly focussed on completing the re-role of the Squadron to become a pukkha Field Squadron for the first time in its history. With summer leave a distant memory it dusted off the combat engineering

PAMs and headed down to Weymouth for the Sqn's first bridging camp in many years. This laid the foundations for a later Combat Engineering exercise bringing the Squadron to Collective Training Level 1 by 1 Oct 13 and getting to grips with some of the finer points of Force Support.



Above and below: Wyke Regis Training Area



One of these points is providing support to the Very High Readiness Field Hospital, a commitment that will be held on rotation by the Squadrons and which 70 Squadron were the first to take on. A section deployed on Ex JORVIC LOOK, the Regiment's first proper Force Support exercise, to provide engineer support to 2 Medical Brigade on 11 October. After an initial brief the section deployed to South Cerney with 22 Field Hospital to build a fully functional field hospital: complete with X-ray facilities. Within 12 hrs of starting construction, the section provided mobility support by laying trackway, providing electricity and ablutions; vital assets without which exercise would not have been able to run. Subsequently the section was nearly deployed to the Philippines in the wake of the typhoon in December.

November saw 'Cadre season' set upon the Squadron and it was well represented on three separate cadres, picking up six new LCpls off the Square and qualifying a further nine for promotion in future. Thulo Syabash to LCpls Dhan Ghale, Sundar Adhikari, Deviram Rai, Topjang Rai, Samir Thebe and Roshan Buddha Magar and to everyone who put maximum effort in the toughest month of their careers to date.





Aside from the Squadron outputs a little time was found for some education and fun. In February the Sqn managed to escape to Cornwall in a period of unseasonably good weather for a spot of multi-activity AT. Going to the west coast in early February one might have expected to be wringing out their clothes from the rain at the end of each day but instead were blessed by good weather and the boys managed to have a taster of sea kayaking, mountain biking and abseiling.



In late March, Waddington Saheb managed to find time away from training for Op HERRICK to take 71 boys from the Sqn to France and Belgium on a Battlefield Study. Picking off a number of key WWI sites the team managed to gain a real sense of what it was like fighting in that war: everyone except Marsh Saheb that is, as most of the briefs from Maj(Retd) Corrigan Saheb were in Nepali, leaving him slightly confused.



On the sporting front, a team of five members from the Regiment took part in RE and Divisional Squash championships this year. League matches were played between two pools for the Unit Championship. After beating 101 EOD, the team went head to head with HQ Army at the finals. Spr Sujan Jwarchan played a very competitive 5 set match against Maj General Urch and won the final team event. Spr Sujan also became runner up in the Under 25 Singles and won the Plate contest. He has now been selected for the Army U25 Squad.

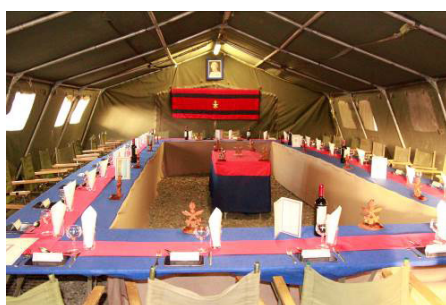


Col BG Saheb visiting 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn

Looking to the future, the pace of life does not look to be slowing. The Sqn will deploy in February on a field exercise to hone our Force Support skills and a Troop will be heading home to Nepal in March to carry out two community project tasks and squeeze in some Adventurous Training. The projects will aim to extend relations with the Gurkha Welfare Scheme and Brigade of Gurkhas, exercising core Sapper skills to assist Nepalese society. Jai 70 Sqn!



EX SAILFISH 13/14 SNAPSHOTS



QGE SERVICE IN 24 COMMANDO ENGINEER REGIMENT

Sgt Prithi Chhantyal²

On 11 January 2006, six Commando trained QGE Sappers deployed to Norway with 59 Independent Commando Squadron RE as a trial partnership. Eight years later, I left 24 Commando Engineer Regiment as the last Gurkha to serve in the unit: for now...

Over 8 years of distinguished service 37 QGE Commandos³ served in 24 Commando Engineer Regiment at various points; 35 at the peak. As the 2IC of the first section and the last man to return, it is a huge privilege and honour to get this opportunity to write about my experience during my service with 24 Commando Engineer Regiment.

To recap the collective service of QGE Commandos at 24 Commando Engineer Regiment is as follows: The first 6 man section joined Condor Troop of 59 Independent Commando Squadron in January 2006. We deployed to Norway and completed the Arctic Warfare Course as part of a trial to see whether integration would work. Clearly it did, and in September 2006 the section deployed on Op HERRICK 5 with the Squadron. It was an extremely kinetic tour and we took part in numerous Close Support Operations. Post tour, more QGE Commandos joined the unit and rather than remaining as a QGE cohort within the Sqn we were spread across the Sqn into various troops and departments working cheek to jowl with our RE counterparts. In 2008, 59 Independent Commando Squadron re-formed as 24 Commando Engineer Regiment with the addition of 54 HQ and Sp Sqn. Then, in the autumn of 2008, the Regiment deployed on Op HERRICK 9. Within the ORBAT, 22 QGE Commandos deployed, spread across the Regiment from stores to close support sections, the Brigade Recce Force (BRF) and everything in between.

In March 2011, 23 QGE Commando ranks deployed on Op HERRICK 14, again woven into the fabric of the Regiment. Of the QGE personnel two were awarded BRITFOR Commendations - SSgt (now WO2) Khadkabahadur Gurung and Cpl (now SSgt) Bhabendra Moktan - and one - Cpl (now Sgt) Mohan Thapa - was awarded a QCVS. Away from operations, QGE Commandos completed several Norway

deployments and took part on numerous exercises within the UK and overseas including the USA, Belize, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Albania.

Due to the drawdown of Gurkha over manning, by summer 2013, the QGE Commando contingent had reduced to just two people; Cpl Ganesh and me. Since writing in this forum last year, I continued to fulfil the role of Recce Troop SSgt within 24 Commando Engineer Regiment and Cpl Ganesh remained a section commander in Condor Troop, 59 Squadron. The start of the year saw us deploy on Ex JOINT WARRIOR 13, a yearly validation exercise for Ex COUGAR⁴. In the summer, I was extremely fortunate to run the 2 week Regimental Reconnaissance Concentration Cadre, successfully recruiting 2 new members into the troop. Despite the busy period, my troop managed to run yet another 1 week package of Rural Observation Post Training for members of the Covert Surveillance Department from the Metropolitan Police. In Aug 13, I deployed on Ex COUGAR 13 as Tp 2IC of 1 Tp Surveillance and Reconnaissance Squadron (SRS), previously known as the BRF, where I commanded a troop of 60 RM and Army Ranks. During the 3 month deployment, we operated in Albania, Jordan and Saudi Arabia conducting Bde level exercises and training with the local forces. Before Christmas, Cpl Ganesh led an RE section to Somalia providing engineer support to 539 Assault Group RM on a Short Term Training Team (STTT) Deployment. He also conducted a 2 week reconstruction project of the obstacle course at the Commando Training Centre.



L/ SSgt Prithi's Troop in Jordan on Ex COUGAR 13

24 Commando's role is to provide close support to 3 Cdo Brigade. To serve in 24 Commando Engineer Regiment is a rare and prestigious experience for any QGE soldier. Apart from the Close Support experience, QGE

Commandos who

served with 24 Commando Engineer Regiment returned with the confidence to operate independently and with a better understanding of how to operate alongside their British counterparts. My time in 24 Commando Engineer Regiment has been hugely rewarding yet extremely challenging. All of us who served in 24 Commando Engineer Regiment bring a different flavour to the party and I believe that it is these

² Ed. Sgt Prithi was selected for SSgt on 6 Apr 14

³ Ed. In total over 60 QGE personnel have passed the Cdo Cse.

⁴ Ex COUGAR is the yearly deployment of Maritime Task Group element of the Response Force Task Group (RFTG). Its primary purpose is to generate and maintain contingent capability whilst supporting defence engagement and regional capacity building.



experiences being brought from outside that make QGE a richer and more versatile organization.



Cpl Ganesh and other members of the STTT to Somali

On behalf of all QGE Commandos, I would like to thank RHQ QGE and 24 Commando Engineer Regiment for all their support and direction. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank personally Reconnaissance Troop, 24 Commando Engineer Regiment for giving me challenges, opportunities and experiences which will remain with me for the rest of my life. The whole QGE Commando experience has been extremely successful in every respect; from the working environment of sunny beaches to Arctic Norway through to the supportive community that has been created. However, I am positive that this is by no means an end of our partnership, and that in time the value it has brought will be realised and reignited...Jai QGE

Last Man Out Sir!!!

LIFE AT 170 (INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT) ENGINEER GROUP, CHILWELL

Maj Dev Kumar Gurung MVO QGE, SO2 G7, 170 (Infra Sp) Engr Gp

It feels like yesterday that, I had joined HQ 170 (Infra Sp) Engr Gp in Chilwell, Nottingham and assumed the post of Staff Officer Grade 2 (SO2) responsible for the training (G7) aspect for the Group. But time has passed by in the blink of an eye and it is time to move back to Regimental Duty which I am very excited as I will soon be the 23rd Gurkha Major of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers. From this short article, I am hope to update the reader on 170 (Infra Sp) Engr Gp and its roles. I hope you will find it informative to read, especially those who have served at Chilwell in the past.

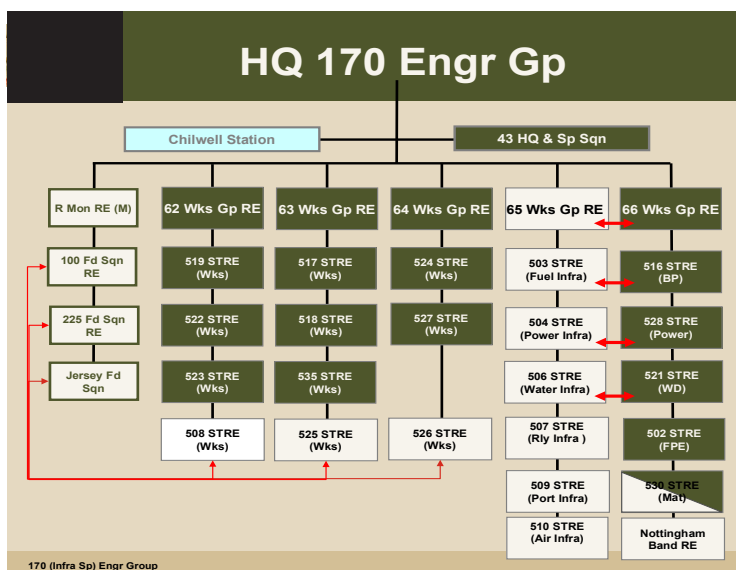
For those who have been out of touch with the military environment for a while, the Army has recently seen several of changes within it's structure as well as the way we train in preparation for operations. As part

of these changes, since 2005, 170 (Infra Sp) Eng Gp has change from the Military Works Force (MWF) to 170 (Infra Sp) Engr Gp. However, it is still based at Chetwynd Barracks, Chilwell, Nottingham, just East of junction 25 of M1. The Gp is one of four Gps (commanded by OF5 (full Colonel)) in 8 Engr Bde and comprises of 6 x units (5 x Works Groups (Wks Gp) and 1 Regiment). Wks Gps within 170 (Infra Sp) Engr Gp provide specialist infrastructure support and planning advice and they undertake projects from requirement definition and reconnaissance, through design and delivery into maintenance and disposal. Work is delivered using a range of procurement strategies from military delivery to civilian contract. The Gps work on the overseas military estate, in post-conflict reconstruction and in support of other Governmental Departments (OGD). Their capabilities include:

- Infrastructure consultancy
- Programme and Project Management
- Engineering design
- Contract management
- Facilities management

Initially I found the prospect of joining the HQ, very daunting. The first few weeks saw very long hours just to familiarise myself with the organisation, terminology and the training progression that was in place for the Wks Gps. Having learnt about each Wks Gp's capabilities and roles, I felt much more confident to offer my advice to the Comd and other organisations/Wks Gps when involved in planning. My previous experience as Regtl Trg Offr and Sqn Ops Offr helped a lot, especially when it came to forecasting the future training events and associated costs on the BLENHIEM system.

170 (Infra Sp) Engr Gp is a very busy organisation with a Wks Gp out on operations in Afghanistan and a Wks Gp going through pre-deployment training and another Wks Gp supporting all other commitments, both UK and abroad. With so many activities taking place throughout the year, my job to co-ordinate and facilitate Wks Gp's military training progression (*Pre Deployment Training (PDT)*, *Joint Force Enabling Exercise (JFEE)*, and *Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX)* etc) has certainly tested my ability to its fullest extent.



Sometimes I felt quite exposed in certain situations due to my lack of background knowledge of Wks Gps, Specialist Teams Royal Engineers (STRE) and Army Reserves. But this didn't deter me; instead, it provided me with opportunities to learn more about the organisation and it made me better informed for the future. Before I joined this Headquarters, I had limited knowledge of the working relationships between a 1 Star HQ and 2 Star HQ and how the Groups fit in. But now, I feel much more at ease when dealing with Brigades and Formations. With the ever changing posture of the Royal Engineers and the Army, I have had the great privilege to learn what the future training progression looks like and what is expected from the units in the Army 2020 era.

During this tour, I also had an opportunity to learn more about the Army Reserve Force (previously known as the Territorial Army). Within 170 (Infra Sp) Engr Gp, expertise in key civilian infrastructure (Fuels, Water, Railways, Ports, Airports) is provided by Army Reserves recruited from the relevant industries from across the country. They are also paired with Regular STRE's.

This posting has been an excellent opportunity for me to learn about the broader aspects of the Royal Engineers and the Army. Now, I am very excited and looking forward to be returning to Maidstone as the next Gurkha Major of QGE which I have aspired to since joining the British Army.

GURKHA COMPANY - GENERATING AND SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE BRIGADE OF GURKHAS



Capt Kamal Khapunglimbu

One year has passed since the start of my tenure as a Platoon Commander in Gurkha Company within the Infantry Training Centre Catterick. In Oct 2014 Recruit Intake 2013 (RI13) completed their Combat Infantryman's Course (Gurkha) (CIC(G)) and 126 recruits for RI14 were then selected and started the CIC(G) in Jan 14.

Gurkha Company is a learning environment, not just a place for recruits to learn but a posting throughout which the Permanent Staff are expected to improve and take themselves to the next level of professionalism. The moulding process from Nepalese youth into Gurkha soldier requires leadership, time, inspiration and selfless commitment from all Permanent Staff. In this article I aim to demonstrate how 7 x QGE Permanent Staff have thrived here in Gurkha Company through a relentless pursuit of excellence. It will also provide an overview of achievements and activities (Ways) in which the QGE ERE personnel, with the mind-set of continuous improvement (Means) within a learning culture, and working towards a common goal have, assisted in the generation of our future (Ends). Finally through this article I intend to give

you an understanding of how Gurkha Company Catterick has offered career opportunities and provide you with an update.

Career Profile and Promotion Prospects

Career profile is about demonstrating that you are able to do your job, and do it well, in barracks, on operations and within the instructor environment. "Promotion is not a reward for doing well. It comes to those that have the ability to assimilate the training and responsibility that is needed in the next rank up." Within the learning culture of Gurkha Company, with an ethos of every rank taking themselves to the next level of performance and potential, it is clear that QGE personnel here, whatever rank or appointment, have seized every opportunity to prove themselves in-barracks and within the instructor environment. Completing a posting at ERE and within the Army Recruiting and Training Division (ARTD) are vital elements to the career development of every Officer or NCO; promotion boards want to see a complete profile.



Cpl Jayendra in the field giving direction to his section

Completing a tour within Gurkha Company goes beyond just ticking the ERE and ARTD boxes of one's career profile. We are ambassadors for QGE, competing and proving ourselves within an infantry dominated training environment. The infantry skills and experience gained through this ARTD posting ensures a QGE Officer or NCO returns to Regimental Duty more employable across the Regiment and wider Corps; this maintains the agile edge of the Brigade of Gurkhas. Completing the mandatory pre-employment training for ITC / ARTD duties ensures that when you arrive you can deliver immediately, gaining the vital instructor experience from the courses.

Gurkha Company gets the best out of every individual. Routinely QGE NCOs and I are tasked to organise training exercises, major extra curricular events, plan and deliver infantry live firing ranges, produce staff work and most importantly get the opportunity to step up to the next rank and appointment. I am about to step up to Training Officer Gurkha Company and all the Section Commanders have routinely stepped up to Platoon Sergeant on major exercises. Proving yourself in appointments of the next rank up demonstrates readiness for promotion.



Continuous Improvement

Continuous Improvement aims to learn and adapt and is an ethos that now runs deep throughout Gurkha Company. As the head of QGE here in Catterick I have been responsible for driving home continuous improvement within QGE personnel. The following SWOT analysis has been useful in the continuous improvement of QGE ERE personnel.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Fully qualified instructors with all pre-employment training completed prior to arrival	Recognition at Battalion & School of Infantry level – mitigated by monthly e-newsletter
Fit, robust and professional	Take professionalism to next level
High calibre JNCOs, SNCOs & Officers	Less experience on infantry tactics/lessons – mitigated by Section Commanders' Battle Course and Platoon Sergeants' Battle Course and pre-employment trg
Right and positive attitude	Reactive rather than proactive
Communication skills, wider knowledge	Generating new initiative
Appetite for construction projects	Wider knowledge about the Brigade of Gurkhas
Attitude to change and improve continuously	
Willingness to learn and adapt	
Opportunities	Threat
Pre-employment courses	Infantry courses (SCBC, PSBC, PCBC) – Risk of being unable to compete with colleagues from infantry units. Finishing in the bottom third.
Career courses	Combat Engineer and trade skill/knowledge could fade out
Display performance – during Sect competitions, lessons, exercises (orders delivery)	Risk involved – employed outside the comfort zone – mitigated by completing pre-employment trg
Deploy to Nepal – support Selection and deliver pre-ITC induction training	Poorly prepared lessons – mitigated by completing pre-employment trg
Mess activities, Regt sports	Intense and long working hours
Other activities; PARAs 10 miler, BUPA Great North Run etc..	Out of sight, out of mind from QGE – SJAR/OJAR – mitigated by CO QGE and GM QGE visits. Head of Arm is written for all OJARs/SJARs

Activities and Achievements

Existing opportunities have been exploited fully by QGE ERE personnel in Gurkha Company. We have created new opportunities and left a number of legacies in order to counter threat and alleviate weakness. Through continuous improvement the following activities and achievements have been remarkable in successfully maintaining, if not improving the name of QGE:

- **Influence.** Numerous high profile visits and functions were organised to the highest standard in an efficient and

professional manner by QGE personnel; among them were a Falklands Dinner Night, Dashain, JNCO Summer BBQ, an indoor games competition and Col BG's visit. Perhaps the most influential is the monthly e-newsletter that I am currently in charge of. Cpl Joseph Subba has yet again been the epicentre of the Cpls' Club as a committee member; he has led various functions and is continuously playing the lead role on behalf of Gurkha JNCOs.



Courses. QGE personnel from Gurkha Company have excelled on all types of professional and personal development courses. This is made more impressive when achieved whilst still delivering the CIC(G) to Gurkha recruits:

Cpl Joseph will top Drill Instr Award

Name	Course	Result	Remarks
Cpl Jayendra Garbuja	Infantry PI Sgts' Battle Course	A- grade, 4 th out of 112. Recommended for CSgt /SSgt instructor	
Cpl Joseph Subba	Junior Comd Cse (JCC)	2 nd overall	Only the top 30% achieve HC on DTTT.
	Drill Instr Cse	Top Student	
	ASLS DTTT ⁵	Highly Competent (HC)	
Cpl Paban Thapa	JCC	3 rd overall	
	Reg Sig Instr	Top Student	
	ASLS DTTT	HC	
Cpl Nirajan Gurung	Skill At Arms Instr	A Grade	
LCpl Bhu-pendra Rai	Infantry Sect Comds' Battle Course	B+ Grade, Top Third	.

- **Community Engagement (inc charity).** The importance of Community Engagement is well and truly understood by all QGE personnel. Cpl Jayendra Garbuja led 24 recruits from 5 Platoon Gurkha Company to raise money for the GWT and ABF in Aug 13. Gurkha recruits helped customers to pack shopping bags at the till in the Sainsbury's superstore in Darlington and raised £3738. This type of charity work was a first for Gurkha Company and the success has generated enthusiasm to take it one step further in 2014. Cpl Joseph Subba raised approximately £500 following the untimely death of Spr Yogaraj Khebang who passed away in Nov 13. In addition he has led several Tae-Kwon-Do / Close Quarter Combat displays in the local community; from North Yorkshire country fairs to the ITC Officers' Mess! Additionally, he represented Gurkha Company by leading a large number of recruits to 'SEWA' (Help) day in Richmond. He leads recruits of Christian faith to church every Sunday and acts as liaison between the local Christian community and Gurkha Company.

⁵ All ARTD instructors must attend the Army School of Leadership Studies (ASLS) Defence Train the Trainer (DTTT) course.





WO2 Prakash Rai at the start of the Great North Run

- **Leadership, Infantry Skills and Military Events.** A number of Inter Section and Inter Platoon military competitions are held during the CIC(G) and yet again QGE personnel have displayed their appetite to emerge victorious:

- **Training for Contingency Ops.** QGE personnel have been an integral part in all arduous physical events and demonstrated a high calibre of fitness, robustness, discipline and aggression. I, along with WO2 Prakash Rai and Cpl Jayendra completed the BUPA Great North 10km. A 4 man team from my platoon completed the Tough Guy 2013 8km event while Cpl Jayendra Garbuja emerged victorious and I managed to finish 3rd. Additionally, Cpl Joseph Subba and Cpl Paban Thapa Magar led a 4 man team from Gurkha Company to the Tough Mudder Run (12 miles military style obstacle course). Tough Guy and the Tough Mudder Run were new to all the members of Gurkha Company and it is now QGE's intent to establish it as an annual commitment. Cpl Nirnanjan Gurung planned and initiated the idea of an annual Tough Gurkha competition for recruits from 2014 onwards. 2 teams from Gurkha Company completed in the high profile PARAs 10 miler and 3 of the 8 participants were from QGE with the teams finishing 1st and 2nd overall.

- **QGE Invest in Gurkha Company.** Gurkha Company is a Brigade of Gurkhas asset and we must invest in it. In 2012 Swami Gopal Sharan Devacharya (Hindu of the Year



New Shivalinga constructed by QGE tradesmen

2009) presented a Shivalinga statue to Gurkha Company. The aspiration to have this correctly and appropriately installed in the Gurkha Company Temple was finally achieved in early 2014. The construction of Shivalinga was initiated and made possible by Comdt QGE and GM QGE during a visit to Gurkha Company. Planned by myself and executed by Cpl Joseph Subba and his team of 6 tradesmen from the Regiment this project demonstrates how QGE have invested in Gurkha Company. The next phase of the investment will be a proposed re-design and refurbishment of the Gurkha Company messing area.

- **Sports.** QGE personnel here have made significant contributions to 2ITB and Gurkha Company sports competitions. Cpl Jayendra, Cpl Joseph and I represented 2ITB during the UK North Inter-Unit Basketball Championships 2014. Cpl Joseph represented Gurkha Company at the Nepal Cup 2013. He is also currently the UK North Badminton Champion, plays for Richmond badminton club and is ranked 4th in the Army. He competed during the Combined Services Badminton Championships, Inter-Services Badminton Championships and Army Badminton Championships. Cpl Nirnanjan has represented 2ITB at the annual Bisley shooting competition.

Name	Military Event	Position
Capt Kamal Khapung	Inter Platoon – Orienteering competition	Winning platoon
	Inter Platoon – Drill competition	Winning platoon
	Inter Platoon – Log and Stretcher race	Runner Up
	Inter Platoon – March and Shoot	Runner Up
	Overall Platoon Position	2 nd out of 5
Cpl Jayendra Garbuja	Inter Section – Orienteering competition	Winning section
	Inter Section – Log and Stretcher race	Winning section
	Overall Section Position	3 rd out of 15
Cpl Joseph Subba	Inter Section – March and Shoot	Winning section



Capt Kamal receiving Inter Platoon Orienteering Prize from OC Gurkha Coy, Maj R Anderson RGR





Gurkha Company Charity Bag packers raised nearly £4000 for the GWT for a days work in Darlington

The New Structure – Securing Our Future

Since last year Gurkha Company has adopted a new structure since Defence cuts saw the Permanent Staff numbers reduce from 82 to 49. However, new QGE employment opportunities exist with a QGE PI Sgt Instructor position coming online in late 2014. An uplift in recruit numbers from 126 to 200 will see two more training teams created in Gurkha Company and going forward QGE will hold the following positions: 1 x PI Comd, 1 x Trg Cord WO2, 1 x PI Sgt, 1 x Cpl PTI, 4 x Sect Comd.

3 RSME REGT

Capt Bishwa Rai



CURRAGH TROOP
57 TRAINING SQUADRON ROYAL ENGINEERS
ME COMBAT CLASS 3 (QGE) COURSE 13/011
21 OCTOBER 2013 – 17 JANUARY 2014



Rear Rank : Spr Santosh, Spr Nayan, Spr Pushkhar, Spr Martin, Spr Nigma, Spr Prakash, Spr Mann, Spr Angshi, Spr Bibek, Spr Ravi, Spr Gobinda, Spr Subodh, Spr May, Spr Himel
Centre Rank : Spr Parkin, Spr McCauley, Spr Smith, Spr Austin, Spr Collomosse, Spr Simmers, Spr Clark, Spr Fletcher, Spr Copping, Spr Devendra, Spr Indraman, Spr Wicks, Spr Burnage, Spr Rupesh
Front Rank : Spr Sloane, Spr Allen, Cpl Fazackerley, Cpl Harrison, Cpl Jones, Capt Bishwa Rai QGE, SSgt Naresh, Cpl Sangharsha, Cpl Pott, Cpl Prakash, Spr Bidston, Spr Clarke

QGE Minley detachment at 3 RSME Regt has seen another very busy, challenging but above all successful year. The detachment consists of one Tp Comd, two SNCOs and

three JNCOs and forms part of 57 Trg Sqn as members of Curragh Troop (Cur Tp). The Tp is responsible for running Military Engineering (Cbt) 0-3 and 2-1 courses for Regulars and Reservists. On a regular basis it also runs Combat Engineering and survival stands for numerous Potential Officers (PO) and Cadets visits.

This year 67 Training Party consisted of 15 Gurkha trainees and for only the second time were fully integrated with 18 British trainees as they completed the 10 week ME Cbt 0-3 course. The first ever experience of doing a course with their British counterparts was a little bit daunting for the trainees however, under the watchful eyes of QGE's Gurujies, all went well and the course was successfully completed. The hard work paid off for 30189111 Spr Indraman Gurung and 30189109 Spr Rupesh Gurung who were the Combat Champion and

Overall Top Student respectively. Rightfully earning the stable belts to qualify as Sappers, they have made themselves very proud and put their names into the long and colourful history of QGE. Since gaining invaluable experiences of the British culture, they have become more confident in their dealings and have moved onto complete their phase 2B trade training, mainly at 1 RSME Regt, Chatham.

As ever, Cur Tp organised a Bag Packing Charity day for the ABF, the Soldiers' Charity and raised £3063 for a very worthwhile cause

which it will continue to support in future. Since the last update, Cur Troop has organised two key events in the RE Corps calendar. SSgt Naresh organised a successful Royal



Engineers Association (REA) Weekend for Minley Station which was well attended by many REA members from the past and present and all thoroughly enjoyed it. Experiences earned from the REA weekend were very helpful for organising another event, the Royal Engineers University Officer Training Corps (RE UOTC) weekend. The aim of RE UOTC weekend is to introduce UOTC cadets to the Corps and to encourage them to take either a Regular or Army Reserve commission in the Royal Engineers. The weekend was well supported, attended by 180 UOTC cadets.



Spr Rupesh Gurung receiving Overall Top Student award from Col of the Regt, Maj Gen T Urch CBE

the good name it has earned over the years. It will continue to ensure QGE Training Parties receive the correct guidance and support in maintaining and promoting the Gurkha ethos for years to come and train them as the best sappers to serve in QGE or the Corps. Jai QGE!!!

1 RSME REGT

Sgt Sher Chongbang (Gurkha Liaison SNCO)

It has been almost a year since my posting to 1 RSME Regt and time is flying by so I would like to let all the readers know about the many changes that are going on here; certainly since my Class 2 course in 1999 much has changed. The first is the name of the role: It is now known as Gurkha Liaison SNCO (GLS) and no longer the Gurkha Liaison Officer (GLO). However, the good thing is all the people at 1 RSME Regt know this post as the GLO and it clearly means that the impression left by the previous GLOs is still there. It is not only the name that has changed but there have been some changes in the role too. The role of QGE point of contact in 1 RSME remains but the GLS is now part of 24 Trg Sqn and works as a Tp SNCO looking after Students Not Under Training (SNUT). This is a part of a new troop, Neame Tp, and has been established to look after the SNUT for the whole Regt in a similar way to Talevera Tp at 3 RSME Regt. Consequently the GLS role is now more challenging and demanding than ever.

Being a Sapper and artisan, we have all been through Chatham and know more or less what 1 RSME Regt is about but since the RSME signed up to a Public Private Partnership (PPP) almost 6 years ago that is managed and run by Holdfast Training Services (HTS) there have been huge changes in the training environment. Some CI 0-2 courses (B&C, B&SF, C&J and Fab) have moved to what is being called a transformed learning environment. This means that while for scheduling purposes an expected completion date is predicted, in reality the students are able to complete the course earlier, depending on their ability. This training programme is known as the RSME Methodology or Training Transformation. The simple reason behind this is if the students are up to standard and pass their assessments then they should not have to waste their time waiting for the last person to complete the course before being posted to their first unit. With all these changes students are now only awarded a Pass or Fail as it would be unfair to award a top student prize to someone who completes their course a month later than the first one. The overall aim of this programme is to make the training system more cost effective and ensure trainees spend less time at the RSME thereby increasing the Field Army's operational capacity.



Handover of cheque to ABF with CO and RSM 3 RSME Regt

With great sadness, we had to say farewell to 3 members who have moved on after completing their successful tenures at 3 RSME Regt. Capt Yam Pun is now posted to 63 Works Group at Chilwell, Cpl Sangharsha Rai was posted back to 70 Gurkha Field Sqn and Cpl Suman Ghale has deployed on Op HERRICK 20 with 35 Engr Regt. To replace them we have Capt Bishwa Rai as the new Troop Comd, his second posting to the Regt. Cpl Bhupendra Gurung and Cpl Sachin Limbu who are now fully settled into their new posts and have been enjoying their duties as the Sect Comd Instructors to train Sappers for the RE Corps and QGE.

Speaking of the other QGE Members, Maj Gooch saheb has been posted into the Regt as the Regtl 2IC. Lt Col Morton Saheb has been posted in Royal Engineers Warfare Wing (REWW – the old BEW) as the Chief Instructor, alongside Maj Moore saheb as the Senior Instructor Command Branch and Sgt Hemraj Gurung who is in Combat Support Branch as a SNCO instructor while Major (Retd) Damar Ghale Saheb is going strong as the Unit Welfare Officer. Sadly, Lt Col Fernandes Saheb has retired after 24 years of service.

This year has been busy but successful and Cur Tp will continue to keep up the same level of effort and maintain





LCpl Dinesh Gurung in action grinding during his Fab 2-1 course

The change to the courses, or as a result of Army 2020, has not changed the Gurkha Ethos, Tradition and Culture; we are still coming top of the courses, as smart as usual, extremely fit, well-disciplined and highly motivated. Although students do not get awarded top student, looking back over the results of 2013; 29 Gurkha soldiers (1 x Clerk of Works, 12 x Class 1 and 16 x Class 2) have successfully completed their courses achieving an average score of 80-90

percent. This is clear evidence that we are still as professional in our trade skills as we are in the field. Gurkha soldiers are not only capable of coming top of the courses but are actively involved in all aspects of Regimental life, especially in sporting events where they have represented the Regiment at Volleyball, Basketball, X-country, Badminton, Taekwondo and Cricket to name but a few. Highlights include winning the Regimental x-country championship, representing the Corps at Badminton and winning an Army level Gold medal in Taekwondo. Serving as the GLS is a huge privilege and I am proud to be part of the RSME Regt as well as a QGE soldier especially when I see daily the professionalism of the new QGE Sappers. Quite simply, "there is no one like us". Jai QGE!!!

QGE BOAT SECTION BRUNEI

SSgt Birendra Kambang

QGE Boat Sect Brunei (BSB) is based in Brunei with 1RGR as part of Brunei Garrison. Currently, BSB is running with limited QGE soldiers and equipment, but still maintains its riverine capability and delivers various courses to UK soldiers. Along with these key roles BSB also continues to support Brunei Garrison to ensure the maximum training value is provided for British Forces Brunei (BFB).

QGE Boat Section was formed in Brunei 2003 and SSgt Taj Kumar Pakhrin was the first Boat IC who laid the basic foundation for BSB with very limited resources. Since its establishment, five SNCOs have served as the Boat IC and other QGE NCOs worked tirelessly to implement and establish BSB as a vital training asset that is part of Training Team Brunei (TTB). Boat IC is now working to modernise and re-orbat the Boat Sect to maximise output using the limited manpower and resources. QGE BSB now has four QGE soldiers: SSgt Birendra Kambang (Boat IC), Cpl Krishnaraj Gurung, Cpl Chandra Budha Magar and Cpl Deepak Rai. Members of BSB, as well having their own specialist responsibilities, all become instructors during the delivery of the Watermanship Safety Officer Basic (WSOB), All Arms Boat Operator (AABO) and Hard Hulled Riverine Craft (HHRC) Operator courses.



All Arms Basic Boat Operator (AABO) Course on Anduki Lake, Brunei

Procurement and maintenance of the equipment and advice on waterborne activities to BFB remains our primary role. The provision of riverine support to TTB, UKSF and Brunei Resident Infantry Battalion (BRIB) becomes the secondary role. In a busy environment, BSB is required to work around the clock to successfully complete inspections, deliver the various courses and maintain our riverine capability. In six months, we have qualified 22 SNCO's and Officers during Jungle Warfare Instructor Course (JWIC) as WSOB, 23 NCOs from 1RGR as a AABO. Planned for April are 2 WSOB and 2 Riverine Buoyancy Aid (RBA) maintainer courses for JWIC and 1RGR. Regardless of these commitments, we have been on 2 hours notice to move as the Engineer support for Op PATWIN, the Philippines disaster response last year.



COS HQ LF and Col QGE, Maj General TR Urch CBE (centre) with Brig AJP Bourne and 2IC 1 RGR along with QGE Boat Sect Brunei

Boat Sect has been involved in numerous VIP visits from the UK including independent advisory and inspection teams to BSB. Comdt QGE, Lt Col EG Robinson and Gurkha Major QGE, Maj Ek Bahadur Gurung visited in Nov 13 and this visit provided us with an umbrella from the Parent Unit and boosted



our morale. More importantly, the visit highlighted some of the key issues in BSB such as man power, ownership of the Boat Sect and Safety issues on HHRC to HQ BFB. COS HQ LF and Col of Regiment Maj General TR Urch CBE spent time with BSB during his visit to BFB which allowed him to see us operate and realise our issues. AI Boat Operation Tp, Capt Jobling and WO2 Gorman from RSME also conducted a visit to BSB as part of Army Competent Advisory and Inspectorate (ACA & I) Annual Advisory visit. This visit was very useful for HQ BFB as it highlighted the importance of mandatory annual inspections.



For BSB, safe conduct of watermanship training, modernisation and an uplift of man power remain the high priorities for the future. To provide more flexibility and avoid the need for more safety staff for riverine

training, Boat Sect will focus on establishing new training areas for its basic infrastructure. In addition the aspiration is to deliver and conduct riverine courses in support of the Royal Bruneian Armed Forces.

BSB is working very closely with BFB as an integral part of Brunei Garrison allowing us to exploit our QGE soldier's capability among Gurkha, UKTAP, and foreign soldiers. BSB has upheld the ethos of QGE, maintained a high level of performance and support in a very busy working environment with limited resources. We are also involved in the Garrison, QGE and Gurkha social calendars enabling soldiers and families to have a social life with 1RGR and to maintain our Gurkha traditions within the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Jai Boat Sect Brunei, Jai QGE!

DEMS TRG REGT - INTERMEDIATE SEARCH TRG

Capt Purnasingh Tamang

After the successful completion of Op HERRICK 17 as an Advance Search Advisor, I was posted to the Defence Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Munitions and Search (DEMS) Training Regt as the Training Officer (Intermediate Search). Such a posting would have been unheard of in QGE 2 years ago and is down entirely to the success of all QGE in the Advanced Search role on numerous Op HERRICK deployments. Therefore, first and foremost I would like to take this opportunity to show my respect and gratitude to those QGE members who deployed to Afghanistan in support of Op HERRICK in this role.



Intermediate Search Training Team

Change continues to be at the centre of everything that is happening within the world of Intermediate Search Training driven by the amalgamation of DEMS South from Lodge Hill and DEMS Kineton to form the DEMS Training Regiment at St Georges Bks, Bicester, Oxfordshire. My team comprises of a mixture of cap badges from both the Army and the RAF and is responsible for delivering Intermediate Search training to all 3 services as well as international students.

A number of new instructors have been posted into the team last year, and with their vast and varied knowledge and current operational experience, the team has been able to deliver the highest standards of instruction to all students on the following courses.

- Unit Search Coordinator.
- Unit Search Advisor.
- All Arms Search Team.
- Service Police Advisor.
- Service Police Search Team.
- International Intermediate Search Advisor.
- C-IED Coordinator.

The main emphasis throughout 2013 has been the training of troops deploying on Op HERRICK and last year alone it trained over 600 students. However, with the drawdown in Afghanistan during 2014 the focus is now switching to worldwide operations, as current doctrine recognises the enduring and ever evolving nature of the IED threat due to the proliferation of cheap IED technology. The Intermediate Training Team is constantly enhancing the training it delivers through liaison across all MOD Departments to assess the current threat and implement the best practices from lessons identified on operations in order to mitigate against the ever evolving IED threat; thus preparing all deploying formations to counter the threat they are likely to encounter be this on Op HERRICK or in sub-Saharan Africa. This has been a busy, diverse and productive training year for the whole team and we are eagerly looking to the future and the post HERRICK training that will follow.



SPORTS CORNER

Capt Mohan Gurung

Have we changed? No, because the sense of competition, Baji, Josh and the pride of achievements is still there. Yes, because we have now embraced more sports and have become more adventurous. One could argue about the level of investment at Regt level but we have made the best out of what we could have achieved through dedication and commitment at individual level. The Regt has been busy throughout the year with various commitments and sub-units have been pulled in all directions, always making it difficult to field a full team let alone the best team. Although the level of success varied, the spirit was always there and needless to say, everyone involved made the Regt proud. The aim of this article is to provide the readers with overview of sporting achievements and progress rather than the inside details on one particular sport.

Badminton 2013. 36 Engr Regt Badminton team achieved some very good results from various competitions across the region. All the players played superbly but Spr Kabir Limbu must be praised for his outstanding performance throughout the season and becoming the RE Champion in the Corps Badminton Championship.

- RE Championship - Winners.
- Sp Comd (UK South) Championship - Runner Up.
- Inter Unit Army Cup - Runner Up.



Engr Regt Badminton Team - WO2(SSM) Govinda Rana, Sprs Umesh Bhujel, Amber Mangmu and Shakti Gurung, Maj Mark Baker, WO1(RSM) M Ashley RE, Spr Kabir Limbu, Sgt Ram Rai, LCpls Basanta Gurung and Jas Rai36

Basketball. Basketball has always been popular within QGE and has gone from strength to strength. With 36 Engr Regt playing in Sp Comd (UK South) competitions, RE Games and local leagues the players have plenty of experience at a high level. This year, the Regt has gone one step further by qualifying for the Army finals – an excellent achievement considering almost 50% of the Regt was away from the base at any one time.

Intake 08 also organised an Inter Intake Rivalry Basketball competition over a 2 day period in memory of their Number 1 the late Spr Ishwor Gurung. Although it was very much an internal affair, the spirit of competition /Baji was nothing less than that of a major competition. After a close fought battle between Intakes 09 and 08, Intake 08 proved to be just too strong and became the Intake Champions for 2014. They wish to continue this as an annual event – an excellent

initiative to remember a fallen comrade and enjoy the sport.



Intake Champions 2013 – Intake 08

Boxing. The boxers below from QGE represented 36 Engr Regt on various boxing events throughout the year. They all demonstrated great skills and spirit and went on to win their respective fights – a very positive and encouraging results for all those would be boxers.

- Charity Event against 2 RGR: LCpl Victor Phombo, Spr Adip Lungeli, Spr Sandesh Rai.
- Regiment Boxing Night against 16 Regiment Royal Artillery: LCpl Victor Phombo, Spr Adip Lungeli, Spr Soman Gurung, Spr Jagdish Gurung



Spr Jagdish Gurung, LCpl Victor Phombo and Spr Soman Gurung with their winning trophies at the Regt Boxing Night

Tae Kwondo. Tae-Kwondo has mainly been limited to individual level and those involved have achieved good results. Last year Spr Adip Lungeli dominated the field in his category and this year LCpl Dinesh Gurung went on to win 2 Gold medals and 2 Silver medals in the Army Martial Arts Winter Championship and 2nd at the Army Tae-Kwondo Invitation Tournament at Aldershot. LCpl Dinesh Gurung has been awarded Top Student in Army Tae-Kwondo course and upgraded to 2nd Dan. He has also been invited as an instructor at Windsor for the Army Tae-Kwondo course to assist in selecting the players for the Army team.





LCpl Dinesh Gurung (kneeling centre) with his Gold medal at Aldershot with the Army Team.

Football - The Nepal Cup 2013



The Nepal Cup team before the final before the final



LCpl Niranjan Budhathoki receiving the 'man of the match' award from Col BG

After demolishing GSPS 5 - 0 in the quarter final and QOGLR 3 - 0 in the semi final, QGE once again, were the favourites for the Nepal Cup. All the matches up to the semi-final were played in Maidstone and the final was played at Queen's Avenue in Aldershot. Despite the better team on the day and numerous attempts, QGE were heartbroken by an injury time goal, losing to 2 RGR, 2 - 1 in the final. Although the final outcome was not what everyone was hoping for, every single player and those supporting the team directly and indirectly contributed 110% - a spirit QGE Sappers are accustomed

and famous for. Well done to everyone and please bring back the cup to the rightful owners in 2014- QGE.

Trailwalker 2013. Since its introduction in the UK, Trailwalker has been taking place every year across the South Downs Way in support of Oxfam and the Gurkha Welfare Trust. This year, two teams from The Queens' Gurkha Engineers, led by SSgt Narendradhoj Gurung took part and secured 3rd and 6th out of more than 400 teams with times of 11 hours 34 minutes and 12 hours 30 minutes respectively.



Team Balaram; LCpl Santosh Gurung, Spr Sureen Thapa, Spr Bal Kumar Budha, Spr Amber Mangmu



Team Iswor; Lt Tom Redding, LCpl Dil Pun, Spr Nishan Thakali, Spr Champak Rai

Volleyball. Not much success other than winning the RE Games and coming 3rd in the Sp Comd (UK South) Volleyball Championship. Once again, slightly disappointing, largely due to the players not being available for the competitions. The Regt has however, qualified for the Army Finals due to take place in Apr/May 14. Please rest assured that QGE has the players to win competitions and will definitely bring back some silverware next year.





Tennis. Although we are far from playing at Wimbledon and challenging Andy Murray, there are promising young boys coming through in this sport, again a sport that has never been taken that seriously before. Cpl Krishna Thapa and Cpl Khum Ale are now playing for the Corps regularly in league as well as championship games. With involvement in local competitions and the Summer weather hotting up this is another sport QGE have potential to do well in.

Squash. The squash courts are arguably one of the best utilised sporting facilities in Invicta Park Barracks. More and more players are taking up this sport and inevitably we should see more players representing the Regt and at higher level very soon. Some excellent results achieved both at Regt and individual level;

- RE Corps Championship - Winner
- Inter-Unit Army Cup - 2nd Runner up



Army Inter Corps Championship – Group B Winners (Spr Sujan and LCpl Sandesh with Col of the Regt Gen Urch Saheb)

Special praise must go to LCpl Sandesh Rai and Spr Sujan Jwarchan who were selected to play for the Corps in the Army Inter-Corps Squash Championship. Spr Sujan has also been selected to play for Army under 25.



RE Corps Championship – Winners

Golf. It would not be fair to not mention this here – a sport once seemed as something for slightly ‘matured’ (not old) group; now it has all age groups and has become ‘the sport for all’. And the youngsters are moving up incredibly fast, some playing off a single handicap within a year of taking it up. Participation has never been a problem at any level of competitions; Inter ranks, Inter mess, Inter unit, Social / charity etc.

QGE SHOOTING TEAM

Lt Dave Waddington

In keeping with tradition, it has been yet another highly successful year for shooting in QGE. First on the calendar was the Corps Operational Shooting Competition (CORPSOSC) held at Pirbright, in which two teams from QGE took part, made up of experienced shots and novices alike. After only 2 weeks of preparation to train and learn the format of each shoot, the competition phase began. With the focus being operational shooting, the shoots varied from moving target ranges and machine gun matches to the march and shoot and pistol range and everything in between. QGE teams swept up the competition between the RE units, winning an impressive 12 trophies out of the 14 available. In the wider Corps competition, QGE ‘A’ team narrowly lost out to our great rivals, the QGS and the QOGLR to finish 4th overall and the ‘B’ team placed 13th out of over 80 teams competing across all of the Corps in the Army’.

The team’s performance at CORPSOSC also qualified them to enter into the prestigious Central Skill At Arms Meet (CENTSAM) held at Bisley, where the top shots from across the 3 services and the international military community go head to head. Once again the team punched well above its weight to win the small units trophy and all four members of



the team qualified to shoot in the famous Methuen Cup on the Century Range where the best 100 shots from the Army carry out the shoot simultaneously on the only 100 lane range in the country! Most impressively, all four finished within the top 30, an incredible result leaving much to be lived up to next year. Jai QGE!



Impressive silverware haul following the CORPSOSC

At individual level, LCpl Krishna Rai was selected for the British Army Combat Shooting Team and travelled to Canada and Australia with the team for shooting competitions – a great individual achievement, well done.



Regt and Corps Team at FTC OSC

QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS 65TH BIRTHDAY

Spr Shakti Gurung

Gurkhas were first enlisted into the Corps of Royal Engineers in September 1948 when a Gurkha Training Squadron RE was formed. The whole Regiment became part of the Brigade of Gurkhas in 1955 and on the 28 September that year the title of the Regiment changed to 'The Gurkha Engineers'. In 1977, the Royal title of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers was granted by Her Majesty The Queen. It is the combination of these events in history that meant that on the 28th September 2013 The Queen's Gurkha Engineers celebrated its 65th birthday in true Gurkha style.

The birthday is a very special day for the whole QGE family; it provides an opportunity for the current serving members



to meet with ex-serving members in a fun atmosphere that any birthday environment brings. The first event of the day was the official ribbon cutting of the newly extended Mandir in Invicta Park Barracks by the Colonel of the Regiment, Lieutenant General Sir David Bill KCB. After an initial gloomy start to the day the weather decided to perk up making the conditions almost perfect for the parade that lay ahead. Once everyone was in position, the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas marched on and performed excellently. The Band certainly knew how to please the crowd with a perfect rendition of 'Gangnam Style'. Once the Band had finished it was time for 69 and 70 Gurkha Fd Sqns to march onto parade for it was their time to join in with the celebrations.

After the Adjutant had announced the Special Routine Order it was time for the presentation of the Bowring Trophy, presented to the LCpl who in the opinion of the Commandant, has shown the best example of leadership and discipline throughout the year. The winner of this trophy was 21171806 LCpl Santosh Goley and the runner up was 21170994 LCpl Lilaram Rai.



As with any birthday it would not be complete without the cutting of a cake, and this birthday was no exception. It was the Colonel of the Regiment, Commandant QGE and the Gurkha Major who cut the enormous cake with an equally enormous khukuri. After a speech by the Commandant, the Colonel of the Regiment addressed the crowd for his final time and announced that after 7 years in this position he would be handing over to Major General Tyrone R Urch CBE after this event. Following this was the presentation for the winner and runners up of the ladies basketball and volleyball competitions.



The event concluded with a traditional Nepalese dance performed by the children before everyone was invited inside to sit down and eat some delicious Nepalese cuisine whilst enjoying plenty of entertainment for the families. With many raffle prizes on offer it was Cpl Jas Rai from 70 Sqn who took home the limited edition QGE watch.

The day was hugely successful and ended with everyone getting the chance to be part of this eventful day. Moving forward there have been many changes already this year and QGE are looking forward to re-rolling to Force Support Engineering after their successful tours in the Search role.

DASHAIN

LCpl Jit Bahadur Thapa

Long darks night certainly remind us of the importance of bright sunny days! Good always triumphs over evil and "Dashain" is the perfect example of this. The festival of Dashain is the longest, most auspicious and highly anticipated time of the year for most Nepalese citizens and importantly the Brigade of Gurkhas fraternity. The fifteen days of celebration occurs during the bright lunar fortnight ending on the full moon day. The first nine days signify the nine days of ferocious battle between Goddess Durga and the Demons who terrorised mankind. The tenth day is when the Demon King himself was slain by the Goddess resulting in the epic symbol of celebration of the victory.

Of these, the main days are Ghatasthapana, Phulpati, Mahaastami, Mahanawami and Vijaya Dashami also widely known as Tika. The Brigade of Gurkhas celebrates this annually with ritual sacrifices, fastings, blessings and major social events. Regardless of the work commitments the festival is celebrated in one form or another due to its significance and importance.



Spr Mahesh is being briefed by OIC Dashain, Capt Dirgha

This year 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn this year had the privilege to organise the event and all Sqn personnel were involved in every aspect with the requirement to make this event a bigger success than before. OIC Dashain, Capt Dirgha KC ensured that necessary preparations were completed to make Dashain a huge success with the utmost importance being placed on entertainment. Due to the huge number of attendees, the ABLE hanger was deemed the best venue for the "Kalaratri" night and which was held on 12 Oct 13.

The day that everyone had been waiting for throughout the year finally arrived. The chief guest for the day was the Col of the Regt, Maj Gen TR Urch CBE who addressed and welcomed everyone present. This was the first address by the General since taking up the appointment of Col QGE. The venue looked brighter than usual not only due to the decorations but more due to the dazzling traditional dresses worn by the families. The atmosphere was full of happiness with a joyous mood all around that could only be matched by the delicious Gurkha curry thanks to the hard work by the Chefs.



Live performance by Pradeshi Band

The entertainment package this year was superbly managed with surprise performances from key personnel within the Regiment. The comedy dance performed by the Gurkha Major, Maj Ekbahadur Gurung, OC 69 Sqn, Major Hendry, OC 70 Sqn, Major Baker along with the GRCMO, Capt Buddhi Bhandari was hilarious and very entertaining. Lt Marris and Lt Redding performance dressed up as a girl and a boy was the icing on the cake and thoroughly entertaining. The singer of the night, Major Rajen Gurung's performance was full of energy, excitement and simply brilliant, we also could not have asked for more from our QGE sappers whose performances throughout the night proved to be a key to the success of the night.



GM QGE receiving Tika from Punditji

Overall, Dashain is a real morale boosting event for the Gurkhas and therefore, of huge significance within QGE. Gurkhas have always maintained their tradition and culture wherever they go; sharing experiences with people from different backgrounds. Aside from fun and entertainment,



Dashain is also the time to forget all the hard experiences of life and enjoy wholeheartedly with family and friends. The bond between family and friends prove ever more enduring. Dashain brings unity and strength amongst us. Jai QGE.

TIHAR

LCpl Basanta Gurung

Soon after Dashain, the religious festival of Tihar was celebrated within Invicta Park Barracks. The five day festival is considered to be of great importance as it shows reverence to not just humans and Gods, but also to animals such as the crow, cow and dog, who maintain an intense relationship with humans. The name Tihar means the festival of lights therefore from the Mandir and throughout the Married Quarters, candles were on display inside and outside of houses and 'Rangoli' were made to make the houses look attractive and bright at night.

It has been a tradition for many years for Gurkhas to celebrate Tihar within the confines of the Barracks. This year was no exception and it fell to I Tp, 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn to coordinate the festival for the remainder of QGE. On the third day of Tihar, Gai Tihar and Laxmi Puja, QGE celebrations were under way with the Pardeshi Band, under direction from Cpl Aakash, starting the Deusire program from the Gurkha Major's house. On their arrival to the GM's house, the band along with all Officer Sahebharu started to sing and dance in traditional Nepali style. The band was offered food and drink before slowly moving onto another street. Despite the rain the spirits of the Deusire could not be lowered as they sang and danced for hours. Once the program had finished everyone moved on towards the Juwa Ghar to begin gambling. As the twinkling lights in the function room set the scene, Commandant QGE, Lt Col Robinson RE was invited forward to officially start the gambling by throwing Tri Pasha. With this all QGE members, dressed in Daura Suruwals and Saris, began to gamble the night away. With Tri Pasha, dice and cards on offer everyone was in full swing for winning but more likely losing money. Intake 1994 Didiharu opened the food stall selling sel roti, momo, chutney, bhutwa and alu dam with all money going towards the charity event 'Three Peaks Challenge Gurkha Ways'. Anyone who was lucky enough to win whilst playing Tri Pasha was invited to kindly give a donation towards the Pahar trust. This program continued for three nights with a final night performance from the Pardeshi Band.

Everyone present appeared to be fully enjoying themselves as the gambling lasted long in to the night. It is always a great feeling to celebrate such a festival with close friends with traditional customs and food. Overall it was a successful event led by I Tp.

REGIMENTAL SUPPORT TO SPR YOGYA RAJ KHEBANG'S FAMILY

WO2 (QMSI) Dilkumar Rai

News of the unexpected passing away of Spr Yogya Raj Khebang shocked all that knew him and brought an agonizing sorrow to his family who will permanently mourn the passing

of a father, brother and beloved son. GM QGE, Maj Ek Gurung Sahib immediately contacted his family and expressed condolence's on the behalf of QGE and under his direction the unit initiated various activities to help generate funds for his family. A charity event was organised on 19 Dec 13. Maj Rajen Gurung, QM 70 Gurkha Field Sqn voluntarily led the event with assistance from WO2 Dil Kumar Rai and his team. Even though it was a busy Christmas stand down period all the preparatory work went smoothly and to plan. The event featured musical performances, comedy and dances from various artists. This event was open to people of all walks of life; therefore more tickets were sold than expected due to a huge turnout. As a part of fund raising, traditional Nepalese food stalls and drinks bar were set up and run by Intake 04 and families.

The charity event started off with an exquisite musical performance by "Pardeshi Band", QGE. The host for the night, Spr Kranti Rai engaged the audience well with his humorous and appealing style of presentation. Add to that an ex-QGE favourite, Mr Deepak Himall who performed stand up comedy as the audiences burst out in laughter. The atmosphere in the hall was vibrant as main attraction of the program continued to unfold. The famous guest artists, a legendary folk singer, Shambhu Rai and a popular singer Khem Raj Gurung from Nepal added significance to the success of the event. The YouTube sensation, Mr Bhim Niraula put icing on the cake with an energetic performance of his latest hit song "Sunday Morning Love" to which the youths and adults could not resist dancing on the floor. The programme also included some elegant dances from children. The audience thoroughly enjoyed the program. It was a very successful event and everything went off without a hitch.



As well as the charity event there were a number of excellent personal donations from the wider QGE community which enabled us to raise a grand total of £11977. On 23 Dec 13, GM, Maj Ek Bahadur Gurung, GRCMO, Capt Buddhi Bhandari, WO2 Dil Kumar Rai and a representative of Intake 04, Cpl Bhim, paid a visit and handed over the cheque to Spr Yogya Raj Khebang's family. The family expressed their heartfelt gratitude and thanked all for the contributions made. Our sincerest thanks and appreciation go to all the organisation team, Intake 04, families, generous donors and all the volunteers who whole-heartedly contributed in many ways to support this good cause. Jai QGE!!!



MEET THE NEW COMMANDANT – LT COL RG WALKER



Schooled in the West Country and a keen outdoorsman – Lt Col Walker felt that he was destined for service with the military due to his love of endurance kayak racing, climbing, telemark skiing and cycling. Few other employments appeared to offer the same opportunities and challenges as part of routine business.

Having completed a Gap Year Commission with The Queen's Gurkha Engineers in Hong Kong in 1990 – 91 serving with 67, 68 and 70 Fd Sp Sqn in Hong Kong, Brunei and Sabah, Lt Col Walker studied an honours degree optimised to preparing for employment in the leadership training and civilian adventure sector that was fashionable in the 90's. While working on a placement in this sector he felt that he needed to return to the military to complete unfinished business.

After a little more time out working in the Transylvanian mountains in Romania he attended Sandhurst, troop commanded in 36 Engineer Regiment and 59 Independent Commando Squadron, was Squadron Second in Command of 69 Gurkha Field Squadron before working on the restructuring of the Corps whilst working in HQ EinC(A). This included the production of a 'tongue in cheek' Gurkha Commando Engineer Regiment establishment which was not endorsed, but the intent was satisfied through other means subsequently. He then joined the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps in order to maximise time in Afghanistan. Mrs Walker (Jenny) has noted that he was very successful in this respect - securing a 4 month planning job with the US and subsequently an 8 month tour within HQ ISAF (coinciding with the birth of their second child!). Returning from this tour he undertook battle preparation to deploy back to Afghanistan as OC 69 Gurkha Field Squadron for Operation HERRICK 7 – a highly demanding and successful operational tour for 36 Engineer Regiment, but with loss that must never be forgotten.

Moving next to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Lt Col Walker instructed Officer Cadets as a Company Commander, before employment as a Chief Instructor charged with restructuring training to make it contemporary and more relevant to current operations (Op ENTIRETY). Promoting to Lt Col he then proceeded to Staff College before returning to Afghanistan this time to work mainly in the Afghan MOD and the training focussed on manning, training and equipping the Afghan National Army working closely to the Afghan Army senior leadership. After a brief time as SO1 People and Policy within Regimental Headquarters Royal Engineers he returns home to 36 Engineer Regiment, The Queen's Gurkha Engineers for what is likely to be one of the most rewarding assignments he has had to date.

Lt Col Walker is married to Jenny, with two great kids Elizabeth (10) and Oliver (8) who are now settled in the family at home in Camberley, Surrey. He continues to love the outdoor

adventure environment, although his sporting and military injuries have served to slow him down a little.

MEET THE NEW GURKHA MAJOR - MAJOR DEV KUMAR GURUNG MVO



Maj Dev Kumar Gurung is currently employed as the SO2 G7 Trg at 170 (Infrastructure Support) Engineer Group, Chetwynd Barracks, Chilwell, Nottingham. He was born on 18 May 1968 in Kaski District, West Nepal. He enlisted into the Brigade of Gurkhas on 22 December 1987. On completion of basic military training as the overall champion recruit in Hong Kong, he followed his father's foot steps (Late Lt (QGO) Lok Bahabur Gurung QGE) and joined The Queen's Gurkha Engineers.

He was commissioned as Lt (QGO) in 2005 and assumed the appointment of Platoon Commander at Gurkha Training Company, Infantry Training Centre (Catterick). He returned to 69 Gurkha Field Squadron, 36 Engineer Regiment in 2007 and deployed on Op HERRICK 7 as a troop commander and promoted to Captain. On the 2008 operational honours and awards list, for his outstanding service during Op HERRICK 7, he was awarded the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service and in the same year he was also awarded the prestigious "Durand Medal" for the efficient service as a soldier and sapper throughout his service. In 2010, he was attached to the 1 SCOTS Battle Group as the Battle Group Engineer and deployed to Afghanistan for the 2nd time on Op HERRICK 12, where he was again awarded the Task Force Commander's commendation for his "Distinguished Service". At the end of 2010, he briefly assumed the post of Operations Officer, 70 Gurkha Field Squadron before moving to Training Officer, 36 Engineer Regiment in summer 2011. During this period he also served at the Buckingham Palace as the Queen's Gurkha Orderly Officer for 18 months and for this personal service to Her Majesty the Queen, he was made a Member of the Victorian Order. He was selected for Major in December 2011 and posted to 170 (Infrastructure Support) Engineer Group in summer 2012. He has served in Hong Kong, Brunei, Kenya, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Canada, USA, Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan and Australia.

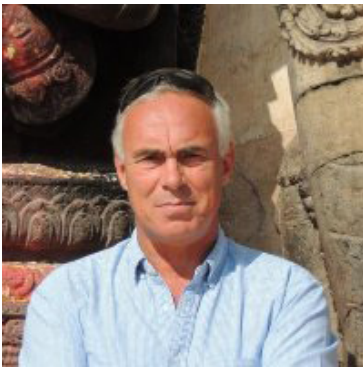
He is a very keen sportsman and outstanding marksman, who has represented and led the British Army Combat Shooting team to compete in the Australian Army Skill At Arms Meeting 2009. He is secretariat of the Royal Engineers Rifle Association as well as the Royal Engineers Badminton Association.

Major Dev Kumar Gurung is married to Ganga and they are blessed with daughter Sherish (14) and son Suveen (11).



CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Mike Carter



I am delighted to have this opportunity to express the real privilege I have in assuming the Chair of the Association and to further my bond with the Regiment and those who have served and continue to serve with such evident professionalism and enthusiasm, as reflected in the Association. I would also like to offer a huge thank you on all our behalfs to Tony Harking for the way he has guided and mentored the Association through considerable change, including the rationalisation of the Regimental and Perowne Trusts with the Association. But particularly for his efforts in ensuring that it remains a lively and thriving organisation that is well placed to meet its aims and objectives and in supporting the links between the serving and non-serving QGE communities. I would also like to thank Philip Cook for his services to the Association; he has, as is our tradition, stood down as Representative Vice President on the Management Committee and is replaced by Tony Harking. In this regard I know they would join me in thanking the Committee who do so much behind the scenes on your behalf. I think the Magazine itself reflects a vibrant Association which will continue to support its members, and for those reading this who is serving or who has served with the Regiment and have not yet joined I would really encourage you to do so. I look forward to meeting you in the near future at our activities. Jai QGE

REGIMENTAL HISTORY VOLUME 3



The Association is hoping to publish the next chapter in the Regiment's history in a book that will start off where Brigadier Hank Bowen's 'Queen's Gurkha Sapper' finished. Until an author for the book is found, Tony has taken on the role of archiving as much historical information as possible starting from 1996. Tony would appreciate

any interesting information at all that could be considered for the archive. If you have anecdotes and artefacts from the Regiment's past please let him know at: sowerbyap@btinternet.com and cc 36ENGR-RHQ-TrgOffr@mod.uk

Tony wants to hear about wide ranging aspects of the QGE since 1996 including funny stories, adventure training, operations, sport, family events, regimental events etc. He has a tape recorder and plans on interviewing those who lived through this history and will travel so please get in touch!

NEPAL UPDATES

KATHMANDU UPDATE

A GATHERING IN KATHMANDU TO MEET COMMANDANT AND GURKHA MAJOR QGE

The Kathmandu based members organised a QGE bheth-ghat in honour to welcome and meet the Commandant, Lt Col E G Robinson RE and the Gurkha Major, Major Ekbahadur Gurung QGE on Thursday 9 May 2013. A buffet lunch was arranged in Bagaincha Restaurant in Jawalakhel.



Both guests (Comdt and GM) posing for a photo with the senior member, Hon Maj Bharatsing Limbu and the Chairman, Hon Maj Surjabahadur Thapa MVO

Those available members gathered at the Restaurant at 1100 hours and the guests arrived at 1130 hours. The senior member present, Honorary Major Bharatsing Limbu welcomed them by offering khadas. Similarly the Chairman, Honorary Major Surjabahadur Thapa MVO delivered a short speech on behalf of all members and in reply, both the Commandant and the Gurkha Major sahibs thanked the members for organising a bheth-ghat programme. They also updated the members on the Regiment's past and future works and the new role.



Cpl Amarjang Gurung, WO2 Purnabdr Gurung, Capt Jahansing Rai, Capt Chitrabdr Thapa, WO2 Bhagawati Pradhan, Hon Maj Dalbdr Limbu MVO and Maj Haribahadur Thapa





Both Commandant and GM sahibs arrived in Nepal on 28 April 2013 on a Duty Trek. They trekked to East Nepal from 29 April – 4 May and subsequently visited West Nepal from 5 – 7 May 2013.



The Gurkha Major, Maj Ekbahadur Gurung is being welcomed by the senior member

All the members were happy and exchanged a lot of gaph-saph and thoroughly enjoyed the day. We wished them a safe journey back home and hope to see them again sooner or later.

WELCOME / FAREWELL PARTIES IN KATHMANDU

The Kathmandu branch of QGERAN welcomed and bade farewell to the following senior QGE officers:

Colonel SPF Harris OBE. The Kathmandu branch officially welcomed Col Harris, the new commander of BGN on Sunday 29 Sep 2013 at the Crystal Party Palace, the day the members of Kathmandu branch were celebrating the 65th QGE Day. Both President and Chairman welcomed the Commander sahib and the Secretary, Captain Manilal Thapa read out the following citation:

“The commander sahib took over the command of British Gurkhas Nepal (BGN) on 19 July 2013. He also took on the responsibilities of Director of the Gurkha Welfare Scheme (GWS) and Defence Attaché (DA) at the British Embassy in Kathmandu. He joined the Royal Engineers as a young officer in 1989 and served QGE in the following years and appointments:

- Sep 91 – Jun 94. 2IC 67 Gurkha Fd Sqn / Adjt QGE, Hong Kong
- Jan 01 - Sep 03. OC 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn, Maidstone.
- Jan 05 – Jun 06. DComd/ CoS BGN
- Jul 2013 – present. Comd BGN / Dir GWS / DA British Embassy



We, QGE members wish Col Harris sahib and his family an enjoyable and a successful tour in Nepal and hope for the same help and support that we received from the out-going commander in the past”.

Colonel A M Mills OBE. The members of QGERAN Kathmandu Branch bade farewell to out-going Comd BGN, Colonel A M Mills OBE, on Saturday 22 June 2013 at the Bagaincha Restaurant, Jawalakhel, Lalitpur. A total of 28 members gathered for a farewell lunch at 1100 hours.



The President, Hon Maj Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE garlanded him with a khada and thanked him for his four years of service in Nepal and for his support to Regimental Association matters. Capt Manilal Thapa sahib read out the following citations for Col Mills:



"The outgoing commander saheb first came to the Regiment as a Young Officer Cadet in 1981 and later joined 68 Gurkha Field Squadron as a Troop Commander in 1982 in Bowring Camp, Hong Kong. He was again posted to the Regiment as a Troop Commander in 69 Gurkha Independent

Field Squadron, UK in 1984. Col Mills, again returned to the Regiment as the Officer Commanding of 69 Gurkha Independent Squadron in 1993. His final tour was in Nepal as the Commander BGN / Director GWS / DA British Embassy from November 2009 – July 2013".

It was now the time for Commander sahib to say few words in his farewell speech. He thanked the committee members, led by the Chairman for a splendid bandobast and a well organised farewell party in his farewell speech.

(After Note: QGE members were very happy and proud to see Col Mills on QGE Day. In fact, Col Mills was selected to serve in Nepal for 3 months from mid September – mid December 2013 as Head of Security to the European Union Election Observation Mission. All QGE members would like to congratulate Col Mills for receiving his OBE in New Year Honour List).



65TH QGE REGIMENTAL BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION IN KATHMANDU

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on Sunday 1 September 2013 confirmed that the 65th QGE Birthday was to be celebrated on Sunday 29 September 2013 at Crystal Party Catering Place, located at Man Bhawan, Jawalakhel. The weather was nice and beautiful, just perfect for the occasion and the number of attendees crossed to 100.

The event commenced at 1100 hours with the registration of members followed by drinks and some tasty tit bits served in a buffet style. The guests arrived at 1130 hours and included Colonel S P F Harris OBE, Commander BGN/Nepal rep. The former Commander BGN, Colonel A M Mills OBE was also invited as a guest. They were welcomed by the President, Honorary Major Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE and Chairman, Honorary Major Surjabahadur Thapa MVO. At about 1230 hours, the Secretary, Captain Manilal Thapa drew the attention of all members and read out the Special Routine Orders of the Day. Soon after this, the present Comd



BGN was officially welcomed and was offered a khada by the Association President. The President also welcomed the former QGE members, Major Ashok Thapa as an Ordinary Member and garlanded with a khada. Major Ashok Thapa served the Regiment as a young Sapper during late 60s/early 70s and was later transferred to 7 GR as a clerk. He served the Brigade of Gurkhas for 32 years and retired from the post of Editor PARBATE in 1992. During the course of welcome programme, the Chairman welcomed some of the new life members. He also welcomed two of three ladies (Mrs Bhagi Pradhan and Mrs Hari Roka) as new committee members into his team. However, the third lady member, Mrs Haribahadur Thapa was not available on the day. (Note: Readers should know that, as per the Nepalese government's new rules, 33 per cent of any committee must be made up of women). This was followed by short speeches by Commander, President and the Chairman



The birthday cake cutting by Chairman, RQMS BGN, Comd BGN, President & Sgt Topbahadur Thapa Magar QGE.



The Chairman, Hon Maj Surjabahadur Thapa MVO welcoming Hon Maj Ashok Thapa

The food was served at 1330 hours. All the members enjoyed the tasty food and after the buffet, a raffle draw was organised by the committee team which was the last event of the day which kept everyone quite busy for some time. As expected, we were blessed with the perfect weather and

the QGE Day was thoroughly enjoyed by each and everyone who attended. The old memories were exchanged and QGE spirit was revived; I think it was the best part of the day. The tit bits, food and all administration, as usual, were excellent and in order. A bundle of thanks go to 3 QGE members, serving in BGN for arranging and sponsoring a birthday cake. We, members are very grateful to the Chairman and his committee for their hard work in making this event a success.



Some ladies posing for a group photo. Sitting 4th from left is the mother of Capt (Retd) Chitrabahadur Thapa and Hon Major Surjabahadur Thapa MVO

Finally, all members would like to thank the QGEA (UK) for the financial support without which we would not have been able to organise and celebrate this annual gathering of historical significance. Jai QGE!



Attention! From right, WO2 Buddhilal Gaha, Cpl Khil and Sgt Topbahadur Thapa Magar with some of the prizes they won in the lottery

The following members are currently working in the Committee:

- Honorary Major Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE – President (Central Committee)
- Honorary Major Surjabahadur Thapa MVO – Chairman
- Captain Giriraj Thapa – Vice Chairman
- Captain Manilal Thapa – Secretary
- WO2 Jogeshkumar Pradhan – Treasurer
- WO2 Keshav Thapa – Member
- Cpl Amarjang Gurung - Member
- Mrs Haribahadur Thapa - Member
- Mrs Bhagi Pradhan – Member
- Mrs Hari Roka - Member





The new Committee members of QGERAN Kathmandu branch. (Wife of Hon Maj Haribahadur Thapa was not available)

A DINNER WITH CGS AND LADY WALL



CGS saheb is being welcomed by President

A dinner in honour of General Sir Peter Wall KCB CBE ADC Gen and Lady Wall was organised on Wednesday 8th January 2014. The General saheb and Lady Wall arrived at the Himalayan Hotel, Lalitpur at 1800 hours and both were received by the Association President, Honorary Major Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE

and the Chairman Surjabahadur Thapa MVO.

Altogether 48 Kathmandu based members including four students, winners of Perowne Trust Scholarship, were in attendance. The General saheb met and chatted with the old friends. Similarly, Lady Wall met with the ladies and chatted with deep interest. At 1930 hours the President welcomed and garlanded the General saheb. Similarly, Mrs Surjabahadur Thapa welcomed and offered a khada to Lady Wall. The General saheb also distributed the money to all four students who were selected for the Perowne scholarship. The four winners were as follows: Ms Kritika Rana (BSc Microbiology), Mr Man Bahadur Limbu (Bachelor of Dental Surgery), Mr Bishal Roka Magar (MBBS) and Ms Dipika Thapa Magar (PCL Nursing). The CGS saheb also distributed a life membership certificate to Cpl Tejbahadur Rai.



CGS saheb, committee members with the students of Perowne Scholarship winners

The bheth ghat programme was very enjoyable with the old and bold eating, drinking and chatting together, some having met after a long time. During the dinner, the General saheb thanked all for such a wonderful arrangement and a big gathering. The event finally came to an end at 2200 hours when the CGS saheb and Lady Wall left the hotel. All members of QGE would like to wish both of them all the best for the future and an enjoyable life in the UK





From left - Mrs Bhagi Pradhan, Mrs Jogesh Pradhan, Lady Wall, Mrs Ravi Sahi, Mrs Tejbahadur Rai and two Perowne scholarship winner students

Last but not the least, all members thank the Chairman, Secretary and the committee team for organising such a wonderful party and a bhet-ghat programme.



Some members with General saheb. From left are WO2 Bhagi Pradhan, Hon Maj Bhimbahadur Thapa, Capt (Retd) Manilal Thapa, Cpl Amarjang Gurung and BGN RQMS

THE COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT AND THE GURKHA MAJOR QGE VISIT MEMBERS OF KATHMANDU BRANCH

Colonel QGE, Maj Gen T R Urch CBE and the Gurkha Major, Major Ekbahadur Gurung returned to Kathmandu on Thursday 13 March 2014 on completion of their official duty trek to both East and West Nepal. Subsequently, the Kathmandu branch hosted a buffet lunch to welcome Colonel and GM QGE on Friday 14 March 2014. The bhet-ghat programme was attended by 25 members including Colonel S P F Harris OBE who was also invited as a guest.

All members assembled at 1030 hours for 1100 hours. The guests, General and GM sahebs arrived at 1100 hours at the Chapter 9 Restaurant, Jhamsikhel of Lalitpur district. The Chairman, Hon Major Surjabahadur Thapa met them at the main entrance and escorted them to the main hall where all members had gathered and were eagerly waiting to meet the guests. The President, Hon Major Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE welcomed them by offering khadas. There was a short welcome speech by the Chairman.



From left Hon Maj Dalbdr Limbu MVO, Comd BGN, GM QGE, Gen Sahib, Hon Maj Surjabdr Thapa MVO, WO2 Siri Gurung, Capts Giriraj Thapa, Imanhang and Manilal Thapa

He informed the members that the General sahib had served the Regiment in Hong during the period 1992/1994 as Adjutant and he was the Gurkha Major at that time. He also said that it was the first visit of General sahib to Nepal in his capacity as Colonel of the Regiment. The General and GM sahibs spoke and thanked the members for a gathering and organising a lunch for them. Soon after the welcoming programme, a group photograph was taken outside the restaurant and all members including the guests lined up for lunch at 1130 hours. The food was very simple and tasty and various types of salads were also served by the Restaurant as complimentary.



At about 1230 hours, all guests said good bye and departed the restaurant. Similarly, the members started to disperse for their homes. I hope that every member present, including the guests enjoyed the lunch and a bhet-ghat programme.





POKHARA UPDATE

Maj (Retd) Hukumraj Thapa, Chairman QGEA-Team Pokhara



3 Jan 14 – General Sir Peter Wall Saheb and Maj (Retd) Hukumraj Thapa at the Attestation Parade of 2013 Intake at British Gurkhas Pokhara. In 1983/84 Hukumraj was the Asst Trg Offr in Hong Kong as a Lt (QGO) and the Trg Offr was Capt Peter Wall RE.

For the members of the QGEA Team Pokhara their social diary was quite full this year. Apart from their normal social outings over the year they were pretty busy keeping up pace with additional eight social events. Brief details of the events are as follows:

The first one was on 4 May 13, a dinner with Comdt QGE, Lt Col EG Robinson RE and the GM QGE, Major Ekbahadur Gurung in Lan Hua Chinese. We were proud to hear from the Comdt Saheb that the Regiments flag is flying as high as ever.



4 May 13 – During Nepal Trek of Lt Col E G Robinson RE Comdt QGE and Major Ek Gurung GM QGE

Within a few weeks on 28 May we were pleased to welcome Maj Andy Gooch RE, OC 69 Sqn/Editor QGE Magazine, after 4½ years of absence from Nepal at a dinner at the Lakeside.

On 7 Jul 13, we said farewell to Col Andrew Mills who was retiring from the Army after his fantastic 3½ years post of Defence Attaché /Comd BGN/Director GWS here in Nepal. It was a BBQ in a scenic spot amid the hills of Lumle just outside Pokhara.



28 May 13 – Maj Andy Gooch RE, OC 69/Editor with members of A Team at Chilly Restaurant before the start of the Duty Trek.

Sat 28 Sep was the day to celebrate the 65th QGE Birthday. It was attended by 63 members and their families. Also present were GE, Capt D Gale RE, outgoing and in-coming Proj Offrs Capt PR Brown RE and Capt B Stretton RE, GLQC SLP students Lt J Hawkes RE and Lt R Richardson RE and WO2 Retd Jagat Gurung (2134) from Hong Kong. Among the attendees, believe it or not, our Chief Guest was Col Andrew Mills! He was back within two months of leaving Nepal on a 3 month contract in the post of Head of Security for EU Election Observation Mission. We were very pleased to see him and also his newly appointed Deputy, WO2 (Retd) Bhagwati Pradhan who were on a flying visit from Kathmandu. The highlight of the day was the Raffle Draw where Capt Gale RE, winner of the first prize kindly handed his prize to Chairman A Team QGE as a gift. The first prize was a Big Khasi (photo below).





2 Jan 14 – Group Photo at the Gala Dinner hosted by A Team QGE Pokhara in honour of Gen Sir Peter Wall GCB CBE ADC Gen and Lady Wall (Fiona) at Mt Kailash Resort, Lakeside

On 24 Oct 13, we also entertained Maj Rob Cross ex QGE/ ex GE BGN who so generously gave a bottle of scotch to A Team. He was here on a GWS Charity Mission. Maj Cross and Memsahib have always been busy helping raise funds for the GWT.

On 2 Jan 2014, the A Team hosted a grand dinner in honour of the Chief of the General Staff/Colonel Commandant Brigade of Gurkhas/Chairman Gurkha Welfare Scheme Gen Sir Peter Wall GCB CBE ADC Gen, late QGE and Lady Wall (Fiona) Memsahib at Mt Kailash Resort, Lakeside. General Saheb and Memsahib very much enjoyed meeting the members of the A Team and their wives and best of all the 'dutfut and chyang fang' of the A Team.



General Saheb's speech was met with great humour

On 5 Mar 14, the A Team had the honour to meet Maj Gen T R Urch CBE Late QGE on his first Duty Trek to Nepal as Col of the Regiment accompanied by Maj Ek Gurung GM QGE.



Visit by Col of the Regt, Maj Gen TR Urch CBE



And finally on the family front, 9 Apr 2014 was the grand Wedding Reception Day of my son Amrit Raj who married Darshana Thapa of Bandipur now living in Chitwan. It was again a good excuse for a reunion of the members of QGE. Jai QGE



DHARAN UPDATE

Missing in Action

DARJEELING UPDATE

SSgt (Retd) Rajendra Tamang

The 65th QGE Birthday was celebrated on 28th September 2013 at "Holiday Residency Pradhan Nagar Siliguri Sub Division. The party was organized by the Siliguri members led by SSgt (Retd) Rajendra Tamang. The weather was very pleasant and as such most of the members from Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong, Siliguri and Sukhia Pokhari were present.

The event commenced at 11:00 am with the welcome speech by SSgt (Retd) Rajendra Tamang and offering of khada to the president Lt A K Zimba, senior members Capt Balkrishna Pradhan and SSgt(Retd) Purna Bahadur Chettri. The president then took over the proceedings. He welcomed all the members present for the 65th QGE Birthday Celebration. He offered khadas to the senior members and their ladies then he called for a minute silence to be observed in honour of those members who had passed away that year. He then read out the special routine order issued by Lt Col E G Robinson RE, Commandant The Queen's Gurkha Engineers, after which he presented the financial statement of the last year 2012. The honour of cutting the birthday cake was given to Capt (Retd) Balkrishna Pradhan (Senior officer) and after that a toast was raised to the Queen and QGE, Jai QGE, QGE sadai baliyo rahes.



It was a great gathering with a lot of gopsop, drinks, tidbits, and a delicious lunch. It was an extremely interesting and enjoyable day for all the members and their wives.

The President thanked SSgt (Retd) Rajendra Tamang and all the members of Siliguri for organising such an excellent party. He also thanked Maj Hukumraj Thapa, Lt Ravindra Sahi and Mr Dawa Zimba for helping us to get fund, SRO and the QGE magazine.

Finally, the President on behalf of all the retired members and their families of Darjeeling thanked the Chairman QGEA and all the members of QGE Association for their kind contribution for QGE day. Jai QGE

HONG KONG UPDATE

Lt (QGO) (Retd) Gopal Gurung

Approximately 85 members and families of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers in Hong Kong including guests, celebrated the Regiment's 65th Anniversary on 29 September 2013. Among the guests we were very pleased to invite Capt Purnabahadur Gurung and Capt Dalbahadur Gurung who were on a visit from Nepal. This year we proudly wore the 65th Anniversary tie designed and produced by Capt Chandra Gurung depicting the QGE cap badge. We also owe our thanks to SSgt Dilipsing Gurung and Cpl Khadka Rai for their hard work and their generous contribution towards the success of the function.



The venue for the second consecutive year was the Gurkha Officers' Mess in Perowne Barracks. The old mess is a perfect place to celebrate the QGE Day. The reasons are that it is the centre point for members living in the New Territories and the main cities, it is spacious with all facilities and most of all it brings back memories of those good old days. I mentioned in the last year's publication that Perowne Barracks has been occupied by a charity organization called Crossroads Foundation since 2001. There has been no changes to what I described about of the camp. Once again, Capt C B Gurung Saheb kindly made the arrangement with Crossroads to hold the function in Perowne. He also presented a cheque for HK\$2,500 to Nigel of Crossroads towards the charity on behalf of all QGE members residing in Hong Kong.



The event started with Cpl Khadka's opening speech followed by thanks and a welcome speech by Lt Gopal and then Capt. Chandrabahadur Gurung's short speech in English. The



special routine order (SRO) was read by Maj (Retd) Graham Price Saheb followed by the cutting of the QGE cake and champagne opening ceremonies carried out by the selected members from the group. It is believed that everyone had a great time and certainly for us it brought a lot of good memories back.

Everyone is looking for similar gathering next year. Jai QGE.

GURKHA WELFARE SCHEME PROJECT ENGINEER UPDATE 2014

Capt Ben Stretton RE

I have the great fortune to currently hold the position as the Gurkha Welfare Scheme's Project Engineer. Having arrived at British Gurkhas Pokhara in September 2013 to complete the Survival Nepali Language course (and Doko race!), I took over from Captain Ed Brown in November 13. I am responsible for the GWS Project Cell with a staff of six.

Highlights for GWS this year have included;

- The visit of the Chairman of the Gurkha Welfare Trust – General Sir Peter Wall GCB CBE ADC Gen, visiting HQ GWS for the first time and going on duty trek.
- The visit by the Rt Hon Mr Alan Duncan MP (Minister for DFID) to bring the excellent news of an uplift in funding for the GWS Rural Water and Sanitation Programme.
- The opening of the second GWS Residential Home at AWC Dharan for 26 Welfare Pensioners.
- The first Ex HIMALAYAN SAPPER carried out by 35 personnel from 70 Fd Sqn QGE.
- The opening of the first joint GWS and CAIRN Trust funded school at Mirkot, Gorkha.
- The opening of the Machhapuchhre Higher Secondary School, Kaski; funded by Capt Doug Brain and constructed in the memory of Sapper Ishwor Gurung – 69 Sqn QGE.
- The construction of 75 School projects across Nepal in remote locations with links to the British and Indian Gurkhas.

Ex HIMALAYAN SAPPER. During March 2014 the first Ex

HIMALAYAN SAPPER took place. This saw 35 personnel from 70 Fd Sqn QGE complete two projects for the GWS. These were the refurbishment of the Jubilee Block at AWC Butwal and the refurbishment of the Bhanu Secondary School in close proximity to AWC Taplejung. After completing their projects the team moved onto an adventurous training package. Project Cell GWS was responsible for organising the projects for 70 Fd Sqn and ensuring that stores and tools were ready for the teams when they arrived on site. The Ex had a mutual benefit for both GWS and 70 Fd Sqn, as GWS got some valuable work completed (saving the charity money!) and 70 Fd Sqn were able to use their trade skills in their home country.



The completed RH Dharan by day and lit up at night by candles



Residential Home Dharan. On 21 March 2014 the Rambahadur Limbu VC MVO Residential Home at AWC Dharan opened. The construction of the home started in February 2012 and saw three separate Project Engineers work on the project. The home was designed by top London Architects, Michaelis Boyd Associates and is the second GWS Residential Home in Nepal. When the home in AWC Kaski first opened it was the first of its kind in Nepal and many were sceptical if the concept would take off. GWS now has a waiting list of residents for the home and receives great reviews from the residents themselves.

The Mirkot School, Gorkha. On the 28 March 2014, the GWS working alongside the CAIRN Trust (Child Aid in Rural Nepal) opened a four classroom extension to the existing Mirkot school. The CAIRN Trust was founded by David and Joanna Thomas – David was formerly a Major in 2GR. The Mirkot School had been a previous GWS major school project during 2005 and when The CAIRN Trust approached GWS requesting to complete a joint project the Mirkot School was chosen as the number of pupils had outgrown the number of classrooms. The CAIRN Trust funded the school with GWS providing the design and project supervision throughout. It is hoped in the future that this partnership will continue. Please visit The CAIRN Trust website for more information on their work. <http://www.cairntrust.org/>





Above: The complete Mirkot School. David Thomas of the The CAIRN Trust with GWS Project Supervisor, Maheshkumar Rana at the opening

School Projects. As well as additional projects carried out as tasked by HQ GWS, the Project Cell annually carries out approximately 75 school projects across Nepal. This could be seen as our core function and not only does it allow the work of GWS to spread to remote communities but also supports schools in the poorest areas. Schools have historically been focussed in communities where Gurkhas have been recruited from. Each school requires an applicant – usually a British, Indian or Singapore Police Gurkha and the community is expected to contribute between 12 and 20% of the total construction costs.

The break down of School Projects for financial year 13/14 was;

Ser	Description	No.
1	Major School Project – Mirkot	1
2	Major School Refurbishment Projects	5
3	Minor School Extension Projects	19
4	Minor School Refurbishment Projects	44
5	Miscellaneous Projects	6
	Total Projects	75

AWC Refurbishment. Project Cell GWS is also responsible for the maintenance and refurbishment of the 20 Area Welfare Centres (AWC) across Nepal and India. This sees the team visit all locations to check leaky pipes, solar panels, electricity supplies, wind damaged roofs, new land.....the list goes on! With the ageing of the AWCs, this work is becoming important to ensure that they do not fall into disrepair. Future planned work includes new accommodation blocks in Chitwan, Diktel, Gorkha and Phidim and to provide vehicular access to the final five remote AWCs that are yet to receive it (Bhojpur, Diktel, Khandbari, Lamjung and Rumjatar).

I consider myself very lucky to be able to fill such a rewarding position and be fortunate to work alongside a very strong team within the Project Cell. Mr Resham Pun, Project Manager, who has supported many Project Engineers in his 17 years at GWS continues to go from strength to strength (there really is no stopping him!). Our latest addition to our six man team is Project Supervisor Mr Kunjani Rai. Kunjani is the older brother of LCpl Topjang Rai in 70 Sqn!

Jai GWS!



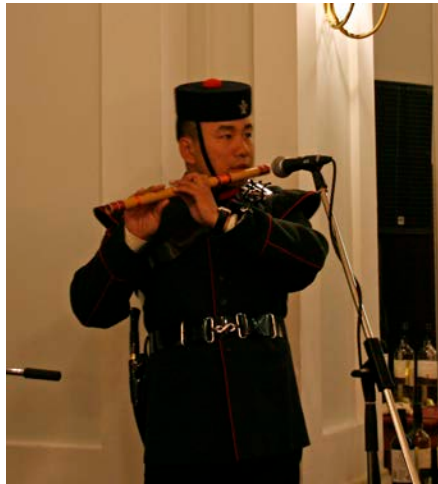
VIP Lt Gen Sir Philip Trousdell and the Residential Home Working Group with RH Dharan residents and GWS management at the opening of RH Dharan.



PHOTOS FROM EX FOUR POINT TIGER BRIEFING TO QGE RAN, 7 JUN 13



QGEA BLACK TIE DINNER – RE HQ MESS, CHATHAM, 28 SEP 13



**THE ASSOCIATION WILL BE
HOLDING ANOTHER BLACK TIE
FUNCTION TO COINCIDE WITH
THE 2015 QGE BIRTHDAY AS PART
OF THE G200 CELEBRATIONS.
PUT IT IN YOUR DIARY NOW**



Over 120 people took part in a highly enjoyable black tie dinner to mark the handover of Colonel of the Regiment from Lt Gen Sir David Bill KCB to Maj Gen TR Urch CBE



67 SQN REUNION AND QGE MINLEY FAREWELL TO LT COL J FERNANDES



All QGE Members of Minley Station gathered at the Bhetghat Gurkha Restaurant, Aldershot on 23 Nov 13 to say farewell to CO 3 RSME Regt and QGE stalwart, Lt Col Jim Fernandes MBE and his wife Gillian. It was a joint celebration as it was also a reunion for 67 Sqn wallahs from Hong Kong, organised by Maj Dilparsad Limbu. Also present were Lt Cols Andy Clee and Roger Morton all of whom had been Tp Comds with 67 Sqn in Hong Kong. All bade Clee Saheb and Fernandes Saheb good luck in their retirement and 2nd careers.



MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES

EARLY DAYS OF THE GURKHA ENGINEERS

Brig Hank Bowen

The Messes. 67 Gurkha Field Squadron did for a time operate its own squadron officers' mess in Kluang when it moved out of Engineer Training Camp (ETC) in 1949 but the first Gurkha Engineers' British Officers Mess was "a house at Dills Corner" in the New Territories of Hong Kong. This was occupied by the officers of 67 and 68 Gurkha Field Squadrons when they moved to the Colony in September 1950. In this mess furniture and equipment were basic field service standard "barrack issue" and no effort was made to buy additional plate, crockery, glassware or furniture. There was, at this time, no real regimental cohesion and the two squadrons soon separated and set up their own messes. In March 1951, with the formation of RHQ, they were reunited at Tam Mi Camp and steps were taken to establish a proper Regimental mess. The British Officers' Mess was established in one half of a Romney hut - unbearably hot in summer - the other half of which was occupied by the King's Gurkha Officers. During 1953, thanks to a generous grant from the Royal Engineers Corps Committee and a long-term interest free loan from the Headquarter Mess in Chatham it was possible to purchase crockery, linen and glassware to raise the standard to above that of basic field service. The HQ Mess also gave on permanent loan a pair of candelabra (circa 1840). The British Officers plunged their hands into their pockets and the flow of purchases and presentations began; the handsome Rosebowl (for inter-troop competition, the first twelve silver goblets (to rise to thirty six), twelve silver ashtrays, a silver mounted inkstand and a silver salver, a silver mounted kukri and a silver quaich.

The single officers were accommodated in two separate single room blocks, located on a slight rise on either side of the Mess with an ablution block in the hollow between. The two bachelor squadron commanders, Jimmy Radford and Murray Dunne, together with the Adjutant (Tom Spring-Smyth), Brigade of Gurkhas Liaison Officer (John Whitehead) and Tony Cronk occupied the senior block. Two, and occasionally three, subalterns (Hank Bowen, Ian Thomson and Peter McMaster) were located in the Commanding Officer's bungalow. It was the practice in the evening, after games and a shower for the officers to congregate on their separate verandas and call for drinks from the Mess Orderly in the mess below.

When the Regiment moved back to Malaya in 1954 it moved into the barracks vacated by 2/7 Gurkha Rifles. The Mess was established in an attap-roofed wooden structure of more character than half a Romney hut in Tam Mi! It overlooked the Sungei Besi Lake (the deepest hole in Asia). There was a separate ante-room and dining room with a bar in between and a large attap roofed patio. Three separate attap buildings provided the accommodation for the single officers. One of these was replaced by a more substantial

timber built structure that was equipped with running hot and cold and flush loos. These were quickly appropriated by the Regimental Second-in-Command, the Adjutant, IO/RSO and OC RHQ Troop. The jungle warriors of the field squadrons had to make do with the more elementary 'loos' and cold showers. Over the years improvements were made - mainly by self-help trade training. A ladies room, the mess office, a tennis court were built. Mess rules were written, re-written and revised and a garden flourished. Over the years a number of pipe-banners, presented by commandants and squadron commanders were displayed and were joined by a collection of portraits of Colonels of the Regiment and Queen's Gurkha Orderly Officers. An item of property from this time is the 'Commandant's Cane' presented by Lieutenant Colonel John Bowring when he handed over command. It was duplicated, by the 'Colonel of Regiment's Cane', in 1970 when General Jon Bowring made his farewell visit as Colonel of The Regiment. Within a few short years the British Officers' Mess in Sungei Besi was rated as one of the best for hospitality and ambience. An article written later in the history does also reflect on life in the early days;

"Some more naive people might consider that the highlights of the Regiment's social life were the Guest Nights but I know better. At no time was the bandobast so smooth, the food more succulent or the conversation more sparkling than at breakfast".

Everything about the breakfast in the Mess was just right. One approached it hungrily after two hours of parades. In the early days no one was allowed to sit down before breakfast for fear of creasing their shorts (Gurkha pattern, knee length, width around the bottom thirty six inches OR waist measurement for the more portly). After all this parading or just standing around smacking ones legs with a Regimental cane one was ready for a meal that was not mere light snack of curried birdseed and an iced grape. There was mulligatawny soup, fruit, fish, bacon and eggs and toast and butter and marmalade and tea and coffee. One had of course a revolting cup of tea at crack of dawn.

The summit of Mess Entertaining was the Breakfast that took place after ceremonial parades. Sometimes these could backfire. On one occasion the Mess provided the whole gamut of *hazari khana*; the visiting Chief Engineer, in whose honour this incredible spread had been provided blanched at the sight of maunds of food at such an early hour and settled for a small piece of pineapple..."

The Gurkha Officers' Mess. Traditionally the Gurkha Officers' Mess - long designated by Indian Army usage as their "club" - rarely rose above efficient functionalism. The Gurkha officers met there after work, or play, to discuss the events of the day and the Gurkha Major held court. There were few if any "single" QGOs living in the Mess and meals were only served on major social occasions by cooks brought in from the Gurkha Sergeants' Mess or the main cookhouse.



The Gurkha Officers' Mess in Sungei Besi, in the family lines, was also in an attap roofed building at the opposite end of the camp, to the British Officers. Over the next few years Gurkha Officers, in turn starting with the Gurkha Major were invited to Guest Nights in the British Officers' Mess and in time they started organising formal evenings of their own. Initially these were in mufti or planters order but in time became more formal with mess kit being worn. However, the main entertainment provided by the Gurkha Officers were their informal badminton evenings.

Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Messes. In Hong Kong the British and Gurkha Sergeants also shared a Romney hut. The British Sergeants shared a cookhouse with the REME Light Aid Detachment (all British Other Ranks) while the Gurkha Sergeants had their own cookhouse. About half of the Gurkha Sergeants were unaccompanied by families. There were only six British Warrant Officer and Sergeants in the Regiment. All were married accompanied and lived in quarters in Sekkong. They, therefore, did not entertain much in camp.

The Gurkha Sergeants main claim to fame was that they acted as the central supply centre for beer at Dashera and other festivals and ensured that they claimed the NAAFI rebate and returned containers account. This kept the mess solvent. However, at this time the Gurkha Sergeants did not run any formal evening mess entertainments. All celebrations were organised on a regimental, squadron or troop basis.

When the Regiment moved to Sugei Besi they were joined by a 11 Field Squadron RE and 410 Plant Troop RE so there were now sufficient mess members for a viable British Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess. This was established in a building alongside the Officers' Mess and soon developed a very good reputation.

The Gurkha Sergeants Mess was located in the centre of the camp and developed a reputation for ambushing young British Officers who had been playing volleyball or basketball with their troops. As time went on they did start to arrange the occasional 'cocktail' party - beer and rum but the more formal parties had to wait until the mess was firmly established in Kluang in 1962.

The Families. The Gurkha families were grouped together in family lines. Ideally they would be located near to the unit barracks but this was not always possible.

In the early days in Malaya families were accommodated in tents but slowly and surely conditions improved, first into **basha** huts and eventually into permanent brick or concrete buildings. In Hong Kong the families were located in two separate camps, One group were located in Tam Mi Camp and the others in quarters in Whitfield Barracks, Kowloon, some 15 to 20 miles away. A WRVS lady was located in Whitfield Barracks together with a married accompanied Regimental policeman and dealt with any problems that may arise. The senior ranks, including the Gurkha Major lived in Tam Mi.

In Sugei Besi all the Gurkha families were accommodated in the family lines of the camp. This meant that the Regiment could for the first time act as a 'family'. There was a family hospital run by the dhai amahs and the WRVS lady.

As happens now the Gurkha tends to marry young but at that time he could not bring his family down from the hills until he obtained "family permission". The scale of family permission was set at twenty-five per cent of establishment. The common practice was for all Gurkha officers, warrant officers and staff-sergeants to have their families with them on every tour. Sergeants and rank and files had to wait until their third or even fourth tour, before they could bring their family down to join them in the Regiment. Tours to UK, which prior to 1997 did not allow for family permission, could disrupt the normal pattern, and the availability of quarters affected the balance of allocations between squadrons. The granting of family permission was strictly controlled by the Gurkha Major after discussion with the Squadron Gurkha Captains. The junior rank who obtained "family permission" at the six year point, ie after two tours, had an outside chance of having a second spell of "family permission" on his last tour before completing his service at fifteen years but generally unless a man reached the rank of staff-sergeant he would have only one spell of family permission in fifteen years of service. Sergeants normally served for eighteen years and so would be guaranteed two tours of family permission, while officers and warrant officers could have a number of accompanied tours.

WELCOME TO QGE, OR 'THE CASE OF THE WRONG TROUSERS' - 2LTS MORTON AND WARDLAW

Lt Col R Morton

On arrival in Hong Kong on 9th February 1993, 2Lts Roger Morton and Richard Wardlaw had been treated to the normal procedures at the airport: met by the living in members of the British Officers' Mess, with baggage being despatched to Perowne Barracks whilst all officers proceeded into town for an evening out – apparently the best way to counter jet lag. Rather naively, we concluded that this was to be our initiation into The Queen's Gurkha Engineers. What was to follow was much more elaborate....

The first couple of days of our tour literally flew by getting to know all about our new home and the soldiers that we would have the privilege of commanding, so the chance to return to Kowloon for an evening out with our brother officers was eagerly awaited, where we would visit bars that formed part of the subaltern folklore: Someplace Else, Joe Bananas and Ned Kelly's Last Stand to name but a few. As we met in the Mess and plans were formed I was advised that I was dressed perhaps a little too smartly and was despatched to change, reassured that a pair of jeans would be appropriate: something I would come to regret the following morning.



Cpts Ian Slack, Iain Stewart and Brandon Wellard led the way, with 2Lt Will Judge (who had been on the same commissioning course with us) reassuring us that it would be a fun evening. Kowloon was indeed the place to be on a Saturday night; after a few drinks we were really beginning to feel that we had settled into life in QGE. Imagine our surprise when we decided to visit a second bar at 2100hrs and were apprehended en route by a Royal Hong Kong Police Force patrol. The initial query of whether we were Black Watch soldiers (the resident infantry battalion with a reputation for being feisty in town) was promptly followed by being frisked, handcuffed and military ID removed. We were bundled into to a van and much to our protestations driven off to Tsim Tsau Tsui police station.

MALE
C.R.O. No. 95381
Name: MORTON, RS

ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE FORCE
T. No.
Classification No.
This space is reserved for F.P. BUREAU

RIGHT HAND (右手)

1.—Right Thumb 大指	2.—R. Fore Finger 二指	3.—R. Middle Finger 中指	4.—R. Ring Finger 四指	5.—R. Little Finger 尾指
(Fold)				

Impressions to be so taken that the flexure of the last joint shall be immediately above the line marked (Fold). If the impression of any digit be defective a second print may be taken above it.
When a finger is missing or so injured that the impression cannot be obtained or is deformed and yields a bad print, the fact should be noted under REMARKS.

LEFT HAND (左手)

6.—Left Thumb 大指	7.—L. Fore Finger 二指	8.—L. Middle Finger 中指	9.—L. Ring Finger 四指	10.—L. Little Finger 尾指
(Fold)				

LEFT HAND (左手)
Plain impressions of the four fingers taken simultaneously

Plain impressions of THUMBS taken simultaneously

RIGHT HAND (右手)
Plain impressions of the four fingers taken simultaneously

Impressions taken by Rank Date
Classified at F.P.B. by Rank Date

A wanted man: R S Morton's fingerprints

Brandon Wellard had been particularly vociferous and at some point he, Richard and myself were separated from the others and led to the cells. At this point I suspected foul play and called a guard. A Chinese police constable arrived and dutifully fetched his inspector. I asked for a telephone call in order to call a lawyer, but was met with nonchalance by being denied on a technicality of our military status. It was now around 2300hrs and we were left to reflect on the situation without any inkling of how it might develop. The cell was basic by any standards and the excuse for a window offered little outlook onto freedom. Irate at being locked up I recall the Chinese guards returning and threatening us with a hosing down with cold water if we continued to insist on our innocence.

At around 0500hrs, Brandon, Richard and I were led to a room where we were fingerprinted and charged with drinking in a public place (contrary to Sections 83(1) & (3) & Section 150 of the Public Order Ordinance, Cap 133, Laws of Hong Kong, to be specific). If faced with finding yourself present early on a Sunday morning in a police station in Kowloon, I can assure you that you are in dubious company alongside some very odd characters. Richard and I were still a little suspicious about the legitimacy of the ruse, but when the Inspector told us that we had been bailed by our Squadron second in command (Capt Sean Harris), we were convinced that a man of such high morals would have no part in anything other than something entirely legitimate. Our journey back to Perowne in the back of a Land Rover was a long and silent one as we prepared to be delivered direct to RHQ where we would have to answer to the Second-in-Command: Major Nigel Fenn.

ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE FORCE

LOCATION: Tsim Sha Tsui Police Station
OFFICER IN CHARGE OF CASE: Insp. R.D. Brooks
INTERPRETER'S NAME: /
LANGUAGE/DIALECT: English
TIME & DATE: At 05.04 hrs on 12-FEB-93
NAME OF DEFENDANT: MORTON RS

You are charged with the offence shown below.

You are not obliged to say anything unless you wish to do so, but whatever you say will be taken down in writing and may be given in evidence.

Charge:- (A) DRUNK DISORDERLY - Contrary to Section 83 (1) & (3) & Section 150 of the Public Order Ordinance, Cap 133, Laws of Hong Kong.
Statement of offence:- MORTON RS, you are charged that on the 12 th day of February, 1993 at 11 Look Rd., TST Kowloon, in Hong Kong contrary to the regulations made under Section 83A of the said Ordinance.
Particulars of offence:-

At 05.07 hrs Deft. received a copy of this document.

Do you wish to say anything?

You are not obliged to say anything unless you wish to do so but whatever you say will be taken down in writing and may be given in evidence.

Defendant states:-
nil.
RS Morton

Print 48 (Rev. 7/82)

Guilty as charged

As we were marched into the Adjutant's office, my attire immediately singled me out and I found it impossible to explain to Capt Ty Urch how it was that an officer of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers came to be wearing a pair of jeans. By this stage it was past 0700hrs, I was unshaven, had been in a cell all night and had lost any vestige of self-esteem. But the situation was about to worsen.

We were then marched into the Commandant's office and I became the centre of attention once again for all of the wrong reasons. Maj Fenn asked Capt Wellard what had happened to which he replied: "We were drunk and walking down the road singing." Richard and I looked on in disbelief; we were



each asked for our version of events, to which we replied that we were not drunk and were simply walking from one bar to the other. When challenged: "Are you accusing a captain of the Corps of Royal Engineers of lying" we both replied a resounding "Yes".

At this point the Commandant's phone rang. "Yes Brigadier" replied Maj Fenn as he picked up the handset, "I have them here sir, I would rather deal with it myself Brigadier, yes sir, if you insist sir, back to the UK sir". We were all doomed. As he replaced the handset Maj Fenn informed us that Commander 48 Brigade had decided that we were not fit to serve in Hong Kong and had ordered him to return all 3 of us to the UK at once. Ours were to be the shortest troop commanders' tours in the history of QGE and I could only muse over what the implications would be for a Capt Wellard whose fate would likely be more severe given his seniority. We were placed under 'Mess Arrest' and faced a long walk from RHQ. I decided to apologise to Brandon for not backing him up and he confessed that he did not know why he had come out with his version of events; Richard found it impossible to speak to Brandon.

Richard and I did agree on one issue, however. We decided that the only honourable course of action was to resign our commissions and we made a pact to write letters to that effect as soon as we reached the Mess. As we climbed the steps opposite Gordon Hard it was already past 0900hrs. Exhausted, embarrassed, hot, dehydrated and preparing myself to face my fate back in the UK, I entered the Mess to find all of the British Officers assembled to welcome us formally to the Mess and about to sit down to a champagne breakfast.

Emotions were highly charged, but I remember a few thoughts: words cannot describe the relief that I felt, but as our fellow officers looked on I did not at first comprehend how the plan was hatched. Even with a glass of champagne in his hand, Richard was still not convinced that it had all been a ruse, it took our officer commanding (Major Mark Stevenson) to grip him, so completely had he swallowed the hook! Over breakfast it transpired that the inspector commanding the patrol was an old friend of Will Judge who had agreed to assist in an elaborate charade to 'welcome' his colleagues to the last bastion of the British Empire. Whilst Richard and I were indeed led off the cells, Brandon had been extricated at the last safe moment once 'sano sahebharu' has been safely locked up. The reality was that he and the others had been languishing in the police inspector's rest room. Furthermore none of the Chinese constables were aware of the ruse or the fact that it had to be concluded by the end of the shift because the inspector's superiors had not sanctioned the plan. The Squadron 2IC was also in on the ruse and Commander 48 Brigade was none the wiser about the event, rather another regimental officer had made the phoney call, which had sealed our fate.

We both learnt a great deal from those 12 hours about officership, good form, having a sense of humour and who to trust! Fifteen years later Richard was himself Commandant QGE and came to give a voice of experience lecture to officer cadets at RMAS, where I was Chief Instructor.



Capt's Morton and Wardlaw, this time correctly dressed as officers of QGE!

As I listened attentively at the rear of the Woolwich Hall I recall with some trepidation seeing a slide appear of the Hong Kong skyline, wondering what public embarrassment I was about to be subjected to. Was my reputation at the Academy about to be ripped to shreds? I could not have been more wrong: the message was all about doing the right thing and how 2 young officers were prepared to fall on their swords for the sake of their honour. Had our experience been a test of our ability to do the right thing, probably not. But it did demonstrate that we were both prepared to do the right thing when called upon so to do.

HAVE I REALLY 'FINALLY SEEN SENSE'?

Ian Slack



Ian Slack served in the Royal Engineers and was medically discharged in 1997 having lost the sight in his right eye. During his nine years in the Corps he served with the QGE in the Falklands, UK, Hong Kong and Brunei (69

Gurkha Fd Sqn RE and 67 Gurkha Fd Sqn RE).

On 4 August 1914 Sir Edward Grey, Britain's foreign secretary, said: "The lamps are going out all over Europe, we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime." A century has



passed since the start of the Great War, and I was keen to do something to show my respect in memory of all those lost and injured in conflicts over the intervening years.

I have always tried to do my bit to support forces charities and particularly identify with the work of Blind Veterans UK, so I decided to combine the two passions.

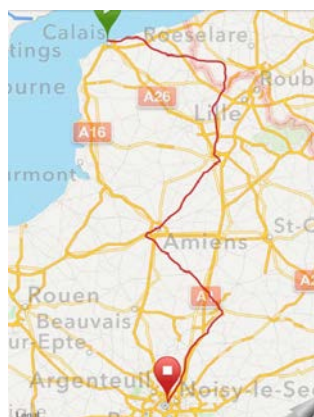


In 1997, I began my unfortunate relationship with sight loss, when a freak accident with a soft fluffy indoor football, took the sight in my right eye. I didn't take the hint and continued to play rugby until 2012 when, whilst on a rugby tour to Asia, I contracted a rare parasitic infection in the other eye. This

left me pretty much completely blind for a few weeks. This was a huge shock and a real 'eye opener' (sorry) to the plight of those suffering sight loss. After getting my sight back, I 'Finally Saw Sense': I retired from playing rugby and started to raise funds for Blind Veteran's UK (formerly St Dunstons).

Last year, unfortunately, blindness reared its ugly head once more, when my Father was diagnosed with Age Related Macular Degeneration (ARMD). This caused him to lose his sight over a matter of weeks, leaving him mobile but unable to read, write or drive. This has had a huge impact on him, affecting his quality of life and confidence. I know that with help and training he will be able to regain 'a' quality of life but this takes time, training and acceptance. Since 1915, Blind Veterans UK's have helped veterans relearn vital life skills and has provided them with the tools, training and recreation opportunities as well as long-term nursing, residential and respite care. They also help their members learn the three A's of 'acceptance', 'adaptation' and 'achievement' at their Brighton, Llandudno and Sheffield centres.

Having only started cycling in May 2013, I decided that this 'campaign' should be on two wheels and have planned two major challenges:

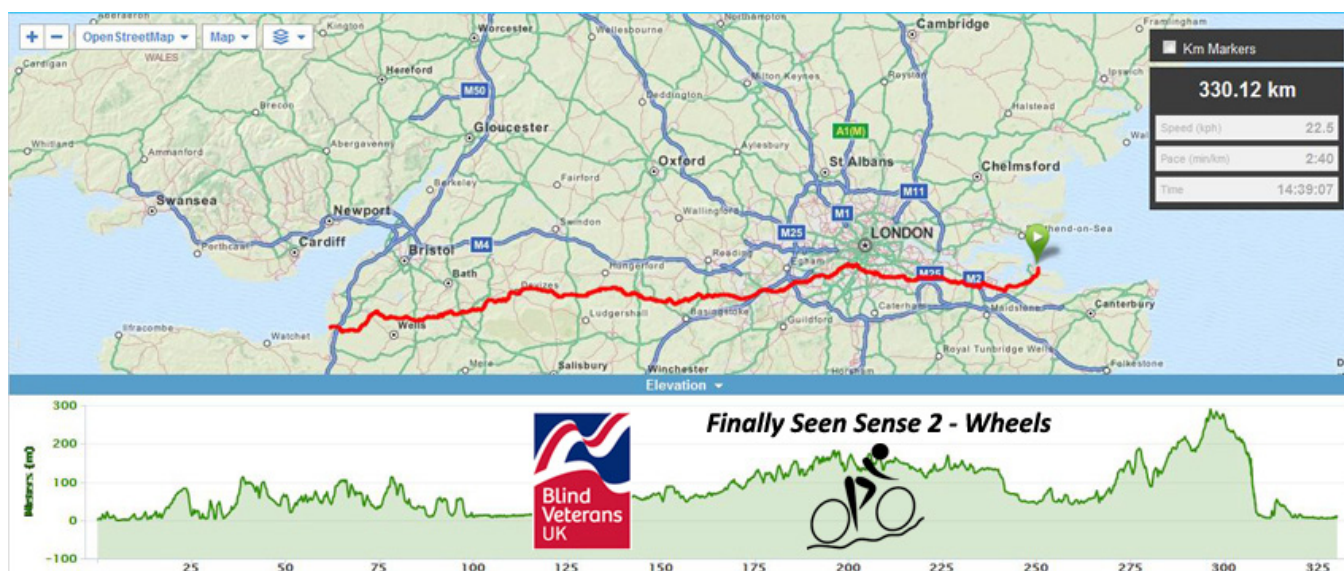


On 4th August 2014, I will take part in 'Unite and Bike for Heroes', a 530km memorial ride across Northern France passing through Ypres, Arras, Amiens, Compiègne before arriving in Paris. During the four day ride, I will pay my respects at a number of the major battlefields and memorials.

While this will be a poignant (and no doubt 'dusty') journey, I wasn't convinced this was a big enough challenge and so I added an additional ordeal in the guise of 'Chase the Sun'. This ride will start on the Kent coast at sunrise on the summer solstice and take us to Chatham, Minley, Sandhurst and over Salisbury Plain and the Cheddar Gorge before we reach the West coast some 330km later. The aim being, to complete the ride by sunset, just 16 hrs, 38 mins and 19 secs later! (To put this in perspective, this is the distance between Chatham and Liverpool or Pokhara and Dhangadhi in less than 17 hours!). I am slowly realising what a daunting endeavour this is and with over 3,500 km to cycle in training, I am not sure I have really 'Finally Seen Sense' after all! I shall, however, mostly, be spending the year in lycra!

Whilst I am learning a lot about myself and offering my respects throughout these challenges; the main aim is to raise funds for this important cause. I know first-hand the impacts of sight loss and how much the right help can ease the impact and therefore, am really keen to do what I can to increase awareness and support.

By the time this goes to press, it is likely that we will have completed (or will be about to undertake) the challenges.



However, there may still be places on the Unite and Bike for Heroes cycle ride from 4th to 8th August 2014 If interested, please contact me direct or Aaron Tillyer at fundraising@blindveterans.org.uk

If you want to follow my exploits through the year and help spread the word, please Like and Share my facebook page at: www.facebook.com/FSS2wheels or for those not on Facebook visit my website / blog at:

www.finallyseensense.com

If you would like to donate, You can still do so through: www.justgiving.com/FSS2

finallyseensense@icloud.com



About Blind Veterans UK (Formerly St Dunstons)

Founded in 1915 by Sir Arthur Pearson, (Owner of the Evening Standard and founder of the Daily Express) to help those who had lost their vision in the First World War by giving them the care and rehabilitation they needed to lead constructive, self-sufficient lives.

Nearly a century later, Blind Veterans UK not only cares for ex-Service men and women blinded in action, but for veterans who have lost their sight through accident, illness or old age. They have three centres (in Brighton, Llandudno and Sheffield) that provide residential and respite care plus sports facilities, as well as qualified welfare staff who support blind veterans across the UK to live independently within their own communities.

QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS MEDICAL OFFICER - A PERSONAL VIEW OF HONG KONG 1976-1978

Lt Col (retd) JW Lowe TD MB BS MRCP(UK) FRCPATH

I look out of my study window into a beautiful clear sunny North Yorkshire morning. There is the merest hint of colour change in the trees and outside that slight chill of approaching Autumn. Having recently retired after thirty five years of forensic pathology I feel that same chill of approaching Autumn as it lightly touches my life.

It was some way down the list of news items on the BBC website, something which caught my eye. The decommissioning the last two RAF VC10's from service.

In an instant it was the week before Christmas 1976 and the VC10 was just straightening out after the sharp right hand turn

over red and white chequered concrete of Checkerboard hill. James, our son was 9 months old and grisly from the long, long flight from RAF Brize Norton. As a MO in HK I would soon discover the benefit of a dose of Phenergan for infants moving back and forwards on the trooping flights between UK and what used to be called the Far East.

Whether it was the first time into RAF Kai Tak or whether you had done it a hundred times the descent was always hypnotic. As the plane straightened out it dropped into the bowl of Kowloon, surrounded by high rise flats so that you could see into the rooms a few metres beyond the wing tip. Then suddenly the plane was on the concrete shaking with the engines on full reverse thrust as the end of the runway and the harbour rushed towards us.

At thirty thousand feet, an hour or so earlier the sun had come up to reveal scattered cotton wool clouds and that amazing spectrum of colour change towards the still dark ground. Whilst still at several hundred feet above Kowloon the whiff of the 'fragrant harbour' would hit you. This fragrance was more of a pungent rotten egg smell however.

Nothing in the initial briefings about my first posting with the Army prepared me for the impact of the sights, smells, sounds and the heat of HK. I had spent five years at medical school in a dreary, cold, grey Northern city during the Miner's strikes, 3 day week and electricity cuts. This was followed by a year as a Houseman during which I rarely escaped the hospital and when I did it was a losing battle to stay awake. Life then changed dramatically with the next 5 months at the Royal Army Medical College at Millbank, RMA Sandhurst and Mychett. Towards the end of our initial military training my group of 27 newly commissioned medical officers was given a list of 27 postings and told by 09.00hrs the following day to have a name against each of the jobs. Late into the night the discussions (and drinking) continued. I was one of the last three people left standing so to speak and that's how the three HK postings were decided.

The Senior Medical Officer (SMO) Lt Col JC ('Jesus Christ') Porter and his wife had made sure that the small bungalow on Buffs Avenue in Sek Kong Village was comfortable and clean. Nevertheless when the tea towel was lifted from the sandwiches she had kindly made, we were startled at the sight of enormous cockroaches (I recognised *Periplaneta americana* from RAMC entomology lectures) which scuttled noisily away. We had clearly interrupted their lunch.

The next several days, running up to Christmas involved local orientation and coping with jet lag – Wo Ping, On Kee Market, the NAAFI, Sek Kong, Phoenix Cinema, mug shot photographs in Kam Tin, MRS staff, on call rotas etc...

Perhaps it was residual jetlag or one of the ear infections that European children were plagued by in Hong Kong however James' screaming effectively disrupted the entire Christmas Day Holy Communion service in the Garrison Church. We were naturally mortified, wanting to quietly integrate into our first Army posting.



Medical cover in the New Territories was organised through the MRS in Sek Kong with the larger regiments having dedicated medical officers and the smaller units such as Gurkha Engineers (later during my tour to become QGE) having med cover provided by 18 Field Ambulance. As one of only two MO's (me, a Capt and the SMO a Lt Col) with 18 Fd Amb - I was immensely fortunate to be told to look after Gurkha Engineers at Perowne as their MO.

My day started early from Sek Kong with a half hour or so drive across the New Territories, to Perowne. Usually this would be in a self-drive Land Rover, occasionally a Land Rover ambulance and for one week I even had use of the SMO's staff car and driver (an olive green Austin 1800 with obligatory white seat covers) when he was away in the UK.

Each morning I would do the hairpin bends at the bottom of Route Twisk, through Sek Kong village and Kam Tin, passed the gates of TDBG (Training Depot Brigade of Gurkhas) and Ah Lee the tailor. Through Yuen Long and then passed Bowring Camp to Perowne. Much of the route in the 1970's was through green paddies still worked by water buffalo.

Sick parade was at 0700hrs where I was assisted with translation by LCpl Deoman Limbu, my medical orderly. Sick parade for the soldiers was the usual collection of twisted ankles, knees and other sports injuries with coughs, colds and gut upsets also. It didn't really take long to pick up Gurkhali for the main presenting symptoms.

It was the returning unit expedition to the New Hebrides which gave a little more interest to the morning sick parade. Unfortunately it was considered too much of a luxury to have a MO on the exercise. And whilst the malaria prophylaxis recommended at that time was in general reasonable in SE Asia, no local advice was sought in theatre and consequently over half of the returning soldiers developed Vivax malaria (for the most part debilitating but not dangerous). The local New Hebrides strain of malaria being resistant to Proguanil.

Another area of interest on my sick parade was the effect of the nearby Rose Garden Motel. It struck me as odd why the New Territories, 20 miles by 25 miles or so should need a motel. Anyway LCpl Limbu would walk in to the MI room with one of the Rose Garden victims and announce "*Trouble with Phoenix Sahib*". LCpl Limbu seemed unable to pronounce the word penis. This would then prompt a referral to STD also known as the Special Clinic at BMH (British Military Hospital) in Kowloon. Treatment and contact tracing was then done by several big rough, burly Regimental Medical Assistants (RMA's) who used to tell me they had "*seen it all Doc*". The weekly indent for several gross of condoms didn't appear to make any impact on the STD referral rate.

The second part of the daily sick parade was seeing locally employed Chinese civilians aided with translation from Ho Chung May. For the most part the locally employed civilians dramatically improved after a medical examination and reassurance that all was well.

At 10 o'clock I would walk to the GFH (Gurkha Family Hospital) where the real medicine was practised. The three resident midwives, ably led by the formidable Tulu Lama were all Darjeeling trained and qualified. The wives of serving Gurkha soldiers spent only 2 years accompanying their husbands out of 15 years military service. The military obstetrics services in Hong Kong were, unlike much of Nepal at that time, excellent and in the 2 years accompanying their husbands it was not uncommon for wives to have 3 pregnancies. The biggest part of my GFH clinic was ante-natal, checking on the health of the mum to be and monitoring the pregnancy. Unlike soldiers, the wives when they came from Nepal needed extensive medical screening. Almost all would need treatment for intestinal hook worm, roundworm and trichuriasis, and you had to constantly think about the possibility of TB of every possible site.

Almost all the babies were delivered in the GFH by the midwives. Their skills were outstanding and you knew that as a MO if they called you with an obstetric problem it was going to be serious. We did however have excellent helicopter CASEVAC support in the New Territories so that obstetric problems could be seen by a consultant obstetrician at BMH within the hour. On those hot sweltering summer nights I would wait in the Land Rover ambulance at the landing zone initially apprehensive and then reassured when that dazzling search light on the Wessex changed night into day.

During a brief secondment to Paklihawa in Nepal, obstetrics was a different kettle of fish. I was the only MO for miles, no helicopter support and the nearest hospital hours away on a potholed road. On my second day I recall a desperately ill woman with massive postpartum haemorrhage, the floor of the treatment room slippery with blood. The patient literally white as a sheet. I also recall my intense relief when massage and intravenous drugs finally stopped the bleeding. This was one patient I was convinced we were going to lose. I was not so lucky with the four cases of Tetanus (one survived) and five cases of Japanese B Encephalitis (all died) in local civilians. There was no intravenous therapy, intensive care or ventilator at the MRS Paklihawa.

During my GFH clinics at Perowne, Tulu Lama would fortify the Doctor Sahib with small bowls of food and introduced me to Aloo Dum, classic comfort food.

The last call of the morning was to Gordon Hard Medical Centre next to the slipway of Gordon Hard Sailing Club. The Med Centre was in a Nissen hut which was painted silver and was dazzling in the sun. This med centre was for wives and children of British officers billeted in that part of the New Territories. To finish the morning there would be occasional house call to families in the Pearl Island hirings.

Finally, before returning to Sek Kong for afternoon clinics it would be an ice cold Nimbu Pani at the Officers' Mess and occasionally, as a special treat, Chao Fan.

One particular episode during my time with QGE has lived with me and at odd moments will rush back into consciousness in high definition video replay and a sudden feeling of dread and



anxiety. During an early summer new OCs came out from the UK to join the unit. Arriving in HK from UK in summer always took some acclimatisation. The acclimatisation process was always accompanied by poor sleep, utter exhaustion and minor infections, particularly skin infections. The tell-tale sign for the MO was a persisting flushed complexion and constant thin wet film on the forehead

Within several weeks or so of the arrival I saw one of the OCs in his office. Acclimatisation was going well but there was a minor but persisting skin infection. An antibiotic was indicated and perhaps because of abdominal upset etc.. I decided that an intramuscular injection was appropriate. The injection was duly administered while we chatted and having sheathed the needle and tidied up, I looked up, because the OC had stopped talking. For me came the shock and that pit of the stomach feeling of seeing his head fall back, him rapidly lose consciousness and his face turn a deathly pallor as all colour drained instantly. I had seen more than enough patients like this as a junior doctor when answering the cardiac arrest bleep. The drills kicked in and when in the recovery position I checked for the two big pulses, the carotid and the femoral and I have to say for several seconds thought this was indeed a cardiac arrest and that I had probably killed the OC. There was some relief when a weak, slow pulse was felt. After another eternity he began to show signs of coming round. The pulse was still dreadfully slow but assisted with a shot of atropine gradually over half an hour he had improved. Nevertheless there was a precautionary helicopter trip to the ITU at BMH. I'm pleased to say that the OC made a full recovery from the minor infection and the complications of Captain Lowe's treatment. My own recovery was not quite as complete, for me it was intensely traumatic and still provides uncomfortable flash backs. As with many serious episodes there is always an element of farce. I was subsequently told that as the OC was being stretchered into the waiting ambulance the duty piper outside the RHQ was practicing a lament. Prematurely it appeared.

Any overseas posting will have its dark side. In the week we had arrived in HK two drunk non-Gurkha British soldiers committed an appalling murder of a civilian in Kam Tin. Two years later the two men were on our return flight to the UK. Both men, escorted by RMP and handcuffed to their seats had had their death sentence commuted to life and were returning to Colchester MCTC. This and the deaths of two colleagues during my tour brought home the amalgam of 'Fantasy Island' and the harsh reality of life and death in HK forty years ago.

Almost as quickly my mind's eye is replaced by the green rolling fields of North Yorkshire and thoughts of the plans for our village open gardens 2014. Visions of VC10's and HK fading away as quickly as they came.

RATO RUMAL, KHUKURI BHIREKO⁶

Hon Maj Bharatsing Limbu

Kluang, Malaya: November 1950. We (the recruits) arrived in Singapore in a ship from Calcutta in November 1949. Most of us were down with sea sickness rendered by the choppy seas for 6 days. We had disembarked there in frail state and spent the night in a Gurkha transit camp. With the exception of 4 young recruit clerks other men of the party were WW2 veterans of the Indian Army. A number of them were decorated with gallantry medals, i.e. IDSM, MM, MiD and Jangi Inanms⁷. On the next day we were met at Kluang Railway station by a young and cheerful officer carrying a No5 rifle on his shoulder and a bandolier of .303 around his waist; he was Captain JF Allen RE. From there we were taken to the Gurkha Training Squadron ETC to be met by OC, Maj CEH Edwards MC RE (brother of Brig JH Edwards (ex-QGE Commandant)). He subsequently became the first OC 68 Squadron in Kluang and Hong Kong for a short period. A number of Gurkha ex-boys from the Boys Company, Sungei Patani joined us for the Basic Infantry Training. The instructors were drawn from Gurkha Infantry Regiments. Ours was No.4 Training Party, all previous ones were training cadres run for the men transferred from Gurkha Infantry Regiments.

Hong Kong – Sept 1950. From Hong Kong a number of British Regiments were sent to the Korean War and 2 resident Gurkha Infantry Battalions viz 2/6 and 2/10 to Malaya to contain the increased communist terrorism. While 68 Squadron (barely 4 months old) was beginning to settle down as an independent entity, both Squadrons (67 about 1 year old) were moved to Hong Kong at very short notice.

On arriving there by sea from Singapore in Sept 1950 we were transported to the Fan Lin Railway Station on the same day. Again, the voyage from Singapore was worse than the previous one. From Fan Lin, in a cool and pleasant evening both Squadrons marched by troops in threes to our new home in Beas Stables near the Fan Lin Golf Course, beating madals and joyfully singing "Lahureko relimai fesanai ramro, Rato rumal relimai khukuri bhireko and Naini tala naini tala, ghumi aayo rela, ankhamalaune kalo gajal, bul bulaima tela" (2 of the most popular "Lahure" numbers of both World Wars) with high spirits and expectations. It really was a great moment for a young soldier like me. Also it was QGE's first and historical entry into Hong Kong in a truly traditional lahure style. I had thought also then of our fathers/forefathers who journeyed through the sun baked vast dusty and dry plains of India at the call of the Crown in both World Wars. After the Wars they had come home with many fascinating and hair raising battle stories; there was no denying that they had become heroes overnight in their own rights. They were admired by everyone in their villages. It touched me more than anything else and I was much determined then to become a Lahure and see the outside world when I grew up.

On arriving in our new home we were received by Edwards Saheb and his advance party with much longed for hot teas,

6 A handkerchief (in my hand), a Kukuri at my waist.

7 IDSM, Indian Distinguished Service Medal.



well-cooked dal-bhat, spicy meat curry and hot and sour chutney. It was the best treat of the evening and I ate full to my liking to get back the appetite and energy that were lost during the sickening voyage. Fully satisfied, I slept well that night. On waking up the following morning I trained my eyes far and wide to realise that I was in a strange place and geographically quite different from Malaya. With some hasty preparations we celebrated Dashera 1950 successfully. It was my first Army Dashera and was celebrated with much happiness.

After some time 67 Squadron moved to the Dill's Corner Camp in Lo Wu and 68 Squadron to a wartime camp in Fan Lin to take care of the two border points at Lo Wu and Sha Tau Kok. Both Squadrons were equipped with MMG, 3" mortar, PIAT and anti-tank guns and some tracked personnel carriers. The Squadrons functioned independently or "indi-pindi" as we say; the two squadron's Gurkha Captains were no exception. Also, there was a good presence of British other ranks from the RE, as troop sergeants, orderly room, QM, MT and signals as well as attached personnel from RAPC, REME, RAEC and RAMC. Also there were two Indian sergeants seconded from the Indian Sappers and Miners. Given this assorted scenario on some occasions the chains of command and control were misinterpreted inviting some confusion amongst British and Gurkha ranks. Later, this matter was amicably addressed once for all when both the Squadrons, less their indi-pindiness came together under one command for good!

Suge Besi Camp Nov 1954 - Nov 1961. We moved to this camp near Kuala Lumpur. It was situated on high ground about 4km from the Sungei Besi tin mining town. The Officers' Mess was placed on the highest point commanding a panoramic view all around with a tin mining lake just below it. The barrack rooms, offices, quarter guard room etc.. were on one side and on the other side were the Gurkha married Quarters, school, mandir, Gurkha OR messes, Regimental farm etc.. Beside the Gurkha married soldiers there were men of other professions; religious teachers, school teachers, midwives, goldsmiths, tailors, cobblers, barbers, dhobies, tea vendors, photographers, grocers etc.... The roti-wallahs, ice-cream and wild boar meat sellers were also allowed in the Camp during the day. The only exceptions to this long inventory were the bhisteas (water carriers), syces and horses as employed in the Indian Army in the peace time. When the Regiment moved camp they also followed it. Such was a complete mutli-structured traditional set up of our Regiment in Malaya.

The First Gurkha Major. Both Squadrons were very young and growing up independently. The Gurkha married quarters were in Whitfield Barracks in Kowloon City. The "Family Wallahs" used to join their wives and children from Friday evening till the first parade on Monday morning. They were looked after by one midwife and one married Regimental Policeman. Obviously Major Permansing Saheb had a very difficult time, frequently shuttling between two separate Squadron Camps and to the Whitfield married quarters to check on their wellbeing. He was married but remained a "muglish" in Malaya and Hong Kong. He was able to hold

his "durbars" twice in 68 Squadron during his tenure. He was alone and in an awkward situation; he was neither a designated RHQ person nor had any better place to lean on for the necessary support. However, one should accept that he did his best under the unfavourable situations. The situations were greatly different when RHQ came into being.

The Regimental Cap Badge. Initially it was designed and painted on a large hardboard for the sheer purpose of beautifying the Gurkha Squadron Camp in ETC Kluang. It was placed at a suitable point between the Squadron office and Gurkha cookhouse for all to see. As a member of the Regimental Football Team I was there from Hong Kong for the second round of the Nepal Cup competition for a month in 1954. One day the designer of this piece of paintwork asked me "how do you like it?" I said "it's very nice" and I asked him "who designed it?" "it was me" he answered. "it's beautiful" I replied again. It was taken out to decorate the Dashera Ghar on Kalaratri once a year. The designer and this board were still there when I was posted to Gurkha Squadron ETC in 1957. The two different branches of the British Army are so nicely blended in it that it eventually it became the official number one item of our Regimental Dress and symbol of our Regiment. The fellow who created it loved the Gurkhas so much that he had come back to the Squadron for three tours. He was a lively man and wore a bald head. He was the late SSgt T H (Curly) Jones RE. I reckon that this fact is mentioned in our Regimental History.

The British / Gurkha Relationship. In Kluang this was the best than at any other time and fruition came through everyone's understanding, goodwill, trust and perseverance. They were a united force at work and at play. The Regiment was now getting maturity; it was one of the best units in the Gurkha Brigade and was also regarded as the RSME in the Far East.

Together they have raised large sums of funds for the Gurkha Welfare Appeal when the British troops left Malaysia in 1970 and also generously donated good portions of their salaries to this appeal. The British and Gurkha wives stood together to collect more funds through the sales of numerous Gurkha wives handicrafts and other materials at the jumble sales and "melas". Even the "bulbuls" (British and Gurkha School Children) had made this appeal richer by additional funds that were collected through door to door visits to married quarters and offices. Here the bond of their unique relationship was clearly demonstrated.

There are many other chapters of their togetherness but I will rather mention just a few owing to limited space in this journal:

The Perowne Scholarship. For the education of the Gurkha soldiers' children created in memory of the late General Perowne who was GOC 17 Gurkha Infantry Division in Malaya and the 1st Colonel Commandant QGE.

The Pahar Trust. Founded by the late Tom Langridge (WO MPF, ex-QGE) for various development works in



hill villages where retired Gurkha soldiers live.

The WRVS. The late Miss Margreat Baird had spent a good part of her life looking after the welfare of the Gurkha wives. She used to take them out to various places such as handicapped people's homes, factories, zoos, amusement parks, seaside swimming and picnics to mention but a few. She was respected and loved very much by them. She was part of their lives and used to love them so much that she did not wish to go anywhere except QGE. She was with them until the final hours of QGE in Hong Kong.

These are some of the remarkable chapters amongst many others of the splendid relationships that were achieved through goodwill, love and trust. We are very grateful to them all.

The Gurkha Brigade Dinner. Although my stay in the UK was short I was fortunate to be present at a Gurkha Brigade Dinner held at the United Services and Royal Aero Club, London on 9 Nov 1973. The QGE table was chaired by the late General Bowring Sahib (ex-commandant QGE and 2nd Colonel Commandant of QGE). The other sahebs were: GN Ritchie, MJA Campbell, GG Roach, DH Bowen, C Spoittiswoode, IAD Thomson, PC Harvey, LGS Thomas, Sunar Gurung, ADM Dunne and myself. It was a memorable evening and I very much enjoyed their company after a long time apart.

Also I was very fortunate to meet Majors CEH Edwards, DH Miller and FA Cronk Sahebs at their homes. I was able to meet some other sahebs at a curry lunch hosted by me at very short notice at 10GR's Officers' Mess in Church Crookham. I was very pleased to be with them again: it was "QGEque" really wherever I went.

A Royal Wedding. A few days prior to this great event Captain PC Harvey RE (ex-QGE) had informed me that a Palace Admission card had been obtained by him for me to witness the departure of HRH Princess Anne from Buckingham Palace for Westminster Abbey and then the return of HRH with Captain Mark Phillips from the Quadrangle of the Palace on the 14 November 1973. This news had made me highly restless and excited. Harvey sahib, Memsahab and myself were there at the stipulated time of 1000hrs. The Palace was glowing brightly in the morning sun. The royal carriages were lined up already as per the royal protocol. HM the Queen and HRH the Queen Mother were the last to leave in the glittering Golden State Coach, gracefully enveloped in the loud and deafening cheers of the vast crowds. My dreams of seeing this famous palace had come true at last. It was a boon from heaven. This was the rarest and most memorable time of my life. I very much thank Harvey sahib once again.

The Regimental History. The writing of a Regimental History requires boldness and heart which are found in only a few people. I assume that this stems from long and memorable attachment to, and the love of the Regiment. He is needed to spend much of his precious time, energy and funds going through the many years of numerous dusty old

files/documents while most importantly making sure that his own health and home life are not neglected. I must say that our Regiment is fortunate to have two such bold persons who voluntarily undertook this huge and arduous tasks; namely the late General Perowne sahib and Brigadier DH Bowen sahib. The Regiment owes them very much.

An Old Pensioner Now. Finally after many years of a sheltered life I returned home on pension and we have now settled down in Kathmandu. I am glad to say that there are a good number of ex-QGE here. We have long sessions of 'Purano gaph-saph' and hear current regimental news when we meet. The oldest amongst us is Major Deobahadur Thapa saheb (father of Major Surjabahadur MVO and Captain Chitrabahadur saheb). He is 93 years old and still in good health. The didi (his wife) is also as fit and active as before. According to him, as the parachutists of 153 Gurkha Parachute Battalion in the Indian Army he and my brother –in-law Jemadar Bombahadur Limbu were parachuted down into the decisive battles in Rangoon, Burma. He, Major Kalusing and five others were the first field engineer trained senior NCOs commissioned as QGOs in QGE. All others, such as Parmansing, Amarbahadur, Narbahadur, Santabir and Dharamlal etc.. were already QGOs prior to their transfer to QGE. They were splendid persons to be with.

Before concluding this article my memories once again take me back to Kluang where I had begun to get the sweet and memorable tastes of my 'Lahure life'. Interestingly it started under:

*"Achchha lekin rangrut mo Gurkha RE ko,
Chare ni motor gari, Jahaj ra rel,
Khanu paryo bessari dumbako tel"*

(Well, I am a recruit of Gurkha RE, travelled in motor vehicles, ships and trains, Had taken lots of fats of Dambas⁸)

The meat was supplied once a week and had more white fat than red meat and was delivered very fresh straight to the Regimental cookhouse from the slaughter yards. It was a nice treat on Saturday evening meals, supplemented by the extra fried dry red chilies and salt placed on the dining tables to please one's tastes. This was the beginning of my 40 years service (32 years in uniform and 8 years as a retired officer EO post in BGN Dharan) under the Crown until the Dharan camp closed down.

Lastly, I am very glad to say that I have very much enjoyed my days in QGE since its inception. It was my home for 32 long years and I wish it the very best luck. Also I wish to extend my heartfelt 'salaams' to all my 'purano sahebs and sathi haru through this splendid journal.

'Jai QGE. Baliyo Rahanu hos.'

⁸ Australian sheep with meat on the hoof.



21150267 SGT ARJIT RAI & NO.2 SECT, SUNGEI PATANI, MALAYA

Maj (ret'd) Judbahadur Gurung

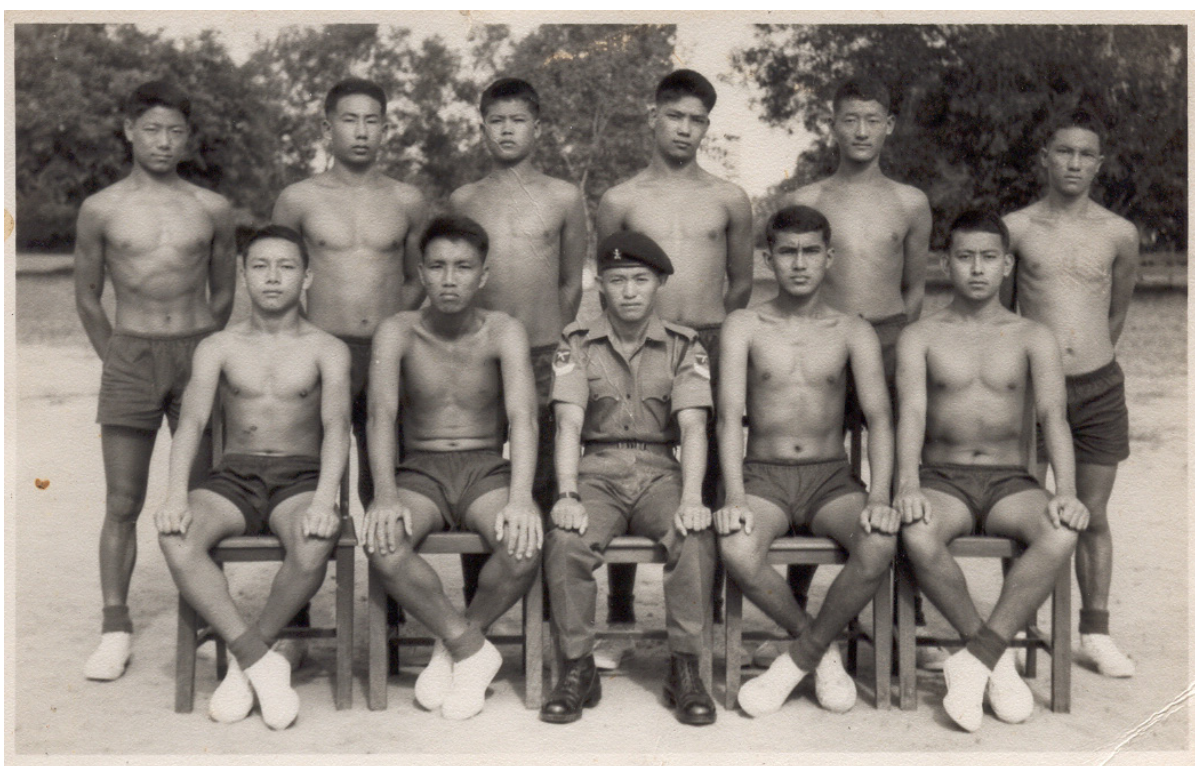
The Late 21150267 Sergeant Arjit Rai was born in 1943 in Okhaldhunga and enlisted as a boy on 7 November 1958. He was small in stature but a man with a great heart. He then joined the Gurkha Engineers in Kluang, Malaya for his combat engineer training before joining 67 Squadron in 1947. His date of discharge was 4 December 1976. In September 1968, I travelled from Singapore to Sungei Patani to train as an infantryman and there to shape me was my Section Commander to be, Corporal Arjit Rai. There were only 7 'Hillboys' and out of the 6 BACs (British Army Children) 3 BACs were placed in No.2 Section, 6 Platoon, No. 1 Company. There were 2 Engineer Section Commanders in

6 Platoon, the other being 21140990 Corporal Sherbahadur Thapa (son of late Captain Dilliram Thapa ex QGE and of the Dilliram Hammer fame while on the Rompin-Gemas Road in Malaya).

Sgt Arjit gave us a friendly talk and a friendly reception and we thought that we were in for an easy time. It was anything but that as Sgt Arjit was steely a character when so required.

One incident that stood out in the years training was a task / competition in the final 2 weeks in the jungles of Malaya. OC, 1 Company had set up his HQ and he had challenged that any section that managed to get his umbrella seat stick out of the Camp Zone would be rewarded with cases of soft drinks. Recruits in those days did not have access to soft drinks and hence it was a great incentive. After a week of unsuccessful attempts by other sections in No. 1 Company, Sgt Arjit took

Members of Sgt Arjit's No. 2 Section (final rank on discharge from QGE)



Sitting

-21159346 WO2 Haribahadur Rai. Champion Recruit. Plant Operator. Now lives in Kathmandu after working with RWSP in Pokhara.

-21157097 Major Judbahadur Gurung. Clerk of Works (C). Works with KAAA BGN in Pokhara.

-21150627 Sgt Arjit Rai. Section Commander

-21157078 Spr Embahadur Gurung. Electrician. Discharged voluntarily. Worked as Prison Officer in Brixton and now lives in London.

-21140996 Spr Maitalal Gurung. Did not join QGE. Later commissioned in the Nepal Army. Now living in Wales.

Standing

-21159390 WO2 Narendra Limbu. Carpenter by trade. Works with Pahar Trust and lives in Pokhara.

-21159351 WO2 Tilakraj Thapa. Bricklayer. Served in Special Forces of Sultanate Oman for 20 years as the RQMS. Lives in Narayangadh.

-21159350 Spr Karnabahadur Gurung. Carpenter. Now lives in UK.

-21159349 Hon Lt (QGO) Lalbahadur Tamang (Ghising). Welder. Has his own manpower company and promises to sponsor numbar party at Annarpurna Hotel in Kathmandu. Lives in Kathmandu but flies around the world.

-21159348 LCpl Naraindra Limbu. Carpenter. Lives in UK but seem to be having health problems according to him.

-21159347 Cpl Tejbahadur Gurung. Lives in UK.



me aside and said that I would be one of the 3 recruits from 2 Section that he would take with him for this task. He was planning to attempt this the hard way. There was a fast flowing river with a sharp vertical cliff some 20 metres high on one side and to get to the top of the cliff meant going through dense jungle. We got there a day before and observed the camp movements throughout the day but nowhere was the prized umbrella stick to be seen.

At nightfall, we climbed down a rope via the sheer cliff and onto the river. Cpl Arjit then told me to get him across the river, as he was a non-swimmer. This I did with difficulty. Once across the river we had to neutralise the trip flares and Cpl Arjit then came into his own by doing so himself.

Cpl Arjit, Recruit Embahadur Gurung & myself literally crawled throughout the camp looking for the elusive prize but alas to no avail. We had left Recruit Naraindra Limbu on top of the cliff with the instructions were that if successful or unsuccessful he would retreat back from the cliff. At the stated time Embahadur & I meet up with no sign of Cpl Arjit. We waited for 30 minutes, as I was worried for my section commander who was not a good swimmer. We then climbed back up the cliff and waited for a further 30 minutes.

We then started worrying not only for Cpl Arjit but also for ourselves and more importantly for how we were going to get back to Base Camp. With a torch to help us, we pursued the sound of the river and then followed the river in it's down flow. We luckily managed to get to a familiar bridge and waited there to think about our Guruji Arjit. An hour later, we heard movements and we retreated in the jungle away from the road. We caught a silhouette of a person walking along and somehow it looked like Cpl Arjit. Once we were sure that it was him we were rather relieved not only for him but for us too. He was totally drenched and when asked how, his only answer was success, success. Never one to give up, Cpl Arjit had strayed beyond the Zero Hour and finally located the prize and on his way to the river he was detected and the alarm was sounded. He apparently ran on, tripping the trip flare but somehow managed to get to the river and hurled the prize up the cliff successfully. The guards caught up with him and soaked him in the river trying to get him to say where the umbrella stick was. He refused to concede and eventually they let him go free. He then followed the familiar entrance track and managed to meet up with us.

The next day we went to the top of the cliff via the jungle and managed to find the Prize and in exchange we were given 4 cases of soft drinks. Other sections followed to wrench the prize but were unsuccessful and hence we were the only ones to be successful.

This incident depicted Cpl Arjit Rai to be a man of great resolve and a meticulous planner who never give up on what he was trying to achieve. More importantly, it was a great lesson for me in my early years of training, which was to stand me in good stead in the years to come.

Cpl Arjit later was promoted to Sergeant but due to ill health could not progress on with his military career. He died in

Nepal on 27 December 2009 of kidney failure. He is survived by his wife Dirga Rai, 3 sons & 2 daughters and lived in Katari, Udayapur in his later years.

EMPLOYMENT POST RETIREMENT – 'FSI' AS A CASE STUDY

Dhan Chand



FSI Europe Ltd is a wholly owned, UK-based subsidiary of FSI Worldwide Ltd. The company was founded in 2006 to provide security solutions to high value assets in high threat environments including the British and US embassies across Iraq and Afghanistan (which FSI still guards today). FSI's founders, Directors and management staff are predominantly ex British Army Officers and FSI's security resources are predominantly ex-Army personnel (largely ex-Gurkhas in the static guarding roles). The company has a strong military ethos at its core (and was one of the first companies to sign the Corporate Military Covenant) and it brings a military style of leadership, planning and management to all its projects. Whilst the company's core business has always been in security, the company has evolved into an international labour / manpower provider supporting major contracts worldwide.

FSI's ethical business practices and leadership have been widely recognised in the award of the 2013 UN Business Award for combating human trafficking (UNGIFT and UNODC) which was awarded to the CEO in Davos last year. Since becoming Link Up accredited in May 2012 FSI Europe has been supporting a wide range of Network Rail projects in London and the South East. FSI's security services and capability have been audited, approved and indeed lauded by Network Rail's resilience auditor and described as being "best in class". Outside of security FSI has provided a plethora of other labour resources to both track and non-track roles using predominantly ex-military personnel from QGE / Royal Engineers and the Royal Logistic Corps; surveyors, cable-pullers, vehicle marshals, resource and stores managers, logistic coordinators etc. FSI Europe currently employs 80 personnel 95% of these are ex-Army and ex Gurkha. FSI Europe also recruits personnel for deployment overseas on behalf of the worldwide group and regularly deploys ex British Army Gurkhas as supervisors to high threat contracts.





MEET THE EX QGE BOYS.....

Maj (Retd) Dhanbahadur Chand



Dhan Chand retired in 2011 after 32 years of service with The Queen's Gurkha Engineers and Royal Engineers and is currently employed as the Director (Head of Resources) for FSI Europe Ltd based in Maidstone. Dhan ensures the business functions in much the same fashion as he ensured the Regiment functioned when he was GM – nothing

happens without his say so and he is essential to the day to day running of the company. He is an FSI Europe Main Board Member and on the Board of Trustees for the Pahar Trust.

Capt (Retd) Tristan Wootten

Tristan finished his service as Adjutant of 36 Engineer Regiment (Search) and The Queen's Gurkha Engineers. After a brief stint with the Olympics he was recruited into FSI Europe as an Operations Manager and is now Director (Head of Operations). Tristan is responsible for planning and delivery of operations across the wide spectrum of sectors in which FSI operates. Tristan is a Main Board Member for FSI Europe and on the Generation for Change Board which is a subsidiary board of Constructing Excellence UK.



Pramod Rai

Pramod retired in 1997 after 13 years of service with 67 Fd Sqn QGE and was qualified as Combat Engineer Class 1 and Surveyor RE Class 2. He joined FSI Europe in 2012 and has been with FSI Europe since the beginning. Initially Pramod was employed as a retail construction site supervisor utilizing

his 'setting out' skills to best effect. Latterly, since the Company has evolved to be more rail focused Pramod has remembered his old surveying tricks and learnt some new ones whilst working as a setting out surveyor

on the railways. Constantly looking to up-skill Pramod is now on an overhead lines course and will be a talisman for FSI as we offer a new capability. There are about 20 other ex-QGE members who are currently employed in various roles mainly on rail track works such as; high voltage cable layers, track possession assistants which includes work as site access controllers on Network Rail project sites.



Ex QGE soldiers offer a considerable amount of transferable skills to civilian industry but presenting it to the right people at the right time can always be challenging and this is where the FSI plays a vital part. In general all ex-Gurkhas and service personnel offer the right character and quality of human resources to all civilian industries whose attitude and discipline in the workplace are highly recognised and respected for.

A VISIT TO SETO GUMBA

Ravindra Sahi

The White Monastery (Seto Gumba) is also known as Druk Amitabh Mountain and is one of the most popular Buddhist Monasteries of Nepal. The monastery is situated in Ramkot VDC, which is located in the Western outskirts of the Kathmandu Valley. It is also known as a haven from where to witness the sunrise and sunset.

It was my third trip in three years to this holy Buddhist shrine and I have enjoyed it every time I have visited with my family and relatives. In my first and



second trip, I travelled via Hallchowk whereas this time I planned to pursue a different route via the Sita Paila area. Altogether there were ten members including me in the group, travelling in two cars from my home, Baluwatar. As it was a Saturday, there was no heavy traffic on the road and therefore we reached Sita Paila in about half an hour. Sita Paila lies near the Ring Road and is roughly three kilometers away from Swayambhunath temple. From Sita Paila, the road was quite rough and dusty and it took us about ten minutes to reach the bottom of Druk Amitabh mountain. Though the road is pitched from there onward, it was narrow and straight uphill to the top of monastery. There are regular public



vehicles going to Sita Paila and from there one can also walk and reach the monastery in about an hour as these public vehicles do not climb to the very top. The road from Sita Paila to the monastery is steep and narrow, making it difficult for almost all vehicles to climb.



The White Monastery's elevation is approximately 1,450 metres above the sea level and from the top we could see the entire Kathmandu Valley and take pleasure in the architectures of the Gumba; paintings which are rich in Tibetan culture. The Gumba is full of greenery and opens to visitors only on Saturdays from 10 am until 4 pm. There are small cafés inside the Gumba that serves its customers with soft drinks, tea, coffee and some bakery items. The entrance and parking are free, but each visitor is issued a pass which one can collect from the entrance gate. Along the entrance gate, there is a souvenir shop. The place is highly non-smoking, non-alcoholic and vegetarian. A hiking trail around the monastery and villages is also a fun for hikers. I, along with my family had a good time and there is no doubt that the visit was worthwhile. I personally suggest everyone visits this Buddhist holy shrine once in their lifetime by saying "Buddham Saranam Gachhami". (Let's follow the Buddha's principles).

RHQ QGE 1993



Capt (QGO) now Hon Major Judbahadur Gurung (Manning Officer) / Captain now Major General T. Urch (Adjutant) / Lt (QGO) now Captain Gangabahadur Gurung (Head Clerk)

WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM YOUR ASSOCIATION?

Attendance at recent QGEA functions has been waning which has led the Committee to ask what is it that you, our members want from the Association and what social functions would you support?

This will be a discussion point at the next AGM on 28 Sep 14 at Invicta Park, Maidstone, but in order to inform the debate we want to hear from you.

Ideas you may want to consider, but are by no means an exhaustive list include:

- 1 or 2 formal functions a year. If so where? All at Maidstone or Maidstone and some where else? Farnborough area, RMAS, Gurkha Museum?

- What type of function would attract you? A formal sit down bhat or an ad hoc get together in a pub?

- Should functions target specific years of service?

- Would you be prepared to organise something with your numbrics/peer group and submit a report of the magazine?

There are no set answers to this. As we try and bridge different eras; Malaya, Hong Kong and now the UK we need to understand what to do to support different groups without disenfranchising the others.

Please send any ideas or thoughts to the Secretary, John Wheeley and the Social Secretary, Ian Moore.

**This is your Association.
Please support it.**



THE GREAT HIMALAYA TRAIL

Doc McKerr

THE IDEA. On a cold December winters day in Swinton Barracks in 2011, I finally committed to the idea that after leaving the Army I would complete the Great Himalaya Trail (GHT), a 1500km trek stretching across Nepal. From my time as Project Engineer for GWS in 2010 I knew the trail had only recently been established and it was therefore the perfect challenge. To do it solo would be the ultimate goal.



The following ten months were taken up with preparation for and deployment to Afghanistan on Op HERRICK 16, 2012. It was not until I came back in the October that I could really started to plan the expedition.

On 10 March 2013, after months of planning I had finally said my goodbyes. I sat in Heathrow Airport excited yet a little concerned. Although I was pretty much good to start I still did not have authorisation to walk across Nepal on my own through the National Parks and Restricted areas. This bothered me. I had tried hard prior to leaving to solve this point but got nowhere.

THE PLANNING. On arriving in Nepal I thought things would be easier. They weren't. I hit brick wall after brick wall, from extending my visa to getting permission for walking through national parks on my own. Both Khil Thapa (Ex-GQE) and I were not even able to scratch the surface. We would meet daily to try and solve these problems as well as discuss every possible 'Actions On' that we could think of to make this expedition as successful and as safe as possible. I even went to the extent of sewing money into my trousers in case I got all of my kit stolen. I would like to think that we left no stone unturned.

After days and days of trying, Maj (Retd) Judbahadur Gurung (ex QGE GM) and the British Embassy came to the rescue. Jud Saheb managed to use his contacts, his persuasiveness and cash in some favors with the WWF to get me permission and the paperwork I needed (which had never been given before). Thankfully due to the BGN presence in the Defence Attache department I got my visa. By this point it felt that the hard work had been done and all that was remaining was the easy stuff; the walk. Having spent two weeks fighting through red tape, I was finally ready to go.

PRE-TREK ADMIN. When I eventually flew to the east on 24 March 13 it was a very surreal feeling. Seeing the foothills

below and the long never ending Himalayas in the distance, I quickly remembered how difficult and demanding it was to walk the terrain and the enormity of the challenge came alive.

This was not going to be easy.

THE START. I spent six days conducting 'battle prep' out of AWC Taplejung doing light trekking, language training and 'int gathering' for the route ahead. As ever the hospitality at the AWC was second to none and on 1 April 2013 I set off on my 120km walk to the start line, Kanchenjunga Base Camp (5143m).

Eight and a half days (8 April) later, having suffered a casualty of a leaking tent during a big storm, reducing my kit by at least 2kg and being followed by the worlds tightest Israeli, I was finally at Kanchenjunga Base Camp (5,143m). The weather was perfect. From the initial idea to start line was 16 months and hours of hard work by many people. I remember looking up at Kanchenjunga (8,586m), then to the west and thinking 'what challenges and adventures await me over the next three months between here and Hilsa? I don't care. I am here now and regardless what happens, I will make it!'



Kanchenjunga Base Camp - Start Point

LUMBHA SUMBHA. The first big challenge of the trek was the crossing of the Lumbha Sumbha Pass (5130m). I won't lie, I was nervous about this even in the UK. It is very remote, hardly travelled and my maps were at such a large scale (1:150,000) that it didn't do the terrain justice or respect its enormity.

On 14 April I planned to get up early and cross the Pass. I woke up an hour late. Not ideal when you want to get up and



over before the weather changes. The route I chose was not the one from the map as I couldn't find this on the ground. I took a prominent snowy re-entrant to get me up high, but this added distance to my day. Negotiating the steep, cold and at times icy re-entrant with 25kg on my back was not easy, nor fast going. Hours later as the sun was really starting to heat up I had made it to the top, but I was not where I thought I was. Far from it. Not helped by the scale of the map. I could see the pass I needed to cross in the distance, far away, with another pass in the middle. 'Deep joy.'

Six hours later, hungry and dehydrated, having waded through knee to waist deep snow and limiting visibility, I eventually reached the actual Lumbha Sumbha Pass (5159m). I was tired but relieved. It was by no means over though. There was a steep snowy descent ahead of me, followed by a long route out of the valley and with black storm clouds coming my way it was going to be an interesting end to the day.

Hours later, descending through more knee to waist deep snow, I hit the valley floor. It was rocky and riddled with streams. I started to run as I needed to find shelter before it was too late. A short while later the storm was close. Hundreds of metres ahead of me lightening was hitting the ground and illuminating the entire valley. As night fell I still couldn't find anywhere suitable to stay to get out of the storm, until I spotted a very primitive shelter out of the corner of my eye. Inside was an elderly Sherpa yak herder trying to sleep. Once he got over the shock of being woken by a cold, wet and very tired 'gora' he was very friendly and invited my in out of the weather. Over a smoky fire whilst I cooked the first food of the day we conversed as best we could, as he didn't speak that much Nepali. I couldn't help but notice he had what looked like frostbite on two fingers and wasn't wearing any shoes or socks! As I settled in for the night I could feel the aches drain out of my body as the storm continued overhead. It wasn't long before I was in a deep sleep.



Kanchenjunga - Yak Herder just before Thudam

GETTING LOST. With the Lumbha Sumbha Pass now ticked, I was a happy man and felt ready for anything. The next section to the Arun River however, was also a concern for me as there was at least 12 hours of walking through the trees using poor mapping. These fears became a reality. The map

was inadequate, the paths were misleading and the weather closed in early yet again. As a result I ended up being lost in the trees for two days without seeing anyone. Although I remained calm throughout, by the third day I was anxious. I was really concerned about losing time and messing up so early into the trek.



Kanchenjunga - Lost in the trees between Thudam and Chayamtang

Thankfully, I managed to find my way out after negotiating a steep re-entrant and in doing so met a Nepali family who were heading to Chyamtang; the same village I was heading for. Perfect. A local guide. It is one thing being on your own and making friends with people quickly to gain their trust and support and it is another being a complete foreigner in the middle of nowhere and trying to do the same. It wasn't easy but it worked. I tried my hardest to explain that I was lost in the trees for two days but I don't think they understood me. After a 14 hour journey through yet more bad weather we arrived at their village in the pitch black. The end of the day was so very typical of the kind hospitality of the people in the remote areas of Nepal. They invited me to stay with them in their home, where we drank tomba, ate dhal bhaat and talked as best we could in simple Nepali before a well-earned rest.

ARUN VALLEY. Sadly after my stay at Chyamtang village I could not continue west through Makalu as the passes here are too technical for a solo trekker. My journey to get Sagarmatha National Park via the Arun Valley took me over some very steep hills, rough ankle breaking paths and occasionally through thick jungle. It was my first introduction to leeches too, which wasn't helped by the continuous rain from 1300 onwards, making life that little bit more difficult.

Throughout the journey I quickly realised that good and bad luck was very much like Yin & Yang. They would bizarrely follow each other; something bad followed by something good. The 'Yin' - half way down the Arun Valley through the thick, humid jungle as the light was fading, I had to cross a small bamboo bridge. Halfway across it gave way and in a fit of panic I clawed at the rock beside me to prevent me from falling through it. The Yang - as I fell out of the jungle into a clearing covered in leaches, I was met by a small Rai



man walking his cow. Within 2 mins of talking to him he had agreed to let me stay in his bamboo hut overnight to get out of the bad weather. This selfless hospitality from people who have nothing never ceases to amaze me.



Arun Khola - Jungle Farmer I stayed with one night

MOVE TO THE SAGARMATHA REGION. After 17 days of hard walking (including getting lost) I had finally arrived in the Sagarmatha region. The land of comfortable guest houses, mouth-watering foods and internet! As great as this was in the short term, I quickly got tired of it. I liked the feeling of being where very few people had been, alone, speaking in Nepali to genuine locals in their own homes. I felt out of place. Hundreds of tourists wearing clothing which was far too advanced for anything they needed them for, all of them talking about how hard their own little Himalaya adventures were.



Everest seen from the top of Renjo La Pass (5360m)

I kept myself to myself during this phase, partly because I wasn't interested in listening to some of their 'war stories' and secondly because I had now spent a reasonable amount of time on my own, I actually enjoyed my own company. A sign of a true introvert. One thing was for sure, I was starting to really notice my fitness getting stronger but also the weight dropping off rapidly. Although I complain about some of the people on this trail and the luxuries, there is no denying it that this area has beautiful scenery. The views from Kala

Patthar (5550m), Cho La (5420m) and Renjo La (5360m) are breathtaking and worth the visit.



Gokyo Lake

TASHI LABSTA. The Tashi Labsta (5760m) is the pass which separates the Everest Region from Rolwaling. I knew that realistically I would not be able to do this on my own because I didn't have the equipment or the correct mapping. Although it went against my original plan of being 'solo unsupported', I decided to hire a guide to cross it. This wasn't an easy decision. I really didn't want to hire anyone at any stage however, I knew it was an amazing pass and one which I probably wouldn't get chance to do for a long time. After my first and only admin day on the trek we sorted kit and planned for the next day.

I was not disappointed. It was hard work getting to the pass camp, a great bivvy underneath a large boulder and the scenery was phenomenal. After a 0300hrs start on Day 26 (4 May) we made our way towards the pass. I have done my fair share of climbing however, this time my hands got very cold to the point that they were in excruciating pain even with gloves on (although not thick ones). I had to stop many times to try and get the blood back into them as the icy wind cut through me. Even though the sun was rising slowly we were constantly in the shadow so it didn't matter. I was cold and I was going to remain cold until I got up and over the pass.

Even with the pain it was completely worth it. The feeling of walking over the pass and seeing the enormity of the Rolwaling valley on the other side was mind-blowing. In many respects the hard work had yet to begin. There were still two glaciers to negotiate, a 200m near vertical descent from one to the other then a 7km walk over demanding glacial moraine before an onward journey to Na Goan. This place was dramatic and was truly Himalayan. The creaking of the ice and falling of rocks within the valley gave this section a unique and remote feeling, however, the 'two steps forward, one step back' movement across the loose moraine becomes exhausting and frustrating. After a 14.5 hour day we finally reached Na Goan. That night the food and 'chang' (or Sherpa juice as some call it) had never tasted so nice.





Rolwaling - The route from Tashi Labsta to Na Goan

MOVE TO LANGTANG. After spending 37 days walking through either the mountains or the Eastern part of Nepal, the next six days through the lower part of Rolwaling, Gaurishankar Conservation Area and then through part of Helambu was a definite change in atmosphere, people, way of life and GHT experience.

I was warned by some Sherpa women in Simi Goan that my route would now take me through some less favourable places and that I should be careful. Although I took notice I thought this was the classic example of people not knowing or liking the people in the next valley or village, so I didn't think that much of it. The route I chose now saw very few tourists. The people I kept meeting were very curious along every step, which is understandable but when you have spent so long on your own and have experienced more reserved people, this took some getting used to. The shouts of 'gora gora' or 'query query' could be heard numerous times, especially by school children and young adults, many of whom were not concerned to come up to me and try and make themselves look big in front of their friends. People are people, no matter where they are in the world and kids will be kids. However, when you are on your own your senses are heightened significantly. I could hear, see and smell things at far greater ranges than ever before especially when going through villages. It's strange, but I could see peoples' movements clearly out of the corners of my eyes as I worked pass them, even which way their eyes were looking.

The most bizarre day came on Day 41 of trekking (9 May), the day after I had a great night with Khil Thapa in Bharabesi. The day was ridiculously hot and the trail was challenging to find. Pleased with my performance and confident for the next stage, I was nearing the end of the day when I was about to go through the trees for the last 3 hours of the day when a Tamang mother and daughter met me on the track. In true style I would always greet people first as soon as I saw them, no matter how far away they were. They seemed annoyed. They asked me repeatedly and bluntly where I was going, what I was doing and where my friends were. As these were questions I received multiple times daily I thought nothing of it, until they told me that I couldn't continue on this track because drunken thieves had killed a man the other

day. He apparently had his head and hands chopped off. To emphasise the point she kept shouting 'manche mariyo, manche mariyo' whilst doing a hand chopping action towards my neck.

Somewhat frustrated and a little confused, we talked more until some other local women came by. To get clarity I asked these women what has happened, which just made things worse as they all started arguing with each other then telling me to go back to Kathmandu where I belong. Slightly concerned and now more confused I negotiated myself a place to stay overnight in their village to give me time to plan what to do next. The experience that awaited me was an interesting one. The village was sadly full of men who mainly drank and smoked whilst the women worked hard for the home. Children were able to run riot and litter was rife. Although they never meant me any harm, in fact they invited me into their home, however, when dozens of people stare at you and prod you whilst asking you the same questions repeatedly for hours on end it becomes a little unnerving. After being watched eating my dhal bhaat using my hands by virtually everyone in the village, whilst still being interrogated, it was finally bedtime. A night spent with the family animals and the drunk father was an experience I hadn't had before, nor since.

The next day after being kindly 'guarded' by the family's three sons we walked two hours to the next village. My journey through random villages continued for the next two days until I entered Langtang National Park. The scenery was tremendous, the weather perfect but the heat was like nothing else I had experienced. From drinking 1-2 litres of water a day I was now taking 7-8 litres, which creates big strains on the body. I was yet again told off by many locals in a caring way (most of the time) for walking on my own as they said it wasn't safe. Just what you want to hear when the days before I was told I'd get my head cut off if I went through the trees!

LANGTANG – DHADING – MANSALU – ANNA PURNA.

On arriving in Langtang I felt that I was really starting to pick up the pace, even after I was ill for the first time. The dismissiveness and concern by locals for my safety as I trekked on my own continued through Langtang and into Dhading. Each one always telling me that the next village or valley was dangerous and that I needed to either return or take a guide. One pastor from Gatlang very kindly said he would pray for me. I thought 'thank you I need all of the help I can get!'

One of the most upsetting parts of my travels was when I walked with two locals from Samdong to Tipling. One was a young man with a family of four children, two of whom were disabled. Having told them I was doing some work for the Kadoorie Agriculture Aid Association (KAAA) and that they sometimes help people with disabilities, he was keen to introduce me to them. On arriving at his house where I was going to stay the night, I saw first hand the two very young disabled children and how difficult it was for the family to cope and survive on a daily basis. Things were hard now but as they get older life would only become more difficult. They





*Ganesh - Old disabled man in
Tipling*

ridiculous descent, I deserved that rarity called a cold beer and a proper shower.

The next nine days along the Mansalu and Annapurna Circuits were bliss. Relatively easy trails, good food and accommodation and of course fantastic views.

LOWER MUSTANG. Nine days of comfort on the large tourist routes, it was now time to get back into the more remote areas; Lower Mustang and Lower Dolpo. The area west of Kagbeni had interested me for years, having seen it on numerous occasions. I felt that the remoteness was going to be a challenge especially as the maps I had were 1:150,000. Flashbacks of the east still haunted me.



Lower Mustang - Village of Santa

With great weather on my side the final legs of my journey started well. Surprisingly a track was being built to connect the village of Santa, sadly it was in true Nepali style; two people and a JCB. There were more people travelling to Santa than I expected and there was even a 'coffee shop' half way (okay, a small tent and a didi serving tea and dhal bhaat). The reason why so many people were heading into the hills was because it was yarsagumba⁹ season. Santa is an incredible small

both had deformed skulls and had brain damage so they needed full attention 24hrs a day. As much as they wanted me to do something, give them medicine or money, there was nothing I could do other than take their details and pass them to KAAA.

From leaving Dhading and entering the comfort zone of Manaslu National Park, was a mammoth day. With big ascents through the trees, wrong turnings and a

village, medieval in appearance. 12 small stone houses with a network of tiny paths. Rested and well fed I started walking with my new friends, a local returning to his village, Charka Bhot, and two men from Syangja who were heading to Dho Tarap in search of yarsagumba.

The journey was fun. We travelled for the next few days through some of the most beautiful and untouched scenery I

have seen, staying with yak herders, underneath rocks and in people's houses. As much as I wanted them for company and for a little bit of security, the guys from Syangja needed me. Without my map they really had no idea where they were going, especially when the weather came in on our final day. So it was a real team effort.



*Lower Mustang - The scramble towards
Dolpo*

LOWER DOLPO – DHO TARAP TO PHOKSUNDO LAKE.

Although I was starting to get physically tired, I was certainly hill fit. The thought of finishing within the next couple of weeks was really keeping me going. Leaving my new found friends behind in Dho Tarap, I made my way up the valley in the early morning ambient light. Surprisingly I wasn't on my own. There were tens and tens of people all over the valley on their search for yarsagumba. The night before I was told that I could not make it to Phoksundo Lake in one day as the route involves going over both the Numala La (5450m) and the Baga La (5169m) and because I was a 'gora'. I was adamant that I could and therefore I had already agreed the challenge before I set off that morning. Two passes, a tiring wrong turn, a number of blunt conversations with some 'yarsagumba mancheeharu' and more poor visibility; I was only two hours away from Phoksundo Lake as the sun was setting. My challenge was not over. I had to make it Phoksundo, that was my challenge! With a combination of fast walking and even running I pushed myself as hard as I could up the final steep hill to the village. Sadly by the time I got the top it was 2015hrs and the visibility was severely reduced, stopping me in my tracks 1.5km from the village. Slightly disheartened and exhausted after over 15 hours of hard walking, I pitched my tent in an opening in the trees, with two yaks for company and got ready for the night.

⁹ This is the name given to the 'ghost moth' caterpillar after it has been infected by a parasite and solidifies and a stalk grows out of its head. They can be found in certain parts of the Himalayas between

3500-5000m. They are used in Chinese medicine as an aphrodisiac, certain ailments and long life. Each one could be sold for as much NCR 1000 each.





JUMLA. The path to Jumla and on to Humla saw me complete my fifteenth and final 5000m pass/base camp, the Kangmala La (5115m) on my 64th day of walking. It was actually a little emotional as it was a sign that I was finally near the end of my Himalaya adventure. Although I had passed 14 already, this felt just as hard, if not harder than the rest. I moved very slowly to get to the top.

ROAD TO HUMLA. The track to Jumla although very beautiful was ruined by the path of destruction from outsiders coming in on their search for yarsagumba. Litter sadly strewn in many areas where dozens of people camped repeatedly as they entered the hills. This track also saw me get ill for only the second time, spend a night in a monastery, get my first blister, receive lots of curious looks and laughs by passers-by and nearly getting mugged by a Nepal Army soldier. This is of course all part of the solo GHT experience.

ROAD TO SIMIKOT. The town of Jumla was fantastic. I treated myself to an afternoon off and a nice hotel to prepare for the final seven day leg to the border. The first few days were great. I had no problems. Unfortunately the weather was still cloudy, and it even rained during my walk around Lake Rara.

From Gamghadi it felt like I could see the finish line at Hilsa. Up to this point I had been walking for a total of 69 days but only 60 of these had been on GHT (ie from Kanchenjunga Base Camp) and I was adamant that I could be finished in five more days. If this was not an incentive to walk quickly, what was? The walk from Gamghadi to Darma was a long one, in hot conditions over yet more difficult terrain. The villages I went through were very different to what I had seen to date. They were very close together, almost terrace like in design, flat roofed with space on the ground floor for animals with lots of primitive timber ladders.

On the way I met two young men who were returning to their village, Darma. Unfortunately for me they were moving fast and light and getting drunker throughout the day. Although minor, when you are in the middle of nowhere and having direct conversations with two drunken men can become a little unnerving. Especially when they start asking for money or food. I knew that it would never turn violent (or at least

hoped not) but being on your own really does change things. Staying calm and polite was always the winning combination.

The warm people of Darma and for that matter Humla, certainly made up for the incident with the two drunks. It was a pleasure to walk through the district. As I said before, 'Yin and Yang'. Simikot was a day and a half away. They were long warm days, but at least the route was reasonable until the steep climb into Simikot. Walking into the bazaar was a great feeling, it was now not only familiar terrain but I could also drop off the bulk of my kit in a guest house. I also felt very confident that I could make the 72km journey to the border in two days. The end was nigh.

I wasn't wrong. Two days later I had crossed my final GHT pass just outside of Hilsa, the Nara La (4560m). The wind was strong, clouds now building but five minutes later I could not only see the finish line, but also Tibet. As I had been in the same spot over two years before I had seen this view before and it was this image that I visualized daily and one which motivated me to get this far.



Day 64 and the end of the GHT; Friendship Bridge at Hilsa

As I walked into Hilsa, my heart pounded, the hairs on my body started to stand on end and I could taste the adrenalin. As I passed the bewildered police at Friendship Bridge I made my way to the border, a simple chain link fence with an opening for access. It had taken me a total of 73 days and 1578km of walking from Taplejung. More importantly at that moment I become the first person to complete the GHT (1480km) solo from Kanchenjunga Base Camp to Hilsa, in a time of 64 days 2 hours and 35 minutes. Success! Jubilation, relief, pride and so many other words could be used to describe my feelings at the time. The only regret was that there was no one else there to share the emotions with me. For the first time I used my satellite phone and rang both my mum and my dad to tell them the good news. They were tearful but immensely happy for me.

Emotions aside, the trek was not over. I still had to make the 72km journey back to Simikot in one piece and the weather was closing in. My original plan was get a lift with a helicopter but due to the poor weather I was back to what I



knew best; walking. Although I was looking forward to getting a helicopter it is purely a mind game. Once you tell yourself you are walking back it quickly sinks in and you just get on with it. As great as it was to have finished the trek, it was also sad. I had finished the challenge I had set out to do. I did take a long look back down the valley towards the border to make sure I could remember that view for as long as possible.



On returning to Simikot over 16kg lighter in weight, I had the best reception that I could have wished for by members of the GHT Development Programme. Now I had actually finished it was time to celebrate with some new friends and pass on some of my new tales.

Two days later when I was supposed to fly out, the whole of Nepal, northern Pakistan and India were hit by a very large weather system that saw four days of torrential rains. I was going nowhere. This heavy downpour washed away bridges, caused numerous landslides, one of which was in Hilsa where I had just been. It destroyed 12 houses and killed five people. There was also a helicopter crash nearby killing four and seriously injuring one. Considering what I had done, where I had been and the weather systems I had been exposed to, this was a real eye opener. I got away lightly. You should never forget how dangerous the Himalayas are, as soon as you do it will be too late.

Expedition 'East 2 West Nepal' was a great success and could only have been made possible through the help of BGN, BGP, GWS, Maj (Retd) Jadbahadur Gurung and Khil Thapa from Gurkha Adventures. For their contributions I am extremely grateful. Since completing the GHT I have raised nearly £9000 for both GWT and SSAFA. I have also helped to increase the awareness of the trail and have helped four international groups plan their own GHT adventures. The best advice for anyone wanting to do their own adventure is so long as you do your homework just go for it and make it a success. Otherwise you may just miss the opportunity of a lifetime.

'Jai QGE'

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/east2westnepal>

www.east2westnepal.org

WHICH IS SCARIER?

Ed. After reading Doc's Article and remembering back to my own journeys across the Himalaya I got thinking about the numerous seat of the pants flights I took while in Nepal. Not least the landing at Lukla Airport, perhaps one of the scariest journeys I have taken.



Or was it? A photo recently taken on the roads of Farnborough...



ARCHIVE

For the final time I have raided the 69 Sqn photo albums and this time bring you photos from life in Chatham between 1985-87.



1985 QGO Commissioning Parade. Brig Lee commissions Lt (QGO) Imanhang Limbu and Lt (QGO) Budhikumar Gurung



1985 Sqn Super Spr Competition:
Navigation Test



Demolition Test



Block and Tackle Test

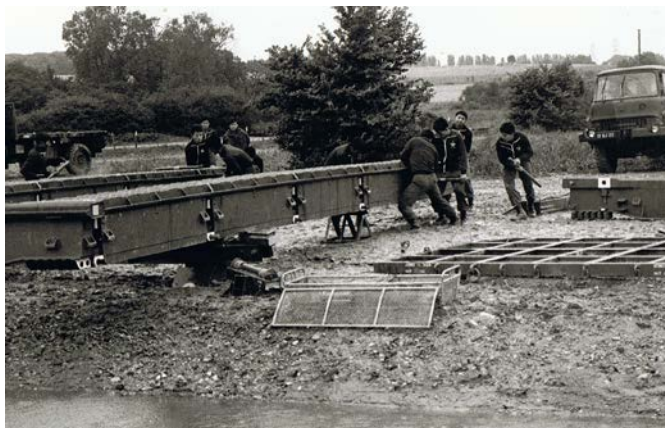


Cross Country Run



Finish at Last : 1451 Cpl Harkaraj Rai and 1470 Cpl
Rambahadur Gurung





1986 MGB Fast Build Competition - 69 Sqn with a record time



1987. 1 Tp undertaking Universal Pontoon Trails at Christchurch – above the completed Floating Bay Raft



1986 LS&GC Party:
Rear : LCpls Padambahadur Rai and Adhibahadur Rai,
Centre: Cpls Yambahdur Limbu, Indrabahadur Limbu, Chandrabahadur Gurung
Front : Cpls Makabahdur Gurung, Motiraj Gurung and Narbahadur Rai

Editors Plea. For future magazine articles please submit the photos separately and do not embed them in text documents.

If using a phone camera please ensure the photos are of the highest resolution possible

I am now looking for other subjects for future Archive Sections so please submit any ideas to the Editor.



QGE Pipes and Drum visit Chatham, seen here on the Regtl Square



QGE Pipes and Drum playing in the RE HQ Mess Garden



1987 - Fort Amerherst Bridge, Chatham, built by H Tp



EX QGE DEATHS 2013-14 as at 26 Apr 14¹⁰

Number	Rank	Name	Date of Death
	Maj	Malcom Thompson	20-Apr-13
	Maj	DML Bruges	13-Jun-13
	Sgt	Gambahadur Gurung	24-Jun-13
	Maj	David Goddard	20-Aug-13
	Capt	Richard Marriott	16-Sep-13
	Maj	Harry A Caulfield	01-Nov-13
	Mrs	Ioan McVein	Nov-13
	Mrs	Joan Ritchie	2-Jan-14
	Brig	John Elderkin	24-Jan-14
	Col	Malcom Campbell MC MBE	7-Feb-14
	Lt Col	Terry White	14-Mar-14
21146981	LCpl	Gajendrabahadur Limbu	4-Oct-12
21150131	Cpl	Mansing Gurung	5-Nov-12
21132412	Spr	Lakhabahadur Limbu	3-Dec-12
21132377	LCpl	Ranbahadur Limbu	10-Dec-12
21151181	LCpl	Keshbahadur Thapa	14-Dec-12
21148899	Cpl	Bhimbahadur Rai	30-Dec-12
21150151	LCpl	Dalbahadur Thapa	31-Dec-12
21132026	Cpl	Manbahadur Thapa	9-Jan-13
21132629	Spr	Jangbahadur Thapa	14-Jan-13
21132033	LCpl	Maniraj Rana	19-Jan-13
21151162	Cpl	Kamprasad Rai	19-Jan-13
21132781	Spr	Meharsing Gurung	14-Feb-13
21136777	Spr	Chhabilal Rana	21-Feb-13
21154895	Spr	Gagansing Thapa	27-Mar-13
21150078	Spr	Bhimbahadur Gurung	7-May-13
21152590	Spr	Gyanbdr Limbu	13-Sep-13
21157987	Spr	Bhuwansing Chhetri	15-Sep-13
21151263	Cpl	Minbahadur Limbu	21-Sep-13
21150045	LCpl	Gatilman Rai	30-Sep-13
21145894	WO1 Hon Lt (QGO)	Dhanbahadur Rai	1-Oct-13
21131841	Cpl	Rudralal Thapa	3-Oct-13
398045	Maj(QGO)	Dharamlal Thapa	7-Nov-13
21146452	SSgt	Lalbir Tamang	6-Dec-13
21150093	Cpl	Sarbajit Rai	10-Dec-13
21152571	Spr	Chandraber Rai	17-Dec-13
21151295	Spr	Balbahadur Gurung	18-Dec-13
21148996	LCpl	Jitbahadur Rai	27-Dec-13
21145882	Spr	Dalbahadur Thapa	31-Dec-13
21139252	Sgt	Laldhoj Gurung	1-Jan-14
21145611	Spr	Karnabahadur Thapa	13-Jan-14
21151226	Spr	Dambarbahadur Rai	20-Jan-14
21152445	Cpl	Khargabahadur Rai	28-Jan-14

¹⁰ Deaths not reported at the time of the Magazine's publication last year are also included in this issue.



Number	Rank	Name	Date of Death
21150032	Spr	Harkasing Limbu	06-Feb-14
21152462	Cpl	Chhakkabahadur Sahi	02-Mar-14
21171019	Spr	Rajat Gurung	13-Mar-2014
425486	Maj (QGO)	Deobahadur Thapa	25-Apr-14
21166515	Spr	Rajen Raj Rai	26-Apr-14

OBITUARIES

MAJOR MICHAEL BRUGES

by John Getley



Mike in Nepal, 1960

Michael came to the Regiment to fill in the five years between University and a career in Survey. Brought up in India and at school there during the war he was an ideal choice for the Regiment at that time. He knew many of the permanent cadre officers from his school days and the customs and languages too. He had

also been 'blooded' in the Korean War where he'd served in George Cooper's Squadron.

I first met Mike trekking in West Nepal. He was a grand companion, encouraging and good company. I remember that we'd stayed in Char Hazaar Pabate with Major Pirtilal Pun 1/2 GR and he sent us up a mountain above the snowline to see the Himalayan Monal pheasants and where we'd nearly killed ourselves. We stayed too in Boris Linanevilch's Yak & Yeti Hotel in Kathmandu where we were fed like kings

I met Mike again in North Borneo in 67 Squadron. He had prepared the engineer plan for the new Far East Training Area there. We were now to execute his proposals and the one in which I was involved was to move the Centurion tanks into the country. This fairly impossible move proved most successful and not a little terrifying, but see below. Well-done Mike.



The photo shows Mike's plan in action when we brought the tanks from Usakan Bay to the new training area in N Borneo. The plywood 50/60 raft had the tank lowered on to it from the LSL in the bay then proceeded out to sea around an island and then back up the very fast River Rejang, an all day journey. The raft had been designed for the Rhine crossing in 1944 and not sea going work more than ten years later!

COLONEL MALCOLM CAMPBELL MC MBE

by Brig Hank Bowen

Malcolm was born in India on 27 December 1922. His father was in 1st Battalion Punjab Regiment, (the Punjabis) Indian Army. Aged 4 years he returned home with his mother leaving father in India. His mother returned to India when Malcolm was six years old and Malcolm then spent his schooldays away from his parents staying with his grandparents. Prep school at Swanbourne House in Buckinghamshire followed by Wellington College. He played cricket and rugby at junior colts, colts and First XI/First XV level. He sat for and won a Durand Scholarship which carried him through Wellington and guaranteed a place at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich.

The start of the war in 1939 prevented Malcolm from taking his place at the RMA Woolwich. He left Wellington in December 1940 and joined an officer training programme. This involved six weeks basic training at Ripon, six months at Birmingham University and should have culminated in five months at an Officer Cadet Training Unit before he was commissioned. Unfortunately he managed to break a leg at the start of the training and spent six months in hospital convalescing before he could return and finish his training! Finally he was commissioned in August 1942.

Malcolm's had a very successful career in the Army but two period stand out; one of intense excitement - the war - and another much longer period of great joy, success and satisfaction - his time with the Gurkha Engineers. These two were interspersed with duller periods on the staff or training units, enlivened by rugby, while he was young, and cricket and golf as he got older! He played his last match for the Corps as a full Colonel and President of RE Cricket, Richard Peck remembers him taking a magnificent catch in the gully.

In early 1943, in command of his first platoon, he joined 15th Scottish Division. A year of strenuous training and exercises readied the Division for the invasion of France. The Division did not land on D-Day, but arrived in France two weeks later



on 19th June. They were into battle very quickly and fought their way out of the beachhead, a five day slog, through the bocage of Normandy, across France to the Seine, to the canals of Holland, he watched the gliders on their way to Nijmegen and Arnhem, the Siegfried Line and then the Rhine crossing, a gallop through the North German Plains and up to the River Elbe - where the war ended! Most of the time he was in support of the Highland Light Infantry. His troop was involved in mine clearance, rafting and bridging and for the Rhine crossing, laying trackway to allow the Buffaloes (armoured amphibians) to reach the river. On one occasion he was ordered to destroy a Tiger Tank that had been captured. He was all set to do so, charges were in place and the fuzes prepared when he was tapped on the shoulder. A young cavalry subaltern told him to desist; this was the first Tiger captured intact and they wanted to study it! During this period Malcolm was only out of active combat for a short period over Christmas 1944 as he was attending a fieldworks course! He was awarded the Military Cross in 1944.

A series of different short term postings followed. Life was pretty routine and perhaps dull after the excitement of the war years, however, he did manage to meet Josephine and then marry her, in April 1948. He was selected to go the Cambridge University, in the autumn of 1948, on the two year course. An idyllic way to start married life - and Joanna was born in February 1950.

In September 1950 Malcolm was posted, as a troop commander, to the Gurkha Engineers, then in Hong Kong. There were no accompanied passages at that time so Josephine and Joanna were left in UK. Malcolm was joining a very new and half trained organisation with a dual role - infantry and at the same time training to become engineers! Malcolm was destined to see this organisation grow into a mini-Corps of Engineers as over the next seventeen years he was to spend three tours in the Regiment finishing as Commandant of the Gurkha Engineers.

His started his first tour as a troop commander building field defences on the border, but quickly moved through to become second in command of the Squadron, and when the RHQ was formed he became the first Adjutant. Josephine and Joanna joined him in Hong Kong. Andrew was born in Kowloon General Hospital. He left the Regiment in 1952.

After Staff College and a staff job he re-joined the Gurkha Engineers, who had by this time returned to Malaya as 50 Gurkha Field Engineer Regiment. He spent six months in Kluang as OC of the Gurkha Training Squadron and then took over as OC 67 Gurkha Field Squadron. He was the first troop commander to return as a squadron commander.

He would have seen a great change in the Regiment. The Malayan Emergency had been in progress for eight years. Some areas had been declared 'White' - clear of terrorists, but a hard core remained in the remoter areas of jungle. The main task facing engineers was to open up the country with jungle tracks and small airstrips so that the infantry could move quickly to areas where needed. In the process

the practical ability of the Gurkha officers and senior NCOs had developed rapidly. Many of them produced competent improvisations in the way of timber culverts and small timber bridges, and became increasingly more competent in the handling of plant and mechanical equipment.

Malcolm was the ideal man to command one of the squadrons, he had wartime experience, been to Cambridge, and he could speak Gurkhali. Over the next two years the squadron ranged over Malaya from a road in Johore, in the South, to another major task in Kedah in the North. The normal drill being nine months on operations and three months back in Sungei Besi. Malcolm even found time to captain the Regimental Nepal Cup Football Cup, as goalie!

He had a very successful time as OC of the squadron, his efforts being rewarded by the award on an MBE in 1959. He attended the Joint Staff College in 1960, followed by two staff jobs in Germany and then Malcolm was given the news he welcomed, he was to return to The Gurkha Engineers as Commandant, in February 1963.

The Regiment had by this time moved from Sungei Besi near Kuala Lumpur, to Kluang in Johore and had now grown to three independent field squadrons, one in Hong Kong, one in Seria in Borneo and one in Tidworth. The Brunei Rebellion had been put down but trouble was brewing in Sarawak and was soon to blow-up into the Indonesian Confrontation. This meant the redeployment of 68 Independent Field Squadron from Tidworth to Borneo. In addition Malcolm commanded the Far East Engineer Training Centre responsible for all engineer training in the Far East. He was the Garrison Commander of Kluang which consisted of about 6,000 men, women and children, engineer training, Army Air Corps, Gurkha Transport Regiment, an independent Malay Squadron, a school, hospital, church and NAAFI. He was also CRE of 17 Gurkha Division and as such was the engineer commander of 11 Independent Field Squadron. Quite a command!

The Regiment had grown in numbers, stature and ability. Young men who had joined as sappers were now sergeant majors and staff sergeants with both artisan and combat engineer skills. The three field squadrons between them provided the bulk of engineer support during confrontation in Borneo. There was never less than one and sometimes two squadrons in the line at any time. Malcolm had a busy and satisfying tour with regular visits to Hong Kong, Brunei and Sarawak, divisional responsibilities, a trek in Nepal, a demanding job running the engineer training and a fairly full life dealing with the problems of the Garrison - visits from two bishops, defence minister of Nepal, Red Cross Queen B, and various generals. He kept up with his sport becoming golf captain of the Kluang Planters' Club. He said himself that the two and a half years he spent in Kluang were the most satisfying time in his career commanding a fine group of officers and super men involved in active soldiering. We certainly loved him as Commandant.

He returned to the UK to another staff job and then on promotion to Colonel became responsible for the stage



management of the introduction of new equipment for the Royal Engineers - the combat engineer tractor, mines and bridging - frustrating but interesting. When his next posting this time to America was announced he decided that enough was enough and resigned early. After a spell with Cubitts he became a 'headhunter'. The family settled in Buxted, near Uckfield in Sussex and became completely integrated in the community. He was church warden for over sixteen years which included an *inter regnum* between incumbent vicars.

Malcolm was a brave, talented, efficient and loyal soldier, he was a splendid commander whom we all loved and respected.

John Getley remembers: *"I really knew Malcolm best as a sportsman. He was always happiest with a golf club, cricket bat or hockey stick in his hand, versatile he played soccer more than once with the Nepal Cup team. I even found later a plaque on the Kluang Padang recording that the practice wickets had been his work. I knew him first, distantly, as OC 67 Squadron building fine roads in the North of the country while I joined 68 Squadron elsewhere. Again as Commandant his duties kept him in Kluang while the Squadrons were attached to Brigades in Borneo and Hong Kong. He was a people person and understood his soldiers well. I am personally grateful to him for allowing Tricia & I to come together to Kluang when there was technically nowhere for us to stay. And further for giving Tricia a fair wind to join me in Brunei where again nothing was really ready for the families."*

MAJOR HARRY CAULFIELD

by David Caulfield

He was born on 30 November 1933 to Harry and Isabella and the early years were not easy with a father who spent many years at sea in the Royal Navy. It was a tough start but he doted on his mother and especially his young sister, Isabel, and they enjoyed an extremely close relationship throughout his life.

At 15 years of age, Harry enlisted into the Army Apprentices School, then in Harrogate, to study as an Architectural Draughtsman. On passing out into the Royal Engineers, Harry was posted, firstly to 37 Army Engineer Regiment and then 27 Field Engineer Regiment in British Army of the Rhine. After a short stint in Germany he attended the next level A2 draughtsman's course at the Royal School of Military Engineering, followed by an 18 month tour in a UK Commander Royal Engineers or CRE drawing office before returning to Chatham for the highest level A1 course. On successful completion he spent a further 2 years in the UK CRE drawing office. It was during this time that he met my mother, Rose, at a dance at the Welling Embassy in London.



Initially rejected as being too short he was extremely persistent and after 2 years eventually won her heart. They married on 2 June 1956 at Chislehurst. He told me of many a long drive by motorbike up the old A2 to her home in Bellingham in order to woo her, when the marriage happened the bike was sadly given up! They were posted to Kenya in 1957 as Chief Draughtsman CRE Kahawa. Unfortunately this appointment lasted only 2 years as on the transfer of RE Works Services to Ministry of Public Buildings and Works (MPBW) the Corps closed the draughtsman and Quantity Surveyor Assistants (QSA) rosters. The options were: transfer to the general roster or attend the 2 year Clerk of Works course. Harry, along with ten others opted for the Clk Wks (Construction) course.

On successful completion Harry was posted in 1961 to Hong Kong where he had a very busy 3 years firstly on maintenance of the Sekkong Garrison, then building a road to the tank ranges and later involved in the supervision of the construction of Casino Lines for 7 Gurkha Rifles. On New Years day 1963 Harry was warned at 10am that he was to fly to Singapore that very afternoon with WO1 Freddy Snape, to join up with other Works Services personnel from Singapore and Malaya to form the Brunei Works Section. The next day, having been kitted out, they flew from Singapore to Brunei where they immediately started organising local contractors to build temporary camps for the infantry, who had been flown out the week before to retake the oil fields. Despite deploying to a war zone, Freddy and Harry managed to pack a half set of golf clubs each to ensure they could maintain their swings. Fortunately the team were relieved, by a permanent team from UK, after about four months and returned to their families in Hong Kong.

In 1964 Harry returned to RSME, to supervise the construction of the UPCHAT Road by various Units and the surveying of the LOWCHAT road which was to be constructed later.

In September 1967, a few days after Sarah was born, Harry was posted to 67 Gurkha Field Squadron (OC Major Tony Rickets and Major Robin Jordan), then based in Brunei, for an eight month unaccompanied tour to assist the Squadron with the construction of a road in the Temburung District. Although this was intended as a Plant Troop task the Field Troops were deployed on a monthly roster for constructing cut-off drains, on the hill side, and culverts. The project turned out to be far more difficult than first envisaged due to the terrain and heavy rainfall. Although the Troop Commanders (Mike Gaffney, Mike Reynolds, Austin Thorpe and Dominic Verschoyle) enjoyed their independence from the Squadron (Harry remembers Mike Reynolds "celebrating" his 21st birthday in Banger) the Gurkha soldiers worked very hard. Harry remembers the frequent site visits by the SSM Bhimbahadur Gharti, who with a permanent smile on his face, always raised morale.

Harry completed a further five years as a Clk Wks including a 2 year tour with STRE Malta, where Joanna was born in 1970, before the British Army was forced to leave in 1972. At this point he completed a WO1 tour in 62 CRE at Barton Stacey. In September 1973 Harry was commissioned and became a Captain, and sent to 28 Amphibious Engineer Regiment,



where he thoroughly enjoyed the complete change in role, for three years. He recalls many a time on a bridge site at night using red and green torch signals despite being completely colour blind! On completion of this regimental tour he was granted a Garrison Engineer Commission and again posted to STRE Malta for one year. Harry was then granted his wish to return to QGE, in 1977, as Design Troop Commander based in Sekkong. The next three years was a very busy and enjoyable time with the Regiment engaged in border control work for illegal immigrants. It was a particularly difficult time for Harry and Rose as I had a very serious accident whilst attending the Outward Bound Course at the Army Mountain Training Centre, in Wales. I fell 72 feet down a mine shaft whilst abseiling. After a very traumatic rescue from the shaft I was moved to the intensive care unit of Aberystwyth hospital. Harry and Rose were given the news at midnight by the Commandant, Colonel Mike Stephens, who very kindly took my two sisters to their home after arranging an immediate flight to UK for Harry and Rose. Everyone in the Regiment were so kind and understanding during this very difficult time, which lasted many months, necessitating in Harry and Rose flying to UK on several occasions. I have no doubt that but for the intervention of my father I would not have lived. He managed, during Easter weekend, to get the RAF Air Sea Rescue duty helicopter to fly me to Cardiff, which had the only Kidney Dialysis machine in Wales. He was also the driving force behind getting me into the military hospital system and then Headley Court where I spent over 5 months, full time, learning to walk – I left there having passed a BFT. This was a traumatic time for Harry and Rose and they owe a great deal of thanks for the sympathy and assistance given by the Regiment particularly the Commandant, Mike Stephens and the Adjutant, Andrew Tuggey.

Following Hong Kong, Harry was posted in 1980 on a civil attachment to Ministry of Public Buildings and Works (MPBW) for the building of the Maidstone Crown Court. In April 1982, Harry was extracted at 2 days notice to deploy with the task force on the QE2 to reclaim the Falklands, certainly the oldest sapper and probably the oldest soldier to deploy with the force. At 48 being handed a shovel and told to dig in at San Carlos must have been quite an experience. At the end of the conflict he found himself in Port Stanley with the CRE Works (Falklands). On his return Harry was posted to the Area Works Office in Berlin for 3 years as a District Works Officer, yet another tough assignment!! This was followed by his last tour as the Project Officer for the development of the RE Museum in the Ravelin Building at Chatham. Here he was given the freedom to carefully select the very best tradesmen from around the Corps to form a 12 strong team. He was presented to HM The Queen in 1987 when she formally opened the Museum. He truly lived in the time when the saying "join the army and see the world" was a reality.

In July 1987 he left the Army, after a 38 year career, to take up the appointment as Estates Bursar at Kings School Rochester. He thoroughly enjoyed this appointment and working in the school environment and among his achievements was the building of an indoor swimming pool. This position he maintained for 10 years before gracefully

retiring to take up Captain of his Golf Club. Harry immersed himself in the business of the Mid Kent Golf Club and was hugely respected and loved.

Harry was always fanatical about sport and played to a very high standard. During his career in the Corps, Harry was awarded Corps Colours for hockey, golf and football (his last game as goalkeeper for the Corps was against the Gunners in the Spring of 1967). However, he is probably best known for his achievements in Corps Golf where he twice won the Corps Championship. He was the first non commissioned officer to be accepted into the REGS opening the path for the all inclusive Society that it is today and as such he was a trail blazer. Harry became Captain of the Society in 1992 and served in that post for five years until 1996. During this period, along with his Gunner counterpart, he planned the Centenary match against the Gunners, the oldest golf society match in the world, which took place in October 1995 and was probably the pinnacle of his REGS involvement. In the words of Ralf Topping, "no such event since has come near to those few days in the Autumn of 1995; and the Centenary Match would not have been the success it was if it were not for the efforts of Harry. He later became Vice President.

Harry was an enthusiast and gave 100% to everything he touched, demonstrating true commitment and dedication. Generous and always willing to help others, he was loyal and had complete integrity. He was also blessed with a wonderful sense of humour that endeared him to many.

425486 MAJOR DEOBAHADUR THAPA MAGAR (DHEGA)

by Maj (Retd) Surjabahadur Thapa MVO and Hank Bowen



Deobahadur was born in 1922 in Dhegachhap, Kykmi, Syangja (No 4 West) Nepal. He died on 25 April 2014. He enlisted into the Indian Army on 14 October 1938 and then the British Army 1 January 1948. He was third son of Jhupalsing Thapa (mother's name Kamala) who served in 1/8th Gurkha Rifles and retired after 18 years of service as a Havildar (Sergeant).

Deobahadur was enlisted into 6th GR, Indian Army, on 14 October 1938 at Kunaraghat. He was in fact 16 years old on his date of enlistment and carried out his recruit training at the 6th GR Training Centre at Abbotabad. He served with 2/6th on the North West Frontier and 3/6th GR. He was promoted Lance Naik (L/Cpl) in April 1941. He volunteered for parachute training and in January 1942 he joined 153 Gorkha Parachute Battalion and was promoted Naik (Corporal), as a section commander in October 1943. He was with 153 Gorkha Para Bn at the battle of Sangchhap, in 1944, when the Brigade consisting of 152 Para (Rajputana Rifles), 153 Gorkha Para and the Kalibahadur Battalion, Nepalese Army, together with



supporting arms, held up a Japanese Division en route for Kohima for about a week but were severely mauled by the Japanese Army. Deobahadur and some of his section took four days to get back to Imphal. In 1945, 153 Gorkha Para became 2 Gurkha Parachute Battalion. Deobahadur became a "jump-master" parachute instructor while the battalion was at Chaklala, near Rawalpindi. He would take young Gurkha trainee parachutists to the swimming pool and order them to jump off the highest diving platform. He was promoted to Havildar (Sergeant) on 1 March 1947. He rejoined 6 GR in March 1947 and was promoted to Colour Sergeant on 1 July 1947. He opted for the British Army when India gained independence in August 1947. He was discharged from the Indian Army on 31 December 1947, and enlisted into the British Army, with 2/6th GR, on 1 January 1948. Initially the battalion was employed on ceremonial duties providing the guards for Viceregal Lodge, but became more and more involved in the communal unrest arising from Partition of India and Pakistan. In 1948 6GR moved to Malaya and then to Hong Kong but was to return to Malaya in 1950 to take part in the Malayan Emergency.

In August 1950 additional volunteers were called for from the Gurkha Battalions to re-form the Gurkha Engineer Training Squadron, following the departure of 67 and 68 Squadrons to Hong Kong, in time to accept a new batch of recruits from Nepal. Deobahadur volunteered. At this time Deobahadur was serving as a Colour Sergeant (Company Quarter Master Sergeant) with the 6GR in Kluang. He was appointed Squadron Sergeant Major and was promoted to Warrant Officer 2 on 1 April 1952.

He attended the first potential Gurkha Officers Course in Kluang and was commissioned as a Lieutenant, King's Gurkha Officer (KGO) on 28 July 1952. He remained in Kluang as a Training Party Officer for the 1952 Intake and for the start of the 1953 Intake before joining 67 Field Squadron in Hong Kong on 26 April 1953 as Troop KGO. He returned to Malaya with the squadron when the Regiment moved to Sungei Besi in 1954. General Lance Perowne wrote of him: *"Deobahadur Thapa, an outstanding able man and leader of a new generation of Gurkha Sapper, who discarded nothing of the traditions of Gurkha riflemen in the process of developing first and foremost as sapper"*,

In January 1957 he was appointed the Gurkha Adjutant of the Regiment. On 18 September 1959 he was promoted Captain (QGO) and went to North Borneo with 68 Squadron

On 1 October 1961 Deobahadur became Gurkha Captain of 68 Gurkha Independent Field Squadron and remained with the Squadron for the next five years taking the Squadron through its tour in UK, where in addition to his duties as a G/Capt he had to discourage the Gurkha families from buying beef from the butcher. When 68 Squadron deployed to Borneo, in 1963, the squadron did not have a full complement of British Officers and had troops deployed in three different Divisions of Sarawak and in Brunei. Deobahadur, in addition to his duties as G/Captain, became OC HQ and Support Troop. In 1964 with one section of C Troop under command, and

the Plant Section, Deobahadur built Muara Airstrip, Brunei for light aircraft to fly General Walter Walker from Lodge to his HQ in Labuan, Malaysia. He was Gurkha Captain of the Squadron for all three tours in Borneo.

On 14 November 1966 Deobahadur was posted to HQ The Gurkha Engineers to become Gurkha Captain of 70 Park and Training Squadron in Kluang. In "Sons of The Regiment" he was described: *"Deobahadur was, impassive, intelligent and thoughtful - would have made a good poker player, but he could become stubborn and angry when he was fighting for something he believed was right for his squadron and his Regiment. He was great man for kaida (tradition). He was not a great engineer, but a very practical field sapper and an extremely good soldier and officer. He had tremendous pride in the Regiment and was continually chiding the men to keep their quarters, their vehicles and themselves smart and tidy. Without a doubt he was one of the outstanding QGOs who never had the honour to become Gurkha Major of the Regiment. He was promoted Major (QGO) on 31 October 1967 as Gurkha Major of The Gurkha Dog Company in Singapore"*.

Deobahadur finished his career with the Gurkha Dog Company and had the unhappy task of disbanding that unit as part of the retrenchment of the Brigade of Gurkhas. After 31 years and 304 days of loyal service to the British Crown Deobahadur left the Brigade of Gurkhas on 4 November 1969. His fellow Gurkha Officers from the Regiment went all the way from Kluang, Malaysia to bid farewell to him and his family at Transit Camp Singapore. His final date of discharge was 18 August 1970.

On retirement he settled in Bhairawa where he built and ran the Yeti Hotel. He also set up a transport company there. His only regret was that the Town Council of Bhairawa never called on him and other retired Gurkha Officers to sort out the town: *"if we had the authority we could soon clean up this dirty town and run it properly"*



Deobahadur and British Officers of the 1950s at the 2008 Reunion in Kathmandu





*Standing: Mr Chin Kai Mee, Lt (QGO) Kalusing Limbu.
Sitting Capt (QGO) Dharamlal Thapa, Maj (QGO)
Amarbahadur Gurung, Lt (QGO) Deobahadur Thapa*

He is survived by his wife, Jamunadevi, whom he married in January 1944, four sons, two of whom served in the QGE; Gurkha Major Surjabahadur Thapa and Gurkha Captain Chittrabahadur Thapa, four daughters, nine grandchildren and three great grandchildren. He will be sorely missed by his family and all who served with him.

He was a true 'Son of the Regiment'.

398045 MAJOR (QGO) DHARAMLAL THAPA

by John Getley



398045 Major (QGO) Dharamlal Thapa, Ex 2/6 Gurkha Rifles and The Gurkha Engineers, died last year aged 96. He was born on 13 October 1918, in Siddetar village, Udaipur, East Nepal. He first enlisted in 13 October 1935 and finally discharged on 27 July 1965.

Surjabahadur Saheb writes "*He was my father's PT instructor when father was doing recruit*

training 1939 (2/6 GR) at Abbotabad, Pakistan".

I met Dharamlal Sahib in 1956 in the Ayer Hitam jungle camp: He was Gurkha Captain 68 Field Squadron and I had newly joined as A Troop Commander. At that time all the Gurkha Officers and many of the NCOs were wartime re-enlistments. Dharamlal himself was ex 6 GR. Our old soldiers had a wonderful attitude to the engineers that they had now become and their traditional infantry values. It was here that the camp sentry found it necessary to shoot a tiger and the plant operators left scorpions on their tractor's seat to dissuade others from playing there. All great fun but the discipline was rigid and the standards high. For this a great credit must fall on Dharamlal Sahib.

He followed this appointment becoming our 4th Gurkha Major in January 1962. Perowne tells us that Dharamlal Thapa stood at the Commandant's right hand when the Gurkha Engineers saw at last the fulfilment of their hopes and reached the fullness of their evolution. We made the Nepal Cup final in 1962 and the final of the 17 Division Hockey Competition the following year and surely he must take credit for this too.

Dharamlal had a son in QGE: the late 21142417 Sgt Ghanbahadur Thapa. Sadly his wife died at Sungei Besi Camp, BMH Kinrara hospital, in 1960 or 61.

BRIGADIER JOHN ELDERKIN

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John Elderkin enjoyed one of the most diverse of postwar careers embracing nineteen appointments in seventeen different locations world-wide. At a time when career patterns in the Corps tended towards "BAOR specialists" and "rest-of-the world", he was firmly in the latter category. John was educated at Clayesmore School, Dorset, with which he maintained a lifelong connection. In 1943/44 he



attended the Cambridge "short course" before being posted in 1945, with an Emergency Commission, to Calcutta where he was appointed Stores Officer. He escaped from this, as he put it, by acquiring a regular commission. He was then posted to the Royal Bombay Sappers and Miners Training Regiment at Poona (Pune) as 2IC of a Training Company moving to Roorkee in 1947 as an assistant bridging instructor.

He returned to UK in 1948 and, after his BSc course at Shrivenham and a brief period at Chatham with 12 SME Regiment, was posted to 28 Engineer Regiment in Korea in 1952 for what was to become the final year of that war. At the time, the Commonwealth Division was taking control of a new sector involving both field squadrons in hectic activity. John was a troop commander in 12 Field Squadron, had a spell as Liaison Officer with the invaluable Korean Service Corps unit in support of the Regiment, and finally became Intelligence Officer at RHQ. Contemporaries bear witness to how he rose to the occasion in these testing times with lives so frequently at risk in the mine-strewn terrain and under the intense enemy artillery fire. He spoke little of it afterwards although, in 1975, he much enjoyed an opportunity to return to the divisional area. Korea was followed by 16 Field Squadron (35 Army Engineer Regiment) as Second-in-Command, initially in the Canal Zone and then at Limassol, Cyprus. It was there, acting as OC, that he led the squadron in an emergency riot control operation. His account of this episode, published in the *RE Journal* of December 1956 became a standard text at Staff College for teaching procedures "In Aid of the Civil Power". Nowhere in the article does John mention his own leading role in the affair.



Three brief but significant UK tours now followed: in 1955, as Staff Captain AG7; in 1957, as a student at the Staff College; and, in 1958, as DAAG at HQ North West District at Preston. In 1960, he was back in Cyprus to command 33 Independent Field Squadron, one of only two independent squadrons in the whole Corps. By this time, 33 Squadron was the only Sapper field unit on the island. Although it was a period of relative peace on the island, it was no time to relax; inter-communal tensions were by no means settled by the recent Independence arrangements.

After this tour, UK beckoned again in the shape of the Joint Services Staff Course and a subsequent MoD appointment in the Secretariat of the Defence Research Policy Staff – John's introduction to the world of defence procurement, foreshadowing a key appointment that lay in the future.

In 1965, he swapped the MoD hothouse for the pleasures of four years regimental soldiering first as Second-in-Command of the Gurkha Engineers at Kluang, Malaya and next, in complete contrast and on promotion to lieutenant colonel, in command of 71 Engineer Regiment in Glasgow. From Malaya, he was able to visit Nepal, India, Hong Kong and Borneo. His Glasgow tour gave him a first taste of BAOR, the Regiment having a reinforcement operational role in that theatre which they practised by squadrons in a series of annual camps. However, in 1969 he returned to Whitehall and the world of procurement as a full colonel, at first on the General Staff and later as Colonel GS OR7, to master-mind the operational requirements of the Royal Engineers. The projects for which he became responsible included Wheelbarrow, Ranger and Bridging for the 80s. In 1976, after yet another overseas tour, this time as Colonel AQ in Hong Kong, he was promoted Brigadier and appointed Chief of the British Mission to the Russian Forces in East Germany (BRIXMIS), based in Berlin, the first Sapper to hold the appointment; a highly satisfying end to his career. He brought to this new responsibility the same qualities that marked his earlier appointments: an intensity of professional commitment, an enquiring mind that, often to the despair of his subordinates, took nothing for granted (he abhorred flannel, which he could identify immediately) and thorough operational control. His somewhat austere outlook did not always appeal to his more flamboyant colleagues but those who worked for him bear witness to his integrity, the sincerity of his friendship and his understated concern for his subordinates.

On his retirement from the Army, he became Domestic Bursar at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, which post he held from 1979 until 1992. There, while he had to live with the frustrations of interference by a few individual fellows unfamiliar with the concept of the chain of command, he enjoyed the friendship and support of the Senior Common Room as a whole and the loyalty of his staff. He was, appropriately, awarded an MA for his services to the University. It was also a welcome settled period for his wife and family. Having married rather later than the average, they had two young sons aged five and three who were able to embark on their education locally.

While at Cambridge, John also served as Chairman of Cambridgeshire Army Benevolent Fund Committee (1981-1990), and was County Representative of the Officers'

Association. However, his main interest and commitment outside his job was as a member of the Council of Clayesmore School. After Cambridge, John and his family moved to Wiltshire to be closer to the school and he became chairman from 1994 until finally retiring in 1998. He took an active part in his local village affairs and was Church Treasurer for many years. He is survived by his wife Erika and their two sons, William and Rupert.

GAM GURUNG

by Tim Beckh



I first remember Gam when I returned to my Troop from my language course. He had been on Nepal leave when I first took over and so I had been in the Regiment several months before our paths first crossed. He was unusually tall and upright for a Gurkha and had a air of brisk efficiency. He was keen to please the BO

sahebs with a sharp tongue for young sappers who didn't react quickly enough or come up to scratch. He was very diligent and enjoyed the responsibilities of his role. However, underneath he had a hint of self doubt and was eager to be reassured that he was doing the right thing. We used to joke about "when he was GM Saheb" although we both knew he wasn't destined for such lofty heights.

We enjoyed the usual rounds of exercises, projects and training before completing a very successful UN Honour Guard tour to South Korea in late 1990. Sgt Gam planned meticulously making sure that we arrived with absolutely everything we needed for three and a half months of working with the Americans and South Koreans. It was testament to his organisation that the only thing we needed sending to us from the Regiment back in Hong Kong was more silver kukri letter openers, cap badges and cufflinks from the PRI to sell to the Americans who had a voracious appetite for anything Gurkha. Gam's leadership ensured that we had a flawless reputation for discipline and professionalism and his entrepreneurial streak resulted in healthy troop funds to pay for a party or BBQ. The Troop's footballing prowess was considerably enhanced by Gam's coaching and enthusiastic forward play.

When I went on my Nepal Trek, Gam absolutely insisted that I visit his wife, Kabita, who was living in Pokhara. I hunted round for their house and when I found it was very warmly welcomed and stayed for a delicious meal. This hospitality was characteristic of most Gurkhas but especially of Gam.

Many years after I left Hong Kong I had a call out of the blue at work. It was Gam. He had left the Army and had been running a hotel in Pokhara. However, this was not enough to stretch him and he had decided to move to the UK. On the phone, he insisted on testing my Nepali, which by now was almost non-existent, encouraging me to try harder despite me being in an open plan office and attracting some very



strange looks from my colleagues. He threatened to schedule regular revisions sessions and to pop by and test me. Gam always liked to gently tease and let you know that despite all the differences in rank and status, he could put you on the spot if he wanted.

In the UK, Gam became heavily involved with his local community in Surrey and with characteristic energy and enthusiasm was elected as a local Counsellor¹¹, an achievement of which he can be rightly proud. It was his willingness to wholeheartedly throw himself into things that made him stand out from the crowd and it is hard to believe that someone with such energy could be taken at such a young age. No doubt he remained characteristically positive to the end.

John Getley remembers: *"At Easter, in 1982, Gambahadur and three other Sappers from 68 Squadron stayed with us shortly after we'd come to live in Fife. They'd come for a couple of days to lay the drive in front of the house but fitted in much more. They'd borrowed the car and enjoyed the dance halls of Dunfermline one evening and much of the next day with a pack of cards. That was Gambahadur so full of life and keen to see just everything. He wrote later to say that he'd come in retirement as a student to this country and stayed on firstly as a site labourer and gone on from there to be a Labour Councillor. He wrote often and always kept us informed on his wife and children in the Pokhara Hotel. He was fortunate to obtain the tenancy of a British Legion house at 3 The Sanctuary, Green Lane, Morden."*

21171019 PTE RAJAT GURUNG

by Maj Hukumraj Thapa

Pte Rajat Gurung died on 12 Mar 2014 at Tidworth, Hampshire, UK while serving with 1 RHA.

Rajat was born to Captain (QGO) Gangabahadur ex QGE and Rishi Gurung on 29 Aug 1984 at the British Military Hospital, Hong Kong during their married accompanied tour. He grew up as a line boy of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers family at Pearl Island and Perowne Barracks. Rajat started his education with the Gurkha Children School at Perowne Barracks followed by education at Camelia Boarding School in Darjeeling, Dr Graham's Home Kalimpong, India and graduated from Global Collegiate High School in Pokhara, Nepal. A lively and "bubbly" character as some of his acquaintances describe him as, had at all times been a fun loving and a humorous individual. Life had at all times been to him at an easy pace.

He also had this great desire to join the Brigade of Gurkhas which he so did in 2003. That was, to follow in footsteps of his

grandfather, his father and his two uncles, all with service with the Brigade. On completion of his Basic Training as a recruit he joined The Queen's Gurkha Engineers in Maidstone. Trade-wise, he was qualified as a Carpenter & Joiner Class 1 from the Royal School of Military Engineering in Chatham. In 2011 he was transferred into the AGC (SPS) as a clerk and posted to 1 RHA. Married to Usha in 2008 they had been living at Tidworth since 2011 after Maidstone.

The funeral service was held on 9 Apr at Church of St Michael. Numberies of Rajat, the 2003 intake, were the pallbearers. The service was attended by distinguished guests, senior officers and members from AGC (SPS), his parent unit 1 RHA, Col of the Regt QGE, GM, and all ranks of QGE, Col BG and the two incumbent QGOs. Also present were ex-QGE members and their families in UK, Payung Khola Tamu Samaj and Tidworth Nepalese Community.

Upon their return from UK, Ganga Saheb conducted the 4 day "Arghaun", a final customary ritual service, at his residence from 25 to 28 Apr. It is a traditional service to ensure that the soul of the deceased Rest in Peace forever. On the final day of "Arghaun" he thanked senior officers and members of BGN, BGP, all his kin, friends and families for their kindness and support given throughout the difficult times.

RICHARD MARRIOTT

by David Corsellis

Richard and I attended an Army Officers Selection Board in Westbury early in 1955 when we were 17 – we did not meet then and we both failed. We were both told by the Board there was no point in reapplying as we were not suitable officer material. In Richard's case, this had created something of a furore, because he was at school at Wellington, which at that time was an important provider of officers for the Army. He was RSM of the Corps there and his failure caused a flurry of letters between the Headmaster and the Brigadier whose staff had failed us.

Anyway we went back for a second time a few months later and we happened to sit next to each other on the bus from the station. That was the start of a very close friendship which lasted until his death almost sixty years later.

We both passed the second time and off we went together to Sandhurst. I believe that Richard's failure to pass first time was in fact very important. It was after all to be about the last thing he failed at in the rest of his life. That failure I think was a wake-up call which instigated in him a fierce but well disguised intent not to allow failure to occur again.

This was apparent with hindsight at Sandhurst where for all his natural charm, ability and he would say his good looks there was a pretty fierce competitive spirit. He duly passed out first of our intake of about 150 in July 1957.

You will probably remember people at school or university who would gaily say before an exam that they had done little or no work for it when you knew that they had slaved away for hours or days. However in Richard's case, it was often true. He had this infuriating ability of being able to read and



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understand things incredibly quickly and then remember them. This ability stood him well at Sandhurst and I suspect was one of the secrets of his success through the rest of his life.

After training at Sandhurst and Chatham which was the home of the Royal Engineers into which we had been commissioned our paths were about to diverge. Before that however we were both sent to an engineer squadron in North Germany where we learnt two things. First its no fun at all being tall in a tank and second that The Reeperbarn in Hamburg was Hogarthian.

Richard then went off to Cambridge for three years which was his plan and I went to the Army university at Shrivenham. So I saw very little of him in this period.

It was at Cambridge that Richard developed his love of racing and betting. He, unlike most of his fellow students was being paid by the Army while he was there – hence he could afford to bet and I gather did with at times some gusto.

Whilst at Cambridge, he also took up shooting and fishing. There is a splendid story of how, when out shooting with Jeremy Greenwood, they shot a goose. They kept it for a few days and then took it to their college kitchens to ask how to cook it. The man they met said that they had best dump the corpse immediately as it was in fact a swan and he was a special constable who could arrest them for killing one of the Queens swans!

Richard did not excel at Cambridge in that he was I think expected to get a first and got a 2/2. His tutor wrote that he would have got a better degree if had spent less time at Newmarket and more at Cambridge. I always found this result surprising but it certainly didn't seem to do him any harm.

After all this education and training in 1961 Richard went off to the Gurkhas in the Far East and I followed a year later. He was to spend five years there and during this time, apart from having a huge amount of fun, two important things happened.

After a period as a troop commander in 67 Squadron which was in Kota Belud for a long time building a training area, he became ADC to the Sir William Goode who was the Governor of what was then British North Borneo. This was at the time when very delicate negotiations were underway which led to Borneo, Sarawak and Malaya being joined together in independence as Malaysia. Richard was intimately involved in these talks and I am sure that this led to a considerable broadening of his horizons. He was also later deeply involved as Adjutant of the Gurkha Engineers in Kluang in planning and implementing a very difficult redundancy programme which was imposed on the Brigade of Gurkhas after the end of Confrontation with Indonesia. This was the first time that he had to take decisions which permanently affected people's lives.

On his return from the Far East in 1967 he decided to leave the Army basically I think because progress in the Army was in his eyes too slow and structured. By this time he was, believe it or not, a qualified parachutist and a frogman.

By all accounts he was not short of offers of jobs. There then occurred a typical piece of Marriott magic. He was having a long and very expensive lunch in Robert Carrier's restaurant in London given by the personnel director of Elliot Automation. During the second bottle of wine his host said that the job was his but had he considered going to a company like IBM. At this point David Dey who was at the table next door got up, came over and said that he was from IBM and he had heard that and would Richard please come to see them the next day. The rest is history.

Was that luck? I suppose it was partly but I think the main reason this happened was because Richard had an air about him which always made him noticed.

After very successful careers with IBM and then BT, Richard worked with my son James during the dotcom era and then in a hedge fund; James said of Richard

"He brought complete calm during our periods of hysteria, grounding us when we started to believe the hype and talking with people across the company as if they were equals despite his obvious experience and track record".

I would like to quote from a letter I wrote to Richard and Val almost two years ago when, just after diagnosis, the future looked bleaker than it turned out to be.

It is a fact that you and Val have been our best friends for a long long time. There is a lovely symmetry that you two were the first people to stay in our first house at Shrivenham in 1968 and also the first to have stayed with us in Chiswick in what we hope to be our last house.

I think that by the time you left the Army we had become close friends who didn't need to see each other frequently to sustain our friendship. This remained the case for the rest of our lives. When we met it always seemed like yesterday that we had last met.

We had watched from afar your amazing exploits with IBM and BT. I was immensely impressed and proud of your achievements. But you always appeared to me to be so laid back. The cleverness and ability is indisputable but I believe that the secret of your success was your immense charm, integrity and considerable closely hidden ambition.

I make no apology for quoting what the Queen said after 9/11 'Grief is the price of Love' I will grieve for you and I will also be immensely glad and proud that I knew you and that you were my friend.

Carl West-Meads remembers: *I first met Richard in the Mess at Kitchener in 1958. We were on different courses but shared an interest in Horses and Racing. We were then in the Regiment together, although not seeing too much of each other as he went off to be ADC to the Governor of British North Borneo. We then both left the Army early. I next came across him when I was a "Headhunter" and he came to see me about a job. He had a good position with IBM but felt he had reached a ceiling yet had more to offer. He went on to be a Director at BT.*



However it was in the mid-nineties when we came together again. He took a share in one of my Midweek Racing Club horses. He then carried on becoming a share holder in all our horses. He was a stalwart a much valued and popular member of the Club. In fact the Trainer and I always sought Richard's opinion if we we had a query about a horse or options.



Staff Chubbly, Richard Marriot and Capt Sherbahadur Limbu in the N Borneo Training Area

From John Getley: "I met Richard when I was in North Borneo with 67 Squadron. He was such good value in the Squadron and in N Borneo too where he was known to many through his father who'd been Police Chief for the North Borneo Company before the war. They still had a buffalo mounted police in the bazaar! Richard fell in easily with us all and was a keen member of the Squadron Polo Team. Unusually for the tropics horses bred well there under the shadow of 13,000 ft Mount Kinabalu and they were easily sold on as polo ponies in Hong Kong."

IONA MCVEIN

by John Getley

I remember well our first meeting. John Bowring, as Commanding Officer, had been a bachelor and towards the end of his tour asked us to 'the Dog' in Kuala Lumpur to meet Iona. She had come out from Britain and they were now engaged and would marry when he got home. I met Iona again on inter-tour leave when they had a house in Kensington and John worked at the War Office. I met her a third time in Singapore where John was Chief Engineer. Tricia & I had just stepped off the flight from UK when we were collected for lunch and I learnt that I was to be the next keeper of the ex-Sultan of Selangor's Rolls Royce. Always a senior figure in the Army she displayed wonderful grace and poise and matched so well her patrician husband. She had a wonderful shared interest in John's soldiers and a great memory for wives and families and all that we were doing. Meals with her were a joy, relaxed and happy and a great time to share news.

Peter Whitestone states: "Iona regrettably died suffering dementia but, a few years ago shortly after her remarriage, gave a grand party at her Cotswold home which her many Regimental guests much enjoyed, and at which she exclaimed how lucky she had been to have two fine husbands!"

JOAN RITCHIE

by Tricia Getley

We'd arrived in Kluang from Berlin, posted back to the Gurkha Engineers in 1964. When John set off to his office early in the morning my first visitor to our 'rabbit hutch' in Jalan Dorset was Joan Ritchie. What a mine of information she imparted to me from what cleaning products to allow the Chinese amah she had found for me to what I should wear and what was expected of an army wife. She was one of the old school, well versed in how to live comfortably in the Far East before air-conditioning arrived and I've always been grateful to her for the way she took me under her wing. Thanks to Joan's example and instruction my days in the Regiment were amongst the happiest of my life.

MALCOLM THOMSON

by John Edwards

Malcolm Thomson died from cancer on 20th April 2013, and was buried in the military cemetery at Shorncliffe.

He came from an Indian Army background: his father was in the Mahratta Light Infantry and he was born in India. On his way to UK to go to school, during the war, the ships travelled in convoy, and his had to enter the River Congo to avoid U-boats. He went to Wellington, and while he was there his father was killed in action in Italy in 1943.



He had a consuming interest in things mechanical, and owned a succession of motor bikes, so when he left school he joined GEC as an electrical engineer apprentice. He found this rather boring, and welcomed his call-up to National Service, where he received a commission in the Royal Engineers. He enjoyed his initial posting in Germany, and soon converted to a regular commission, when he volunteered for service with Gurkhas.

Malcolm and I joined the Regiment together in 1957. We sailed by troopship, round the Cape as the Suez Canal was blocked, to Singapore. We were allocated a three berth cabin, with a Lieutenant Brewer, who failed to show up, and we used to drink a solemn toast to him every evening, to thank him for the additional space! From Singapore we went by train to the Regimental Base at Sungei Besi, near Kuala Lumpur. It was exciting to see the unfamiliar countryside as we travelled through the Malay countryside. We spent about three weeks there having uniforms fitted, and being introduced to a new way of life, before being sent to join our squadrons, both of which were deployed in different parts of Malaya.

Malcolm was initially posted to 67 Squadron, and used to say that a jungle track which he constructed is now a four



lane highway. He then went as 2IC of Gurkha Squadron at the Engineer Training Centre (ETC) in Kluang, Johore. This establishment trained all sappers in Malaya, including British, Malays and of course Gurkhas. The Regiment was expanding fast at the time, and there were large numbers of Gurkha sappers to be trained. For instance in 1959 a party of 130 recruits arrived to do their combat engineer training, trebling the size of the Squadron. It was a busy time.

In those days new officers did two consecutive tours with the Regiment, and in 1960 Malcolm went to UK on inter-tour leave. It was during this leave that he met, fell in love with, and married Monica. His friends thought it was the most sensible thing he had ever done!

They returned to Malaya, where Malcolm commanded Plant Troop in 70 Support Squadron. In late 1961 the Regiment moved to Kluang and took over the ETC, expanding to 1400 men, with field squadrons in UK, Hong Kong and Brunei, apart from the HQ and Training Establishment in Kluang. The now re-named Plant Training Troop absorbed most of the military plant in Malaya, at a time when the plant trades were in a state of flux, due to the arrival of wheeled machines. Lance Perowne says in his book "The troop was from the first fully extended, but its commander, Captain Thomson, quickly brought the new organisation under rational control". In 1963 Malcolm was posted to 68 Squadron in UK, where he spent his last months with the Regiment.

For the rest of his career, Malcolm had two tours in BAOR, followed by tours in UK, until he retired in 1986. He then spent the next ten years running five busy training camps in the Shorncliffe area as a Retired Officer.

He had close connections with Hythe, where his mother lived, and he had spent his childhood. Monica's family also lived in Hythe and she had been brought up there. In 1970, on return from BAOR, he and Monica bought their first house in the town. They moved a couple of times, but remained in Hythe, where Monica still lives. Their first child, Charles, was born in Malaya, but his siblings, James and Sara were born in Shorncliffe Military Hospital. Monica stayed in the family home, looking after the children until Malcolm's final posting, when they moved to Surrey. In 1986 he retired and they returned to Hythe. They became involved in the community, and Malcolm was Treasurer of the Hythe Civic Society for 12 years.

Malcolm was a family man, and it was a very happy marriage. As Charles said "They (Monica and Malcolm) let us find our own way, but were always there if needed". Malcolm took particular pleasure in his grandchildren, "the little hooligans". He and Monica enjoyed entertaining, and Malcolm liked nothing better than welcoming people and pouring the drinks.

Malcolm had always been a good all round sportsman, and was a particularly useful centre three-quarter. He was a very practical man, and apart from his interest in things mechanical, he was proficient at DIY, and helped his children extend and improve their houses, and repaired their cars. He enjoyed sailing and built a dingy, which lasted the family for 35 years.

Malcolm was a sociable and likeable man, who made friends easily. He was good company, and to quote Charles again "he tried to be seen as a curmudgeonly old reactionary, but mostly failed when his sense of humour took over!"

Spr YOGOYA RAJ KHEBANG

by WO2 Dilkumar Rai



21171170 Spr Yogya Raj Khebang, son of Lt (Retd) Ganesh Khebang, was born in Ekthar Jorpati, Pachthar on 13 Jun 1984. He was educated at Jagat Mandir Boarding School, Chabahil. On 18 Dec 2003 he enlisted in the Brigade of Gurkhas. Upon completion of basic training in Catterick, he

joined The Queen's Gurkha Engineers. He then went on to complete the Combat Engineer Class 3 in 3 RSME, Minley and trade class - 2 (Ftr Gen) course in 1 RSME, Chatham. On completion of his trade course he subsequently posted to 70 Gurkha Field Sp Sqn, QGE. During his time in the Regiment he completed several exercises and Operational tours including Op HERRICK 7 in Afghanistan (Op H-7) and Op VALERO in Kosovo. On 14 Oct 2008 he was posted to 33 Armoured Engineer Squadron in 26 Engineer Regiment as part of the newly formed 8 Mechanised Gurka Troop. Being an exceptional soldier with a positive work ethic he quickly established himself in the new unit.

His service in the army ended in redundancy Tranche 2 after 9 ½ years of service in the Brigade of Gurkhas. In June 2013 he moved his family and settled down in Bridgewater, Somerset where he worked as a Gas Engineer and went on to be an established member in the community. After only a few months of working with his new company he noticed he started to lose weight and he started to tire quickly. In Oct 13 he was admitted to the Royal Devon and Exeter hospital for treatment. He was then diagnosed with Systemic Lupus Erythematosus; this is an immune system illness and his health deteriorated day by day. After a few weeks he was put onto full life support in the hospital. On 25 Nov 13 Spr Yogya Raj Khebang died peacefully in hospital. His funeral service was held on 9 Dec 13 at Kingsdown Crematorium, Swindon. He leaves behind his wonderful wife, Reena and 3 year old son, Ayush as well as his loving parents, brother Pesal and sister Pujan.

Spr Yogya Raj Khebang was a true gentleman with impeccable manners, always resolute and inspiringly hardworking and loyal. He was a true music lover and a fine guitarist who actively took part in "Pardasi Band" involved in most of QGE social events. He was also a good badminton player who had occasionally represented the Regiment in the badminton competition. His contributions to the unit were remarkable and will not be forgotten.



FAMILY NEWS

Tim Beckh (90-91, 92-93)



Tim arrived in Hong Kong in early 1990 to take up his post as OC B Troop in 67 Fd Sq and, as was customary, was met by many of the Regiment's young officers for his obligatory beery welcome to QGE and introduction to the high spots of TST and Central.

Twenty-four years later Tim's still meeting a few of the same individuals over curry and beer in London to recount stories of legendary nights out, unforgettable exercises, narrow escapes and infamous parties.

After two excellent years with QGE in Hong Kong and subsequent tours at Training Regiments, the ERLS staff, 21 Engineer Regiment and on the staff at Sandhurst, Tim left the Army in 1997 and entered the world of recruitment. He is now Managing Partner of a small search firm in London placing senior executives in the Consulting, Energy and Infrastructure sectors. This means that from time to time he crosses paths with other ex-Sappers and finds myself a willing source of counsel for officers leaving the Army for pastures new.

In 1993 when he was QGELO in Chatham, Tim was married to Rebecca, a talent linguist who had studied Hindi at university. Rebecca's ability to speak Hindi was a constant source of amusement to the Gurkha soldiers at Kitchener Barracks and her ability to read Devanagari script was definitely one up on her husband. Rebecca is now teaching Modern Languages at the Marist School in Sunninghill where she is joined by their two children Annabelle (13) and Sophia (11).

Tim has not managed to cut his military ties entirely and enjoys haranguing serving and former military contacts into giving a talk at his local branch of the British Legion in Windlesham, Surrey where he is Vice Chairman. He is also a Governor at St John's School in Leatherhead and is trustee of a local charity that raises money for good causes in the Windlesham area. He also tries to keep his Gurkhali vocab up to speed by engaging Gurkha security guards in London office buildings or manning the gates at Wellington Barracks near his office or by chatting to the Memsahabs on the checkout of Tesco's in Camberley.

Maj (Retd) Dhanbahadur Chand

After 32 years of service with The Queen's Gurkha Engineers and later with Royal Engineers I joined FSI Europe Ltd in 2011 as Operations Manager and now as their Resources Director. No complaints there as we (the Chand family) are happily settled in Maidstone, not far from the Invicta Park Barracks. Both our children have completed university and have started working.

I joined FSI Europe Ltd straight after my retirement in 2011, a wholly owned subsidiary of FSI Worldwide, run by

former British and Gurkha Officers of the Brigade of Gurkhas and my part of the company focuses on the UK part of the business by employing

ex-service personnel and their dependents in civilian employment such as; construction, security, rail and other facilities management services. The worldwide part of the company focuses on the security sectors such as guarding US and UK embassies in Kabul and Bagdad.

The company also employs an ex Adjutant QGE (Capt Retd Tristan Wootten) who is employed as the Operations Director. The company runs its nationwide business with its office based in Maidstone Kent and currently employs 100 personnel; mainly the retired Gurkhas, their dependents and a small number of Foreign and Commonwealth soldiers. There are at least 15 ex-QGE members who are employed mainly within the specialist areas of the operation such as; rail track surveyors, line of sight surveyors, domestic and overhead line electricians and general rail track maintenance workers. The rest of the employees are employed mainly within the security sectors such as Site Access Controller and majority of these come from the retired RGR community. I am happy and lucky to be working with FSI as I get the opportunity to meet and work once more with the friends I worked together with during my army life and likewise my family are very happy being closely located and associated with the retired Nepalese and QGE community in Maidstone. Jai QGE



Clive & Anne Clayton 93-95



Is the Jago Arms alive and well in Cyprus? Not really, but for those who remember the sign from 70 Support Squadron Bar in Sek Kong it has probably brought back fond or hazy recollections. Clive 'rescued' the sign as QGE drawdown officer in 94.

Clive and Anne now reside in Zanjaja, Cyprus. We retired from the British Army in October 2005 after a most enjoyable tour in SHAPE Mons Belgium and moved to Cyprus. We had brought the land in 2002 therefore it was construction time on arrival. We moved into the house late 2007. Clive worked for Interserve Defence in Episkopi Garrison from 2006 to 2012 before full retirement. Our 3 girls Elizabeth, Debbie & Bella



all reside in Kent in or around the Maidstone/Ashford area. Our son Daniel who we were blessed with adopting during our QGE tour has flown the coup and joined the Intelligence Corps in 2012 despite Clive's hint for the Royal Engineers.

Best wishes to all in the QGE family. We have fond memories of our QGE tour and it is great to see all the latest news and also note the progress of those young officers at the time of our tour.

Frank & Jacqui Compton (76-79)

Frank left the OC TAS(RE) post in April 2013 and moved into retirement, well almost. Having had 15 years serving and subsequently as a Civil Servant in the post it seemed a shame not to put all the experience gained to some good use. Frank now has an Independent Consultancy advising on Range Safety Policy 403 that he helped develop over the 15 years with TAS(RE). During that time TAS (RE) employed as Deputy Technical Officers, WO1 Kumar Gurung and WO1 Ashok Rai, both very capable Clerk of Works (Construction). In 2012 we celebrated the 150th Anniversary of TAS(RE) that formed up in Hythe in 1862 (See The RE Journal April 2012, Vol 126 No.1).



Ashok



Kumar

Frank & Jacqui visited friends in Natal, South Africa during 2013 and during a weeks stay on the coast managed to see hump back whales every day as they migrated south to the Cape. We have visited South Africa many times since 2006 but not seen the whales before, quite a treat. We also visited the Orbi Gorge where the photo was taken in a cave used once by the San people.

This year Frank had a visit to Kuwait helping consultants bidding for a range development for the Ministry of Interior. A modern city now but at this time of the year (February) when it is cooler many of the city folk move out into the desert to live in their Bedouin tents. Here is an old photo of Mike Stevens and team taken from a slide so not the best quality.

Francis and Freeman in Abu Dhabi (83-85)

David develops defence and aerospace projects for AugustaWestland with a focus on technology transfer, training and export sales. He set up Tala Consultants Ltd (www.talaconsultants.co.uk) in 2010 to identify, develop and manage offset projects for defence and aerospace companies, with recent assignments in Denmark, Turkey, Algeria and South Africa.



David Francis and Mark Freeman (both QGE 1983 – 1985) met in Abu Dhabi, UAE in March 2014.

David is married to Tracy and they have three girls: Tegan, Lucie and Pip. Home is an old stone house in Somerset which thankfully, with the recent floods, looks out across the levels rather than being built on them !

Mark owns Noukhada Adventure Company (www.noukhada.ae) a rapidly expanding eco tourism business based around kayaking and sailing. With expansion in Abu Dhabi, Ras Al Khaimah and Zanzibar, Mark is always on the lookout for customer service minded kayakers and sailors. Mark is married to Annie and they have Benjamin and Maggie and all live in Khalifa B, Abu Dhabi where flooding is not a concern.

Mark and David are collaborating on sustainable crops and waste to energy initiatives in the UAE and the region.

WO2 Ganga Bahadur Gurung, Sgt Chhetra Gurung



Sgt Chhetra (left) and WO2 Ganga

Sgt Chhetra Bahadur Gurung (Electrical Engineer) and WO2 Ganga Bahadur Gurung (Mechanical Engineer) are both currently employed at the Skanska Facility Services (SFS) in the City London as Maintenance Engineers. Sgt Chhetra, ex 'B' Troop Sapper served in Hong

Kong, the Falkland Islands, Belize, PNG and the UK. He was one of the first Gurkha instructors, who set up the first Gurkha Training Troop in 3 RSME Regiment, Minley and trained the first batch of Combat B3 Sappers in the UK. He spent most of his career serving in Field Troops and retired at the end of 1996 after completion of 18 years of exemplary service.



He now resides in North West London with his wife and two children.

WO2 Ganga, also an ex 'B' Troop Sapper, served in Hong Kong, Fiji Island, the Falkland Islands, South Georgia, Western Samoa, Sierra Leone and Kuwait during the last Gulf War. In his early days he served as a PTI instructor at QGE Gymnasium in Parowne Barracks. During his career he served in 3 RSME Regiment as a Training Instructor in Gurkha Troop, as a Platoon Sergeant in Gurkha Training Wing in Church Crookham and as a Troop Staff Sergeant in G Troop in 69 Squadron before becoming Training Co-ordinator in ITC Catterick and in the end, Squadron Sergeant Major 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron. He retired in February 2004.

In his spare time Ganga still enjoys training and teaching Martial Arts (Taekwondo). He now resides in South East England with his wife and two children.

The photo opposite shows Sgt Rastrakumar Rai, ex QGE (Master Rastrakumar Rai, Founder of Sagarmatha Taekwondo Dojang), briefing the students after the Taekwondo upgrading Test and ex WO2 Ganga Gurung observing to make sure the students pay.



Rob and Mereydyth Grant (06-08, Nepal 08-09)



I am extremely pleased to announce there has been a significant expansion of the Grant clan since our last contribution to the QGEA magazine with the arrival of our son Maxwell in July 2012 and just recently our lovely daughter Matilda who was born on the 14th February 2014. As a

result the last two years have been somewhat of an adventure with the arrival of our two ankle biters, the establishment of Mereydyth's PR consultancy charliecharlieone, a nine month tour in Queensland, Australia, and finally Staff College in Shrivenham.

Fortunately our run of luck appears not to be completely exhausted and we will be moving to Texas in the United States in August 2014 for what promises to be an exciting two year stint working with the US 1st Cavalry Division. Somewhat of

a steep learning curve for a light role Sapper but a challenge that we are looking forward to immensely.

As ever, the Grant household is always open to the wider QGE family and so if any of you find yourselves in Texas over the next two years then it would be lovely if you would get in touch as you would be extremely welcome.

robertdouglasgrant@gmail.com

mgrant@charliecharlieone.co.uk

Douglas and Margaret Humphrey (66-71,84-86)

Douglas and Lara have recently returned from Moscow and St Petersburg where they were recruiting students for enrolment in British boarding schools. This was Douglas's 48th trip to Russia. His company, York International, which deals exclusively with Russia, is going from strength to strength. He now has 52 students aged from 8 to 18 in 20 schools in the SW..... you can imagine the number of Parent Teacher Meetings he has to attend! Margaret meanwhile hosts some of the students for Exeat Weekends and helps arrange school uniform and bedding – don't mention sewing on name tapes to her!

Douglas and Margaret are off to Spain with Brett and his family in July and returning to Mauritius in September for the third year running – they love it there.

Retire? Don't know the word

Peter Kershaw (91-94)

Peter, Bhawa Krishna and Dinesh Gurung all served together in the QM Dept of 69 Indep Fd Sqn in 1991/94. They still meet up regularly for lunch, usually in London or Chatham as this photo shows, taken recently on the South Bank. Both Bhawa and Dinesh are settled in the UK with their families and work in the security profession.



Roger and Claire Morton (93-95)

Roger has now relinquished command of the Sandhurst Support Unit and has moved to MInley to be Chief Instructor of the RE Warfare Wing (amalgamation of Battlefield Engineering Wing, Command Wing and Communications Training Wing in old money). Claire is working as Registrar of Eagle House



School and the boys are growing up fast. Hamish (16) and Angus (13) are at Wellington College and Jasper has started school aged 4. Roger insists on convincing himself that he is still young enough to play football occasionally and hopes to join his Nepal Cup winning team mates later in the year to compete in the Kathmandu Cup competition for veterans of the Brigade of Gurkhas units.



Graham and Rebecca Price, (77-80,81-83)

Graham and Rebecca Price continue to fight a rearguard action in Hong Kong. Ian McEvoy and Mike Law visited recently and they meet up occasionally with Richard Beazley and Peter Smyth. Rebecca is still teaching and Graham is starting another new venture in the technology sector. Hannah and Ethan are now starting school, whilst their big brother David is flying his big green helicopters at Middle Wallop.

In other Hong Kong news, our beloved Perowne Barracks, on Castle Peak Road, now seems certain to be redeveloped into Housing - for that read tower blocks housing many hundreds of families.

On a sad note, I heard recently that Ah Lee, passed away peacefully last Autumn. Many of us fondly remember the trips to the ramshackle tailors shop outside the barracks in Sek Kong. Some of us still go there, where Richard Lee carries on the family business. Those red books with your vital statistics in are still there, and represent a slice of history!"

Brian Taylor (71-76)

Alison and I sold our Croydon house in May of last year and moved into our country residence (a caravan at the National Shooting Centre, Bisley) where I still spend much of my summers target rifle shooting, whilst we looked for a new house. We eventually moved into a lovely house in Herne Bay at the beginning of September. The whole saga of selling and buying was not without several major incidents on the way. However we are at last here and are enjoying every minute of it as are our two springer spaniels, Barney and Harry who are both sadly getting on in years and have several ailments between them. However, they are great company for me during my retirement whilst Alison is at work during our walks

by the sea. Alison has just started a new job in the City as HR Director having last year been made redundant as a result of her previous firm being taken over by a much larger one! This as you may imagine was not particularly helpful when we were in the middle of house hunting! On top of that we have had to cope with Alison's 89 year old Mum being very poorly, sadly the reason we were unable to make the Ladies Guest Night which we would love to have done. So 2013 was a bit over eventful for us and we are hoping for a quieter 2014. By the time you read this we will have been on an exciting adventure motor rafting down 170 miles of the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon in May with Alison's brother and family who live in Tucson, Arizona.

Andy was specifically seeking news from those of us who served with the regiment at certain times, one of which was 1973-1975. Those two specific years were both very special ones for me because my two daughters were both born in BMH Hong Kong; Joanna in 1973 and Amanda in 1975! This last Christmas we had a fabulous week in a cottage on the North Norfolk coast where we were joined by Joanna and her family from Rainham, Kent and Amanda and her husband from Newcastle. Norfolk proved a convenient 'halfway house' and this was our first Christmas together for several years. The cottage I bid for and won at a Charity Auction at London Zoo some 18 months earlier!



Joanna and her husband Ross now have two children, Megan 4 and a half and Oliver 18 months. The photo shows Megan, Joanna

and Amanda on Christmas Day. For those that remember Joanna from Hong Kong, Megan has shown over the years remarkable similarities to her mother at a similar age. Joanna is still with Standard Chartered Bank where she has been since leaving school. She only works 4 days a week now enabling me on Fridays to spend time with her and Oliver and to go and meet Megan from school. Amanda is a Senior Intensive Care Sister in the Heart and Lung Transplant Unit of the Freeman Hospital in Newcastle. Sadly their mother Sue has been very poorly in and out of hospital in Bristol.

Any old acquaintances passing by will be very welcome to visit. Unlike our house in Croydon we are now able to entertain guests to stay. It just leaves me at the time of writing to wish everyone's very Happy New Year.

David and Judy Walker (75-77, 86-88)

After three wonderful and interesting years on the canals, culminating in a sail past the Houses of Parliament, we moored Ophelia at Caen Hill Marina, Devizes, and began our search for a house in the Cotswolds. We soon came across a characterful house in Tetbury where we have now



been ensconced since November 2013. David is now heavily into working as a volunteer with the Tetbury Rail Lands Regeneration Trust while Judy is left at home to do all the decorating and furnishing that a new house entails, plus spending more time with the grandchildren.

Eldest son James, having finally decided that running one pub is not the challenge it once was, is now anticipating a role overseeing the management of several in the Cotswolds area. William and Poppy, still transport civil servant and Metropolitan Police civilian staff officer respectively, are expecting their second child in July. Charlie is now living in Oxford where he works for a market research company that supports the global water industry.

Peter and Sally Whitestone (53-59)

Our main excitement since we last wrote was a cruise across the Indian Ocean from Colombo to Singapore via Galle, the Andamans, Rangoon, Penang and Malacca over Christmas and New Year 2012-13. We particularly enjoyed our two days in Rangoon, the quiet calmness and cleanliness of the city and cheerful politeness of its inhabitants apparently reflecting the Buddhist culture and contrasting noticeably with the noise, dirt and chaos of India. The Shwe Dagon temple complex was amazing in its huge extent, the multiplicity of shrines, spires and statues and the great numbers attending.

In Singapore we attempted to find Sally's former peaceful rural hostel in the centre of the island but, where it had been, the metro landed us in an extensive and well-established suburb of 20-storey flats served by a network of dual carriageways as well as the underground - perhaps not surprising changes after over half a century! We could only console ourselves with expensive gin slings at Raffles (at least that hadn't changed).



The photo shows the central business district, shooting ever upwards, and the now freshwater Singapore River reservoir, the former saline sewer having been dammed at its mouth as with all the island's other inlets.

Bill and Janet Wiggett (65-71)

A short update from the Wiggett family - sent from the sunny beaches of Barbados! (sorry folks, just had to mention it!)

A senior moment was passed on the 1st of January when I became of age (70)! - lots of exclamation marks in my writing these days. A good time was had at my party on the 4th January where dear and old! Doug Humphrey read some lying words and drank my fine wine. Doug (we were Troop Commanders together in Hong Kong - 69 Sqn) was 70 some months before. Oh we were bad lads in Hong Kong! - but that's another story. Like the one when I was sitting in my Troop Commanders office in Perowne and received a telephone call from the 48 Brigade Duty Officer asking if I was duty officer. I wasn't but, what the hell, it was Saturday mid-day and we were about to go to the Mess, change, then hit Kowloon for more badness! I replied I was duty officer and Brigade said something like 'Red Dragon your unit now!' After asking him to repeat and being asked if I understood, I said I did. I didn't of course. So, what to do? Approach the font of all knowledge at that time, Mike Stevens, who was 2 I/C. I explained the conversation to Mike who exclaimed something like 'they can't say that, its classified!' After a little thought Mike decided we had to take action and get the Squadron on parade. How do I do that said I. The oracle thought for a split second and said 'ring the fire alarm'(no wonder he made Brigadier!) - something I had always wanted to do! The alarm was one of those jobs mounted on the wall with a circumferal handle (notice the technicality here!) I rang and rang until my ambition was fulfilled and ran to the square where troops were congregating with buckets and hoses!! NO!!, ordered I, we're mobilising, draw your weapons! I drove to the Mess to change from OGs to hairy shirt order and quickly returned to Perowne only to find a very long queue outside the guard room/armoury with soldiers drawing weapons in the usual way i.e. find rifle, check and inspect rifle, sign register etc. At that rate the Squadron would just about be ready for Afghanistan now! My Troop, with WOII Bhimbahdur Gurung as my QGO (Gurkha Major and stalwart President of QGE in Nepal) supported 1/10 GR and we were dispatched to the barrier post just outside Lo Wu where the shooting had started... More stories were to evolve in the coming year - Doug had fingers blown off, I 'over' blew up a union building in Wanchai. I blame L/Cpl Babindraman Rai - great cross country runner! - for that. He gave me too much PE4!! That's my excuse anyway. Perhaps more stories next time, especially the one about.....!!

Back to family. I sold my Company CQC Ltd (manufacturer of MOD webbing, body armour, sleeping bags etc etc) over a year ago but still keep my other Company active, which does not require too much effort. Probably pack it all in when I am 75 and start a house of ill repute in St Albans - there is a need there I believe! Janet is well, remodelling the house as always, Alice, now 26, is teaching prior to becoming Minister of Education! and Tom, 24, works for Bristol Cars in Kensington. Tom and I hope to take part in the Miglia Mille next year in our newly purchased TR3. Is it still raining in Somerset, Doug??!! That's about it for now, back to the beach and another Pina Colada!



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION HELD AT ON SATURDAY 28th SEPTEMBER 2013

Present:

Lieutenant General Sir DR Bill KCB	President and Colonel of the Regiment
Brigadier AD Harking OBE	Chairman
Lieutenant Colonel EG Robinson	Comdt QGE
Major Ekbahadur Gurung	Gurkha Major
Major AA Gooch	Magazine Editor
Major I Moore	Social Member
Major AP Sowerby	Historical Member
25 Members of the Association	
Lieutenant Colonel J F Wheeley MBE	Secretary

Apologies were received from the Treasurer, Web Site Editor and 10 Members of the Association.

ITEM 1 – OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN

1. The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming the Members present and thanking the Commandant and Gurkha Major for hosting the day's events.
2. The Chairman noted that the new structure of the combined charities had been in place for a year and that there was no discernable change to the way in which the individual elements operated. However, the financial report, prepared by the Treasurer, did present the first combined accounts for the merged charities.
3. The Chairman introduced Major Tony Sowerby who had volunteered to join the QGEA Committee as Historical Member and would work with the Gurkha Major to prepare material for the next edition of the Regimental History.

ITEM 2 – PREVIOUS MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

4. The Minutes of the AGM for 2010 were passed as a true record.

Proposed: Lieutenant Colonel Inge

Seconded: Major Rajen Gurung

ITEM 3 – ACCOUNTS

5. The Treasurer sent his apologies and the Chairman drew the Meeting's attention to a financial statement that had been prepared by the Treasurer covering the period up to 20 September 2013, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. In essence the value of all the funds has risen in line with rises in the Stock Market.
6. There had been no expenditure from the Perowne Trust fund as due to changes in the Gurkha Welfare Trust's approach to education there had been no candidates to support. However the Perowne Trust had now put in place an alternative system for selecting candidates based upon the Regimental Association in Nepal. Four candidates have been identified and it was hoped to resume funding from now on.
7. Both the QGEA and regimental trust funds remained steady and the Treasurer had no comment on these.

ITEM 4 – THE MAGAZINE

8. The Chairman congratulated the Magazine Editor on yet another excellent magazine.
9. The Magazine Editor briefed the Meeting that the lateness of the magazine's publication had been due to his operational commitments. The overall cost this year was £2200 and, for 850 copies, was £250 less than in 2012. The magazine had been printed in Nepal that, even with transport costs, was still cheaper than printing in the UK. He reminded Members of a need to receive obituaries and to keep their addresses up to date.

ITEM 5 – THE QGEA WEB SITE

10. The Web Site Editor sent his apologies. The newly reformatted Web Site now included back-copies of the Magazine and social forum. A copy of the web development software had been provided to OC 70 Squadron and this should allow for better Regimental updates.



ITEM 6 – REGIMENTAL UPDATE

11. Commandant QGE briefed the meeting as follows:

- a. The Regiment had come out of the Army 2020 restructuring very well with a manning figure of approximately 300, whereas RE as a whole was reducing by some 25%.
- b. At its peak the strength of the Regiment had been allowed to grow to 398 and, after 3 tranches of redundancy, is now at 340. To date some 50% of redundancies had been volunteers and a number of sappers and lance corporals were considering transfer to the wider Army. This meant that Tranche 4 may only see the need for 10 to 20 redundancies but could be less due to transfers out.
- c. Both 36 Engr Regt and The QGE were re-rolling from Search to Force Support. This meant that the focus was now back on basic combat engineer skills with the aim of achieving full operational capability by 2015 at brigade level.
- d. Other operational deployments to Afghanistan were on-going and there may be one more in 2014. 69 Squadron will deploy to Canada to conduct engineer construction tasks in 2014 and 70 Squadron will deploy to Cyprus also for engineer construction tasks.

12. In response to a question from General Pigott the Commandant explained that 36 Engr Regt and The QGE were to be paired with 75 Engr Regt (V) whose role will be to provide specialist amphibious and logistic bridging capabilities. However there was concern over the ability of the Army Reserve to recruit and that, as a result, CGS foresees a possible need for more Gurkhas in 5 years time.

ITEM 7 – QGEA FUNCTIONS FOR 2014

13. The Social Member briefed the Meeting as follows:

- a. The 2013 summer lunch was attended by 90 personnel - 50 from The QGE 36 and 40 from the wider Regimental family. Income covered expenditure; indeed it surpassed it by £133, allowing us to pay back the loss covered by the Association in 2012. If we are to continue to run this event, we need to increase attendance from the 'wider family' and decide on a new location as Minley is no longer available.
- b. A total of 127 people are to attend the dinner night on 28 September - 74 Association Members, 53 guests and spouses. The menu cost was estimated at £37.30; as such it is anticipated that income (including the agreed Association subsidy of £5 per head) will cover expenditure including the charge for guests and the agreed Pahar Trust donation of £5 per head.
- c. Looking forward to the Summer Lunch next year there are the following options:
 - (1) Hold the function within Gibraltar Barracks: service charge to be confirmed but it is anticipated it would be similar to RMAS as the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) govern costs. It is certain that it will be more expensive than previous lunches held at Minley.
 - (2) Hold at the Gurkha museum: capacity limited to 68 persons seated. The cost will be £5 per head to a maximum charge of £275. The Museum has a small catering facility and so Regimental chefs are viable but this would need reconnaissance. Given routine attendance figures this may be the preferred option.
 - (3) Hold at RMAS: if we cannot book through an RMAS foundation member the following charges listed below apply. If we can book through a Foundation Member we will get a 'small' discount:

(a)	Admin Charge	£300	
(b)	DIO Charge	£144	
(c)	Insurance	£30	
(d)	Indian Army Memorial Room		£775

- (4) Hold in another facility: for example the Meade Hall at Crown and Cushion. Initial enquiry lodged but this requires further investigation.

14. After some discussion the Meeting agreed that:

- a. There was a need to develop the link between serving and retired officers and soldiers.
- b. The best date for a summer function would be in May as it would not conflict with GBA summer functions.
- c. Hold the function at Maidstone as this would remove any need to compel serving personnel to attend in order to make the function viable.
- d. In order to encourage greater participation from the retired soldier community make the function more of a bhela / mela.



Encourage organisation from the bottom up to remove the perceived divide between officers and soldiers and create a working group that includes the Chairman and Social Member.

Details will be passed to members when the Regiment has identified a suitable date.

15. The Social member and Magazine Editor have also been discussing opportunities for more informal gatherings but there has been little appetite to date. They felt that trying to gather interested parties on the same day as 'Sappers in the City' might be effective with the added advantage that it would require zero effort.

ITEM 8 – THE REGIMENTAL HISTORY

16. This Item was covered under Item 1.

ITEM 9 – FUTURE DATES AND EVENTS

17. The Secretary briefed the Meeting that the following events had been notified to him by the Gurkha Brigade Association:

- a. 7 November 2013: Field of Remembrance, GBA AGM and GBA Dinner
- b. 10 November 2013: Remembrance Sunday Parade at the Cenotaph.
- c. 7 June 2014: GBA Memorial Service and Reunion at RMAS.
- d. 12 September 2014: Brigade of Gurkhas golf hosted by QGEA.
- e. 23 September 2014: Opening ceremony of the Gurkha Memorial in the National Arboretum.
- f. 6 November 2014: Field of Remembrance, GBA AGM and GBA Dinner.
- g. 9 November 2014: Remembrance Sunday Parade at the Cenotaph.

ITEM 10 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

18. Mr Peter Beckinsale briefed the Meeting on the Forgotten British Gurkha Charity. His speaking notes are attached to these Minutes.

19. The Secretary raised the matter of liaison with the Britain / Nepal Society of which the Association has honorary membership. OC 70 Sqn agreed to act as a point of contact.#

20. The Colonel of the Regiment briefed the Meeting on the following points:

- a. He recommended to Members the Opening ceremony of the Gurkha Memorial in the National Arboretum and attendance at the GBA Annual Dinner at which General Wall would provide a brief.
- b. Events to celebrate Gurkha 200 included a gathering at the end of March 2015 in Pokhara and a major fund raising party on behalf of the GWT in the royal Hospital Chelsea.
- c. The Pahar Trust was moving its focus from building schools to assisting with public education. The Trust had reached a level of maturity whereby Nepal's were able to help Nepal's and to this end Major Dhanbahadur Chand was now a Trustee.
- d. The Colonel of the Regiment further recommended that those Members whose children were contemplating a gap year should consider spending it with the Pahar Trust in Nepal.#

21. The Colonel of the Regiment concluded by thanking the association Committee and commending the Magazine Editor for producing what was recognised as the best regimental Magazine within the Brigade.

22. Lieutenant Colonel Tomlinson asked the Meeting to keep a look out for his sword that he had presented to the RE Museum but was missing. It was unique in that it has both RE and QGE badges on the blade. Lieutenant Colonel Inge offered to check the RE HQ Mess's stock of swords to see if it was there.

23. There being no other business the Meeting closed at 1640 hours.

J F Wheeley MBE

Lieutenant Colonel

Secretary

12 October 2013

Enclosures:

1. Speaking Notes – Mr Peter Beckinsale.
2. Financial Statement..



Mr Peter Beckinsale's Speaking Notes given to the 2013 QGEA AGM

"Mr Chairman, Officers, Ladies & Gentlemen. Thank you for giving me your time to hear just a little about 'the forgotten British Gurkha', a registered Charity 1128754. I will be as quick as I can!

My name is Peter Beckinsale and I am a Member of this Association and Founder of the Charity.

I am an ex boy soldier from Chepstow Army Apprentices School, 54B Group. I served as a Trade Instructor to the GE from 1959 - 1963 with the then Captain, now Major, (retired), David Owens, who has known me for 54 years. I left the Royal Engineers in 1966 and shortly after started my African adventures where for 12 years of 30, I soldiered, (part time), in Rhodesia, for Prime Minister Ian Smith. Afterwards, I lived and worked throughout East Africa until returning home in 1997, due to the onset of diabetes.

Back in the UK, I read in the National Press that the Veterans were returning their medals to HM Govt. After looking carefully into the Veteran Gurkha situation in Reading, I decided to support Gurkha Veterans in their claim for the right to live in the UK, if they so wished. To help enable this, I raised their public profile with the help of a small group of local Veterans: the then MP, Martin Salter, and Mayor of Reading, Councillor Chris Maskell.

We quickly gained the unanimous support of the Reading Borough Council. This action was noticed by an erstwhile group of Political 'wannabes' and solicitors outside of Reading, who engaged with Joanna Lumley. The rest is **unwritten** history.

So almost 6 years ago, I decided to form this dedicated Charity to give personal help to our local Veterans that the GWT, the Royal British Legion, and SAFFA were unable to offer. This involves everything from filling in application forms for NI numbers, applications for NHS registration, housing application forms; forms to open bank accounts, teaching newcomers how to use cash machines, to all sorts of other things at Job Centers and the DWP.

Our Veterans also receive free bus passes if they or their Widows are too young to receive a Pensioners Bus Pass. This saves individuals at least £1000/annum.

So why, '**the forgotten British Gurkha**'. Well, for the very simple reason that up to that point, they **had** been, well and truly, '**forgotten**'.

However, I am pleased to say, that they are no longer, '**forgotten**', and once settled in and around Reading, enjoy peaceful and respected lives. But we decided to retain the name to remind us all of how remiss we and our forefathers had been.

Of course, they still have their wish lists, based, quite correctly, on **historical injustices**. This is confirmed in a recent High Court Judgement handed down in August regarding, 'adult Gurkha children' and their possible entry into the UK. It is not a political statement.

Meanwhile, my Charity continues and I am proud to say that we have a board of Trustees Chaired by Peter Beard, ex Mayor of Reading, and which will ultimately have three or four Veteran, Gurkha Trustees. Our General Manager is also a Veteran, Chandra Bahadur Burathoki, who does a fantastic job.

At this point I would like to make it quite clear that our Charity is A-Political and that we cater for **ALL** ex Gurkhas and their Widows. **All** our services are free of charge. Our Trustees and Volunteers are all unpaid.

Last year we opened our premises at 6 Queens Walk, Reading and now offer everything from a very comfortable lounge to coach tours! Even one on one services, (with translation), with the DWP, CAB and the GWT bi weekly. We also have Nepali TV daily, so they can keep up with the news in Nepal. We hold festivals and Reading College educational courses, which include Ladies (Certified), Cleaners courses; ESOL level 3 English and Certified Sewing courses. Our most recent festival being the Teej for the Ladies, when more than 150 visited, chatted, ate and danced. It was, like our recent 55 person coach visit to Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, a huge success.

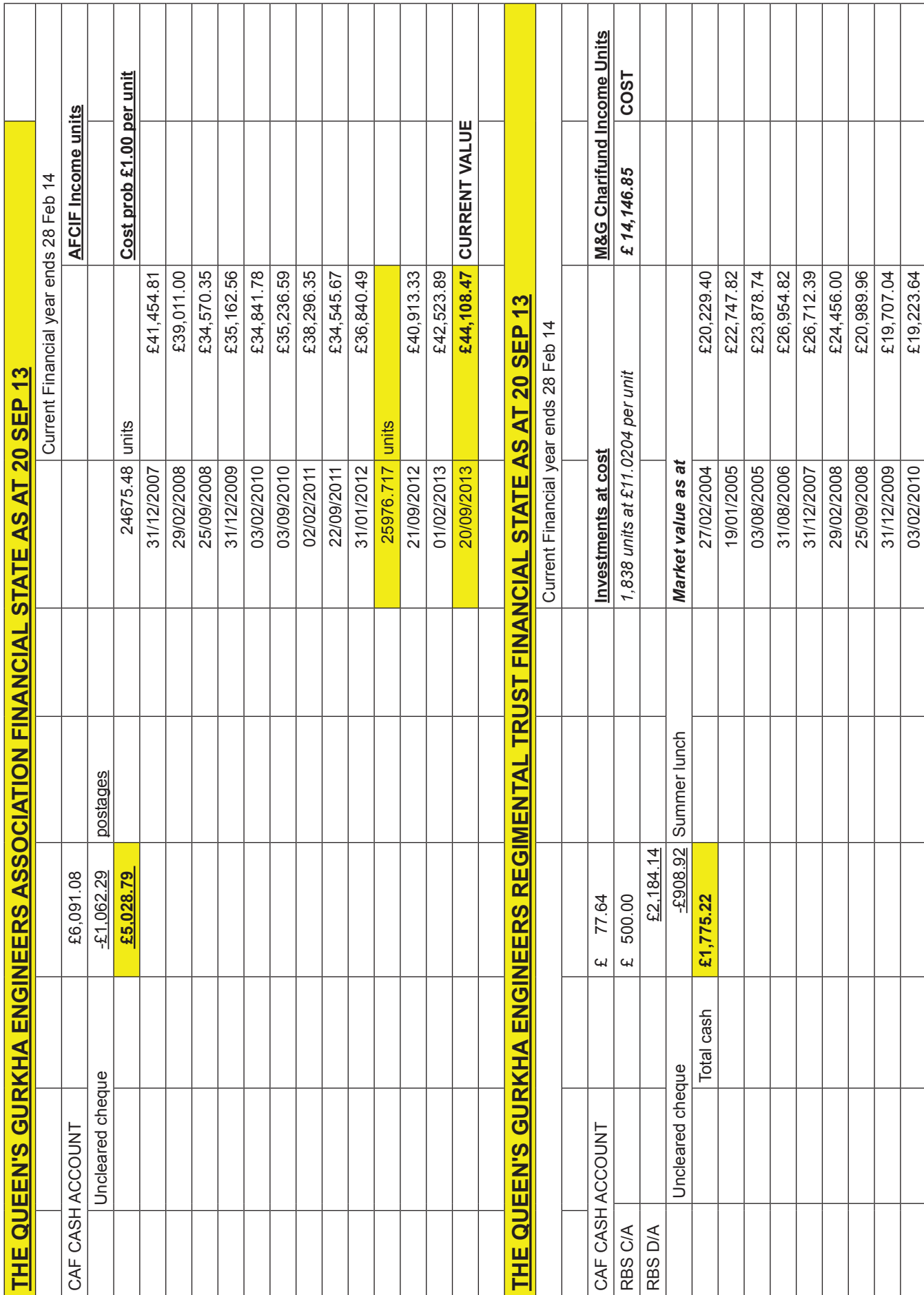
Everything we do is aimed at Integration and we encourage the learning and use of English where possible.

Why have I come to tell you all this? Quite simply because I would like the QGE Association to recognise my Charities work and give it support, as I believe, we are all interested in the Welfare of our Gurkha Veterans.

I am also proud to say that Brigadier Ian Rigden OBE, who attended our Ceremonial Opening of the Charity with the Lady Mayor of Reading and other retired and serving Officers, commented that we are, (in what we do), '**unique**' in the UK.

Thank you for your time and interest!"





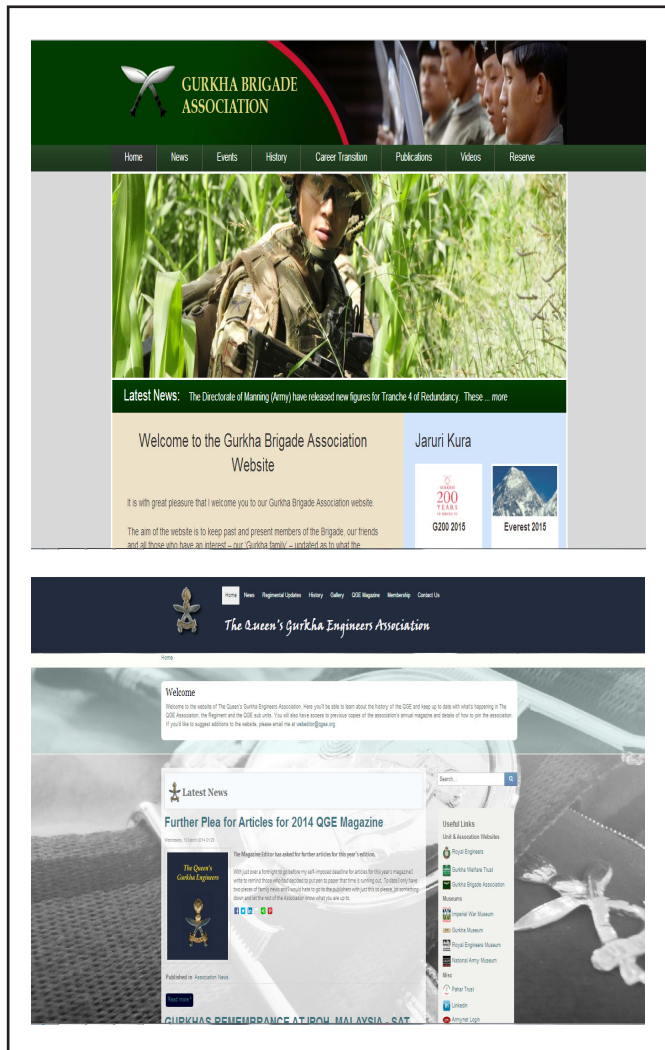
								03/09/2010	£19,723.21		
								02/02/2011	£21,062.56		
								22/09/2011	£19,052.34		
								31/01/2012	£20,537.81		
								21/09/2012	£21,899.77		
								01/02/2013	£23,236.92		
								20/09/2013	£25,565.29	CURRENT VALUE	
THE PEROWNE TRUST FINANCIAL STATE AS AT 20 SEP 13											
Current Financial year ends 28 Feb 14											
CAF CASH ACCOUNT								Original holding was in		ACIF Accm units	
								46526.686	Accm units		Cost prob £1.00 per unit
								Market value as at 6 May 2005			£ 60,438.17
								Market value 3 Aug 05			£ 65,509.57
Accumulation units converted to income units 21 Oct 05											
								50421.946	Income units	AFCIF Income units	
								-2934.702	raised £4,000.00		
								47487.244			
								-2810.962	raised £4,000.00		
								44676.282	M/v 31 Aug 06		£ 66,612.33
								-1895.135	raised £3,000.00		
								42781.147			
								-2066.115	raised £3,500.00		
								40715.032	£68,401.25	Market value	
									£64,370.00	Market value	
									£59,851.00	Market value	
									£57,041.76	Market value	
									£58,018.92	Market value	
									£57,489.63	Market value	
									£54,135.46	Market value	
								37909.983	£58,836.29	Market value	
									£53,073.98	Market value	
									£56,599.60	Market value	
									£59,708.22	Market value	
									£62,058.64	Market value	
									£64,371.15	CURRENT VALUE	



Rear Cover Photo

The Queen's Gurkha Engineers on parade at a ceremony to mark the cessation of the Advanced Search Role and start of the Force Support role on 1 Oct 13

**Is the address the Association Secretary has for you correct?
The Association will publish a new address list in 2015 so
please ensure your details are up to date**



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

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

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

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

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**The deadline for material to be with the Editor for 2015 edition
of the Magazine is 31 March 2015**

