

# *The Queen's Gurkha Engineers 2009*



**SATHI BARSA RA AJHAI BALIYO  
HUNDAI GA EKO CHHA**

# The Queen's Gurkha Engineers

**Affiliated Colonel in Chief:** Her Majesty The Queen

**Colonel of the Regiment:** Lieutenant General DR Bill CB

**Officers of the Regiment:**

Lieutenant Colonel R Wardlaw	Commandant
Major Dudhprasad Gurung MVO	Gurkha Major
Captain D Hirst	Adjutant

**Field Officers:**

Major RG Walker	OC 69 Gurkha Field Squadron
Major GD Brown MBE	OC 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron
Major Dilparsad Limbu	G3 Engineer Ops HQ 5 Div
Major Dhanbahadur Chand	Trg Major 75 Engineer Regiment (V)

**Captains:**

Captain Bhishmaraj Gurung	Captain NM Anderson	Captain Prembahadur Ale
Captain Krishnabahadur Gurung	Captain CJ Mitchell	Captain Yogprasad Thapa
Captain Rajen Gurung	Captain CW Willows	Captain Ekbahadur Gurung
Captain Uttamkumar Sherchan	Captain DJA Dias	Captain Devkumar Gurung
Captain Bishnubahadur Ghale	Captain GW Drysdale	Captain Tulbahadur Ale MBE
Captain Tarabahadur Pun	Captain Mohankumar Tamang	Captain Buddhibahadur Bhandari

**Subalterns:**

Lieutenant TGP Myatt	Lieutenant S Hudson	Lieutenant ETM Gay
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**Affiliated Officers serving with the Brigade of Gurkhas:**

Captain CF Thoms RE	Captain RD Grant RE	Captain PJ Bridle RE
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**RSM:**

WO1(RSM) S J Clewley MBE RE (RSM QGE)



## The Queen's Gurkha Engineers Association

*President* – Lieutenant General DR Bill CB

*Chairman* – Brigadier AD Harking OBE

*Secretary* – Lieutenant Colonel (Ret'd) JF Wheeley MBE

*Treasurer* – Mr M Adler

*Nepal Member* – Colonel (Ret'd) WJ Chesshyre

*Editor* – Major AA Gooch RE

*Social Events Member* – Major I Moore RE

*Gurkha Major* – Major Dudhprasad Gurung MVO

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# Editorial

Andy Gooch

Welcome to the 2009 Edition of the QGE Magazine. I would like to open this short editorial by firstly thanking the previous editor, Iain Adamson for all his hard work and enthusiasm over the past few years which have contributed to the success of this publication. On similar note I would like to thank all those who have contributed to this edition since without your articles there would not be a magazine. A special thank you must go to all the Prices for their articles covering the Reunion in Nepal.

Late last year I was lucky enough to be able to return to Nepal to attend the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations, many thanks to Dom Verschoyle and Hukumraj Saheb and his in Country team for all their work. As I was talking to the old Sappers one thing that struck me immediately was how much people crave information on what is going on both in the serving Regiment and in the lives of those who have left the service. So, as a plea, please continue to send updates and articles in. I will happily receive them all year round and not just as a result of a begging letter. On this note there certainly seems to be a lot to read about from the Regiment this year. If my maths is correct I have counted 13 countries that QGE soldiers have deployed to and exercised in over the past 12 months and there is the UK activity on top of this.

As all readers will know, this year saw the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Regiment and there are a number of articles and many more photos to celebrate this event.

As technology continues to alter the way we conduct our business I thought it was time to re-advertise the existence of the QGEA website. Although it has been up and running for a few years it has not really found the role that was previously envisaged. It can be found at the following web address: [www.qgea.org.uk](http://www.qgea.org.uk)

Please take a minute to look at it and if you have any comments please send them to the website editor. On a similar note, a plea from our Secretary. Can everyone ensure he has your correct address; both surface mail and email. He currently has a large amount of mail coming back and would like to make sure the news gets through and if possible by email.



I have kept the format the same as for the previous years but if there is something you would like to read about and see in the future please let me know. I am thinking of a regular feature entitled 'What Gurkhas say and what they really mean'. This idea was formed when I was recently going through some old paper work and came across a troop training programme which informed me one of the troops was going to go peasant shooting in Chatham on Wednesday afternoon. The police were informed but luckily the troop was just trying to bag a few pheasants!

Before I let you delve into the magazine and read the interesting part, I would like to thank a few more people who have helped in the production of the magazine. Firstly to the Gurkha Major and Captain Prembahadur Ale for collecting all the articles from the Regiment and secondly to Hukum Saheb in Nepal for his continued hard work.

I hope you enjoy this years magazine and find it informative and interesting. **Jai QGE**

**STOP PRESS:** Congratulations to Lt Col R Wardlaw on being selected for promotion to Colonel in 2010.

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# Message from the Colonel of the Regiment

Lieutenant General David Bill CB

It really has been a remarkable year for the Regiment with celebrations of our 60<sup>th</sup> birthday being marked in some style both in the UK and in Nepal. Meanwhile our soldiers continue to demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism and *josh* wherever they are sent in the world. Indeed, we seem presently to be providing a continuous commitment to Afghanistan with commando gurmukha engineers at troop strength recently recovered from a particularly tough tour of duty in Helmand, only to be replaced by the newly created QGE mechanised troop forming part of 33 Arm'd Sqn. I shall leave detailed description of the Regiment's exploits to others, but suffice it to say that our ever increasing exposure to the wider Army continues to win us allies as we seek to broaden our horizons in the wake of changes to gurmukha terms of service and related factors. But to say that decision makers are wary is something of an understatement in the present macro-economic climate. We understand the need for patience in the marshalling of our arguments. Turning to the social highlight of the year – our 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, the Regiment did us proud at Maidstone marking the actual day on 28<sup>th</sup> September with an excellent turn out of regimental members past and present and ample opportunity for excursions down memory lane aided by photo albums and displays from yesteryear. We also enjoyed a delightful informal lunch in the Minley Orangery earlier in the year as well as a memorable dinner night at Maidstone which, with pipers around the table after dinner, brought back for more than a few, evocative Hong Kong memories of similar occasions in the Perowne Mess. So a huge thank you to the Regiment in particular for ensuring that all these events passed off in such good order. But for those lucky enough to make the trip, the regimental reunion in Nepal provided the icing on the cake with 40 or so of us travelling from the UK and elsewhere to join more than 420 QGE at Pokhara for a remarkable and unforgettable *tamasha*. Bhimbahadur Gurung presided over an expertly executed programme of bhat, beer, chatter and dancing in the delightful setting of the Fulbari Hotel. Under Hukum's exceptional organisational hand – some things just don't change – 'willing' assistants were pressed into service such that every detail was flawlessly covered. A great day.

Turning to wider matters, the Gurkha Welfare trust continues to do a remarkable job in the hills, providing increasingly targeted and sophisticated support to our pensioners. Inevitably it faces a testing couple of years in securing the necessary funds to allow its core activities to prosper. Clearly the GWT can do with all the help that we can muster and may I reinforce a point made so cogently by Mike Stephens whilst we were in Pokhara: the UK regional GWT structure is always looking for contributors – both financial



and practical. Should you be willing and able, perhaps you could seek out your local committee and join up! Finally I must thank your committee under Tony Harking's sound leadership and John Wheeley's secretarial eye for another year of sterling effort. And sadly - as the wheel makes another turn, the Regiment must bid a fond farewell to its Commandant and GM. Richard Wardlaw and Dudh Saheb have made a remarkable team in the most testing of times. Thoughtful, energetic, pragmatic and hugely dedicated we owe them both an enormous debt of gratitude for what they have given and what they have together achieved for the Regiment and its members during their tenure. So we can look to the future with confidence. How many can say that in these difficult days. With all good wishes.





# The Commandant's Report 2008-09

*Lieutenant Colonel R Wardlaw*

With the recovery of the Regiment from Op HERRICK 7 in March last year, you might be forgiven for expecting this year's report to reflect a return to something which passes for normality. However, with the deployment of Queen's Gurkha Engineers with 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron on Op VALERO, 24 Commando Engineer Regiment on Op HERRICK 9, and with the newly formed Gurkha Mechanised Troop in 33 Armoured Engineer Squadron on Op HERRICK 10, the reality is that the last 12 months have been no less dominated by operational commitments than those before. Concurrently there has been the requirement to make meaningful progress in addressing the structural imbalances introduced as a result of the new Gurkha Terms and Conditions of Service (GTACOS), ensuring that in the long term the Regiment provides the career and promotion opportunities our soldiers deserve. To do so, against the backdrop of such a hefty commitment to operations and the prospect of further deployments on both HERRICK 11 and 12, highlights the size of the challenge faced. Indeed, if it were not for the determination, perseverance and selflessness shown by so many, I would not, in my final report as Commandant, be able to report that the Regiment is in the fine form that it is today.

Not wishing to be left out of the action, shortly after the recovery of the Regiment from Op HERRICK 7, 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron fielded a troop in support of the deployment of the Spearhead Land Element (SLE) Battalion to Kosovo on Op VALERO. Under the inspired leadership of Captain Bishnu Ghale, over a period of just 6 weeks, the troop made an outstanding contribution to the deployment, masterminding the construction of the Devic Bridge and in so doing earning the respect of the local population as well as the praise of MNTF(N) Commander. Captain Bishnu's recent award of a Joint Commander's Commendation is just reflection of the success enjoyed. Returning to Maidstone at the beginning of July, the period through to Christmas has been dominated by commitments to the new training year, with the focus for both Gurkha squadrons firmly at sub-unit level and below, albeit in the context of forthcoming commitments to both HERRICK 11 in Sep 09 and HERRICK 12 in Mar 10 as part of 52 Brigade. A particular highlight in this period was the deployment, on the occasion of our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, of 29 personnel on Ex MALAYSIAN GURKHA SAPPER, a Battlefield Study designed to reflect on the contribution made by the Regiment to a very different counter-insurgency and the lessons we can draw to shape our approach to operations in Afghanistan today. It was a fabulous trip and we owe much to OC 69, Major Richard Walker, in making it all happen given the many obstacles put in his way. The recent deployment of 70 Sqn on Ex TAURUS in support of the 40 Cdo RM, has ensured that QGE remains firmly in the eye of 3 Cdo Bde as well as enjoying a considerable amount of time at sea in the balmy waters of the Mediterranean off the coast of Cyprus and

Turkey. In contrast, 69 has deployed to Canada on Ex WARPAINT 09, working through the most difficult winter conditions on the Canadian Prairie to help shape the exercise infrastructure into something which resembles that found in Afghanistan. It has not been all work and no play as I discovered for myself – the Squadron has successfully invested time and effort in a comprehensive programme of adventure training – and with some success, claiming to everyone's surprise 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the recent and highly prestigious annual BATUS Ski Meet!



The deployment of 24 Commando Engineer Regiment on Op HERRICK 9 is the first deployment of this arm of the Regiment and I am therefore especially pleased to report that they played a full and immensely valuable part in the tour earning genuine and deep seated praise from their Commanding Officer. Their recent and safe return will precipitate a much needed period of rest and recuperation and hopefully a little more time with their families in Chivenor.

The transition to the new GTACOS has continued to throw up fresh challenges and opportunities. One of the positives to fall out of the excess manning created by the transition period is the decision by the Engineer in Chief to create a Gurkha Troop in 33 Armoured Engineer Squadron, 26 Engineer Regiment which deployed on HERRICK 10 in March 2009 and the possibility, circumstances permitting, to see further QGE manpower employed similarly in the wider Corps in due course. The new TACOS has also precipitated some much needed rigour, structure and transparency to our officer career structures and selection processes, with the consequent benefits all the way down the chain of command; the inclusion of our potential commissioning candidates on this year's Royal Engineers Arms Selection Board being the first tangible measure of doing so, with a 100% success rate in open competition with the wider Corps' WO1s a clear testament to the quality of our men. Notwithstanding such tangible progress, we should not underestimate the size of the challenge we still face in delivering the career and promotion opportunities that reflect historical norms and provide parity with their British counterpart in the wider Corps.

We have, of course, taken immense pride in celebrating our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In addition to the normal Birthday



celebrations on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2008, a particular highlight of the anniversary was the unveiling of the Gurkha Sapper Statue on 2 October 2008 in Maidstone town centre – only the second such statue of a Gurkha soldier in the United Kingdom! As is covered extensively elsewhere, members of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers' Association both in UK and Nepal celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Regiment in Pokhara, Nepal on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2008 with Colonel of Regiment, Lieutenant General David Bill CB leading the celebrations.

There have of course been a raft of personnel changes this year and while I cannot cover every one here, it would be remiss of me not to thank Major Giles MacCallum for his time as OC 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron and Captain Mark Hendry as 2IC 69 Gurkha Field Squadron. Both officers served the Regiment with distinction and played an instrumental part in the success enjoyed both in barracks and on operations. Welcomed to the fold and new to QGE are Major Gavin Brown and Captain Nick Anderson who, to their immense credit, have taken little time in coming to terms with Regimental Kaida! Captain Prembahadur Ale and Ekbahadur Gurung are both to be congratulated on their selection for promotion and, of course, Prem's selection as the next Gurkha Major.

Despite the busy operation tempo of the Regiment you will be pleased to hear that the Regiment has maintained its

reputation for sporting excellence. Captain Prembahadur Ale and his team once again secured the top position in Badminton as both the Div and Army Championships this year. Our shooting team, spearheaded by Captain Devkumar Gurung, swept the board at both the Corps Championship and the Army Operational Shooting Competitions. Particular congratulations go to Spr Kumar Gurung for being selected to represent the British Army at the 18<sup>th</sup> Armed Forces Skill At Arms Meeting held at North Little Arkansas, USA. He came 2<sup>nd</sup> place overall and was the Individual Combat Rifle Champion.

As testified by the award of a Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service and three Joint Commander's Commendations following HERRICK 7, with so much to play for operationally, the capacity of the Gurkha sapper has known no bounds and often been the deciding factor between mission success and failure. In this most special year, I therefore believe we can all take immense pride in their achievements and look forward to the future with renewed confidence and optimism.

Finally, in my last report and as I prepare to handover to my successor Simon Hulme, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the officers and soldiers for their unstinting support, loyalty and commitment to the Regiment. It has been a rare privilege and an immense honour to serve you. Jai QGE!

## The Gurkha Major's Report

*Major Dudhprasad Gurung MVO*



Since its introduction the new GTACOS has been constantly dominating every news letter that we publish in the Regiment and this year is no exception. Last year I concluded my report with the remark that "we are firmly in the era of implementing the new GTACOS

and the year ahead will be much more challenging". From this year's perspective, it is fair to say that we have broken much new ground and have made very good progress in terms of implementation. However, there is one particular issue which although seemingly straight forward has turned out to be the most complex of all. This is soldiering manning and we have identified three key areas to be addressed. Firstly there is managing the change from the existing basic, 15 year length of service to the 22 open year engagement. If that were not enough there is now the changes brought about by the introduction of the Versatile Engagement and the offer to transfer to it and thus giving up to 24 years of service. It is essential to ensure there

is a long term, progressive career structure for all our soldiers and this means we are working hard to manage the excess manpower and get over the problem of promotion stagnation. Regimental Headquarters is working flat out with Comdt Saheb himself leading from the front. Once this project is completed I genuinely believe the QGE manning will be in a very strong position and we can look forward with relish to the future. There are number of challenges still to face in the coming months and years but the all important foundations are firmly in place.

Besides that above this has been a historic and memorable year for the Regiment. It was marked by three events all associated with Regiment's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary which seemed to follow each other in remarkably quick succession. The first was the Regimental Celebration in Invicta Park Barracks in September. The second was unveiling of the Gurkha Statue at the courtyard of the Maidstone Museum in early October and third was the re-union in Pokhara organised by members of RAN. I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to attend all three events along with the Col of the Regt and Comdt Saheb.

Despite the Regiment transiting through this new GTACOS turmoil our soldiers have continued to progress and achieve success on operations in very challenging circumstances



and the work they have delivered is, as always, highly regarded and valued. Above all, none of the progress made has undermined that "Kaida" which plays such an important part in making our soldiers so special.

Since we have had our own full time Pandit things have significantly improved in the life of Regiment. Not only have we managed to properly celebrate all festivals and anniversaries but also our children are now much more educated in understanding our own Nepali culture and traditions and all credit must go to him. We do not limit his service to only the Gurkhas; he works closely with Regimental Padre and every so often delivers joint Services which is very good for a Regiment employing 50% British and 50% Gurkhas soldiers. He also pays periodic visits to members of QGE serving outside Maidstone and it is no small part to this that I assess morale is currently very high within the Regiment.

Sadly this is my last report as the Gurkha Major and by the time you read this Magazine, I will have already left the Regiment and started a new job, serving in the wider Corps. Under the old GTACOS this would be an unusual thing to happen but with the implementation of the new GTACOS it is now possible.

Memories from 1980, the year in which I joined the Regiment are still as fresh in my mind as if it was yesterday! We were then known as 33 Training Party, a batch of 100 Sappers, an unusually large intake (still a record in the Regiment's history) arriving at Perowne Barracks and being greeted by Capt Kusalsing Gurung and his team who subsequently took us through our Combat Engineer Training in the blazing heat of Hong Kong. It has been nearly three decades since I first joined the Regiment and I suddenly realised that time has come to move on! I look back on my time with tremendous pride and satisfaction. It has been a privilege and a great honour to have been the Gurkha Major of a Regiment with such a very high reputation. It is indeed sad to leave the Regiment after 30 fulfilling years but on the flipside I am delighted to leave QGE in the capable hands of Capt Prembahadur Ale. There are too many people to thank individually for their support over such a long period, but it would be remiss of me not to mention our Comdt, Lt Col Richard Wardlaw Saheb for the outstanding work he has done for QGE at this time of historic change. Dhanyabad Comdt Saheb.

Finally, some advice from the Gurkha Major (the most burho manchhe): The responsibility to maintain the good name of the Regiment earned by your fathers and forefathers is now in your hand. Reputation is such a thing that is incredibly difficult to earn but an even more difficult thing to preserve. Therefore I urge you to prioritise your interest always in the following order:

Put your Regiment

First

Your Squadron

Your Troop

Yourself

Second

Third

Last

I wish everybody in QGE the very best for the future. Baliyo Rahanuhos! Jai QGE!!

## RHQ QGE News

*Capt Prembahadur Ale MVO*

Regimental Headquarters is pleased to inform you that the Gurkha Sappers have been working hard wherever they are; be it on operations, in training or on construction projects, their performances have always been praised and they have preserved the good reputation earned by the forebears. RHQ QGE works hard to ensure that its soldiers get the most suitable career advice. Although this Headquarters is only composed of Comdt, GM, Adj, RCMO, GMSA and two JNCO clerks it delivers a wide range of services to its soldiers and their families around the world as well as our retired soldiers and their families.



*RHQ QGE*

Today the total strength of QGE is 419, including 40 newly arrived Sappers from 62 Training Party. They are serving in various locations including; Maidstone (RHQ QGE, 69 and 70 Sqn), Andover (a troop of 31 men with 26 Engr Regt), Devon (the Commando troop of 35 men with 24 Engr Regt), Catterick (Gurkha Coy), Minley (Gurkha troop), Brunei (Boat Section) and Nepal (QM Pokhara and Assistant RSM Kathmandu). This year alone the QGE has sent 8 JNCOs on to the Clerks of Works, (CoW) Course and 3 on the Military Plant Foremen, (MPF) Course. They are all doing superbly well and on successful completion of their course they will be transferred to the RE. For next year, a large number of soldiers have already submitted their application for CoW and MPF courses.

Amid the high demand of operational commitments, training and overseas exercises the QGE has successfully organised the following events:

- QGE 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebrated on 28 Sep 08 lead by





Capt Yogprasad Thapa, G/Capt 69 Sqn.

- Dashain and Tihar 2008 – with both 69 and 70 Sqns in Station it was one of the largest attendances in recent years with about 700 attendees including wives and children. Lead by Capt Rajen Gurung, G/Capt 70 Sqn.
- Unveiling of the Gurkha Statue, parade through Maidstone and 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner night – 2 Oct 08.
- 62 Training Party attestation parade lead by 69 Sqn.

The Regiment was very fortunate to have the Col of the Regt, Lt Gen Bill CB in attendance at every single event that the QGE celebrated. The most notable event of all was the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner Night which was held at Officers' Mess, 36 Engr Regt attended by a number of high ranking officers who had served with the Regiment including Gen P Wall CBE, (Commander in Chief Land Forces).

RHQ QGE is very conscious that it should maintain the promotion flow for the soldiers even in this transitional period. In order to achieve this there is a lot of high level discussion and negotiation with HQ EinC(A) and RE MCM Div. Although a lot of the work on manning issues have not yet been endorsed by the HQ EinC(A), every opportunity for our soldiers to be employed outside the Regiment are being seized in order to provide the opportunity to bring on fresh talent. Needless to say Comdt Saheb has been the leading figure in this work and QGE has been very fortunate to have Lt Col Wardlaw as Comdt QGE during this difficult time.

As far as Brigade sporting events are concerned the QGE is yet to win the two most highly prized events; the Nepal Cup and Trailwalker. Constant determination by all ranks within QGE will hopefully lead to securing the titles soon. RHQ is unreservedly hopeful that QGE should win this year's competition since both 69 and 70 sqns are not operationally committed.

Finally, RHQ QGE has been and will continue to be the at the forefront, working hard in the interest of the Regiment and its families.

## Honours and Awards

### Member of the British Empire

545927 Maj G D Brown

### Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (Op HERRICK)

526428 Lt Col R Wardlaw  
563523 Capt Devkumar Gurung

### Engineer-in-Chief's Commendation

21169146 Sgt Subash Rai  
21170063 LCpl Govinda Tamang

### Joint Commander's Commendation

563817 Capt Bishnubahadur Ghale  
21169590 Cpl Chandraprasad Lawati  
21170558 LCpl Deepak Tamang

### Commander BRITFOR Commendation

21168617 Sgt Purnasingh Thakuri  
21169599 LCpl Lalbahadur Pulami  
21170201 LCpl Chandrabahadur Pun

### Durand Medal 2008

Winner 563523 Capt Devkumar Gurung  
Runner Up 21168981 SSgt Bhesbahadur Thapa

### Bowring Trophy 2008

Winner 21169976 LCpl Prithibahadur Chhantyal  
Runner Up 21169861 LCpl Hemraj Gurung

## Appointments

### Selected as Queen's Gurkha Orderly Officer

555996 Capt Prembahadur Ale

### Selected as Gurkha Major, The Queen's Gurkha Engineer

555996 Capt Prembahadur Ale

### Selected for Intermediate Regular Commission

549373 Maj Dhanbahadur Chand  
548437 Maj Dudhprasad Gurung MVO  
555996 Capt Prembahadur Ale  
560530 Capt Ekbahadur Gurung

## Promotions

### Selected for Promotion to Major

555996 Capt Prembahadur Ale  
560530 Capt Ekbahadur Gurung

### Selected for Commissioning

21167998 WO2 Meenjang Gurung  
21168174 WO2 Yambahadur Pun  
21168216 WO2 Mohan Gurung

### Selected for promotion to WO2

21168738 A/WO2 Ashokraj Gurung  
21168542 SSgt Ganeshprasad Gurung  
21168981 SSgt Bhesbahadur Thapa

### Selected for promotion to SSgt

21168779 Sgt Dipkumar Rana



21168995	Sgt	Manbahadur Ale
21169289	Sgt	Khadkabahadur Gurung

#### Promotion to Sgt

21169285	Cpl	Maniram Gurung
21169327	Cpl	Narendradhoj Gurung
21169347	Cpl	Krishnakumar Pun
21169540	Cpl	Nareshkumar Limbu

#### Promotion to Cpl

21169629	LCpl	Ramesh Rana
21169642	LCpl	Manbahadur Sunwar
21169657	LCpl	Ajaykumar Gurung
21169781	LCpl	Koshbahadur Gurung
21169796	LCpl	Ramkumar Rai
21169818	LCpl	Juddhabahadur Limbu
21169871	LCpl	Krishnaraj Gurung
21169976	LCpl	Prithibahadur Chhantyal
21169982	LCpl	Bikash Shrestha
21169988	LCpl	Dasarath Gurung
21170063	LCpl	Govinda Tamang
21170071	LCpl	Milan Rai
21170104	LCpl	Omprakash Budha
21170105	LCpl	Ramprasad Phago
21170108	LCpl	Mohan Thapa
21170201	LCpl	Chandrabahadur Pun

#### Promotion to LCpl

21170548	Spr	Santosh Rai
21170686	Spr	Premjung Thapa
21170798	Spr	Dipprasad Gurung
21170828	Spr	Bheshbahadur Gurung
21170842	Spr	Tekbahadur Gurung
21170999	Spr	Suman Ghale
21171042	Spr	Prakash Gurung
21171050	Spr	Pabankumar Thapa

## Best Students

#### RE JNCO Commander Course

21169965	Cpl	Bhabendrakumar Muktan
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#### ME Draughtsman E&M Class 1

21169965	Cpl	Bhabendrakumar Muktan
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#### ME Fitter ACR Class 1

21170776	LCpl	Dayabahadur Gurung
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#### ME C&J Class 1

21170589	LCpl	Tilak Pun
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#### ME Fabricator Class 1

21169590	Cpl	Chandraprasad Lawati
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#### ME Welder Class 1

21170568	LCpl	Raju Sunuwar
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#### ME H&P Class 1

21170059	LCpl	Dipesh Gurung
21171099	Spr	Nirmal Purja

#### ME B&C Class 1

21170527	LCpl	Kanaiyalal Thapa
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#### ME Fabricator Class 2

21171762	Spr	Samarpan Lawati
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#### ME Fitter General Class 2

21171718	Spr	Ramkaji Thapa
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#### ME Electrician Class 2

21171617	Spr	Bobin Gurung
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#### ME Combat Class 3

30048363	Spr	Nagesh Sunuwar
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## Transferees

Transferred to:

21167660	WO1	Kumar Gurung	RE
21168197	WO1	Ashokkumar Khanal	RE
21168496	WO1	Ranjan Badgami	
21167996	WO2	Chitrabahadur Rana	RE
21168010	WO2	Nabin Gurung	RE
21168185	WO2	Suryabahadur Thapa	RE
21168189	WO2	Jitbahadur Thapa	RE
21168221	WO2	Ashok Rai	RE
21168255	WO2	Jiwanpyara Limbu	RE
21168009	SSgt	Bhim Rai	RE
21168525	SSgt	Khagendra Rai	RE
21168972	SSgt	Chetbahadur Thapa	RE
21169296	SSgt	Chiranjibi Limbu Khim	RE
21169297	SSgt	Balkrishna Gurung	RE
21168923	Cpl	Jitbahadur Gurung	RLC
21169272	Cpl	Amrit Gurung	RLC
21169148	Cpl	Khem Thapa Rana	RLC
21169248	Cpl	Ganeshkumar Limbu	AGC (SPS)
21169291	Cpl	Rajkumar Ghale	RE
21169297	LCpl	Lalbahadur Pun	RLC
21169620	LCpl	Kapil Rai	RLC
21169659	LCpl	Rajkumar Gurung	RLC
21169793	LCpl	Giriprasad Pun	RLC
21170019	LCpl	Dillishor Tumbahangphe	RE
21170237	LCpl	Arjun Thapa Magar	RLC
21170332	LCpl	Karma Sherpa	REME
21170534	LCpl	Pankajdev Rai	RE





## Pandit to the Queen's Gurkha Engineers

Pandit Shree Prem Prasad Gaire was first enrolled as a Pandit in 1981 in Hong Kong and posted to 2/7 GR where he served until the sad demise of the Battalion in 1987. He was then cross posted to Training Depot of the Brigade of Gurkhas, (TDBG).

As part of the Hong Kong draw down the decision to close TDBG came in 1994 which resulted in another cross posting this time to the newly formed 1 RGR. He served ten years with them in countries like, Hong Kong, Brunei and the UK.

He feels that the highlight of his time in 1 RGR was the operational deployment in Bosnia, for him this deployment



was an interesting experience, challenging at times and on the whole very rewarding. In 2006 he saw another move this time to 2 RGR where he served 18 months. The new GTACOS brought an increase to the number of Pandits within the Brigade and he was posted to the Queen's Gurkha Engineers in September 2007. Pandit Prem Prasad is not new to QGE, when he was in TDBG he used to cover the pastoral care and spiritual support to 70 Support Squadron who were collocated with TDBG in Sek Kong. Since 1994, he has served the QGE on a part time basis when Regiment did not have own full time Pandit.

Almost 2 years since arriving in Maidstone, Pandit Prem Prasad Gaire is now fully integrated not only with the QGE but also in 36 Engineer Regiment. He is the senior Pandit in the Brigade of Gurkhas and QGE has been very fortunate to have him as their full time Pandit. He is married to Kamala and they are blessed with 1 son and 6 daughters. He currently resides within Invicta Barracks.

Jai QGE.

## CO (Des) 36 Engineer Regiment/Commandant Queen's Gurkha Engineer

*Lt Col S J Hulme MBE RE*

Lt Col Simon Hulme MBE RE was commissioned into the Royal Engineers in August 1990. He spent the early part of his career as a troop commander in 23 Engr Regt when it was based in Osnabruck.

Remaining in Germany he was then posted to 32 Engr Regt working as both a Sqn Ops Offr and Sqn 2IC. Following staff tours as an SO3 at HQRE 1 (UK) Armd Div and as SO2 Engr as CAST (N) he was selected to attend the JSCSC.



Opting for a sunnier course, Lt Col Hulme attended the US Staff College where he was fortunate to be selected for a second year in Kansas and undertook the advanced course

at the School of Advanced Military Studies. His black bag job was as the SO2 G3 Ops/O&D at HQ 3 (UK) Div where he deployed on Op TELIC 2 as the Chief of Operations at MND (SE). He was appointed MBE in the New Years Honours list 2005. He commanded 20 Field Squadron deploying to Gibraltar and Cyprus on exercise and operationally to Northern Ireland. Lt Col Hulme has served operationally in the Balkans, Northern Ireland and in Iraq and has travelled widely during his Army career. More recently he was the SO1 G5 at the Royal School of Military Engineering in Brompton, where he was involved in the delivery of the RSME Private Public Partnership Project. Lt Col Hulme has recently been selected to command 36 Engr Regt at the end of this current appointment in June 2009.

Lt Col Hulme is married to Louise; they have an 8 year old son (William) and a 6 year old daughter (Isabelle). He takes part in most sporting activities, is a keen diver and squash player but has to admit that it now takes much longer to recovery from a Rugby match than it does to prepare for it.



# 69 Gurkha Field Squadron QGE

*Capt N M Anderson RE*

In a period of significant change within the QGE, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron has faced some equally significant challenges both at home and abroad. From the heat and humidity of Malaysia to the extreme cold and bitterly cold winds of the Canadian prairies, the Squadron has been fulfilling a multitude of roles and the tempo remains as high as ever. Amid the intensity of Squadron life over the past few months were some welcome announcements. Capt Ek was selected for promotion to Major, Squadron Sergeant Major Yam has been selected for commissioning and both Staff Sergeants Ganesh and Bhes for promotion to Warrant Officer Class 2. Also worthy of special mention are the numerous individual awards announced recently; Capt Dev was announced as the winner of the Durand Medal and also awarded the QCVS, Cpl Chandra Lawati and LCpl Deepak Tamang were awarded the Joint Force Commander's Commendation. Sgt Purna, Cpl Lalbahadur Phulami and Cpl Chandrabahadur Pun (flying doctor) were awarded Commander BRITFORs Commendation and Sgt Subash the Engineer-In-Chief's Commendation, all for services whilst on Op HERRICK 7. LCpl Dipesh is also applauded for his recent nomination as the Student of the Year for all those the Class 1 Heating and Plumbing course.

Since the last update, the new Squadron 2IC, Capt Nick Anderson has been well and truly 'broken in'. His introduction to the Sqn came in the form of the Commanding Officers' Challenge on Salisbury Plain. For this event all Squadrons from 36 Engineer Regiment were competing in a timed 20 mile march across country with a little surprise burden thrown in at the end for good measure. After an emotional six and a half hours of tabbing and despite a valiant effort by 50 HQ & Sp Sqn, the 69 Sqn team triumphed.



A few thousand miles away a large contingent of the Squadron was attempting to replicate this feat in the Jungles of Malaysia. During a Battlefield Study they aimed to learn the many valuable lessons about countering an insurgency and visiting many locations pertinent to the history of the

QGE on this our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year.



Everyone was soon back in the UK, where there was just enough time prior to Christmas stand down for G Tp to put the final touches to the Howlett Zoo Rhino enclosure. The remainder were busy carrying out some essential maintenance prior to everyone taking some well-deserved block leave.

With an extremely busy year ahead, the Squadron had to hit the new calendar year at a sprint. As such the diary was packed out with pre-deployment training for Ex WARPAINT 09 in Canada, essential routine training and numerous Regimental commitments throughout Jan 09. Support Troop arranged a comprehensive package for all drivers up in Swynerton, G Troop conducted an educational visit to London and I Tp were carrying out preparatory works for the Regimental QM's shelter and the remainder were busy preparing for a Regimental TEWT and Ex MUDDY KUKHRI; a Sqn level exercise aimed at running all personnel through their yearly training assessments as well as testing Command and Control in a tactical environment. In the world of Adventurous Training and sport, 9 members of the Squadron deployed on the Regimental Skiing expedition to France and the Squadron boxing team stepped up their training for the Regimental Boxing at the end of the month.

Always keen to do our bit for charity the Squadron, led by SSgt Janga ran a fund raising event at Bluewater Shopping Centre where the aspiration was to climb the height of

Everest on a step machine. In order to provide that little bit more insensitive for people to reach into their pockets all participants wore boots and carried a Bergen throughout their 30 minute stints on the machine. Dressed in desert combats and displaying photos of the Squadron in Iraq, Afghanistan and on projects in the UK the affinity felt by the public was clear and it was obvious that the general opinion of the Armed Forces, particularly the Gurkhas was high amongst them. The aim of the event was to raise money for the Invicta Memorial Fund and Gurkha Welfare Trust. In







In addition to the charity event at the Maidstone River Festival during summer last year the total funds raised now amounts to £5933.31; a sum of £2207.15 has been handed over to Invicta Memorial fund, and the remaining money (£3726.16) will be presented to the Chairman of GWT in near future.



Dominating the last 10 months of the Squadron planner was the deployment to Canada on Ex WARPAIN 09. The recces had been conducted back in Jul 08 and the enabling works had taken place on the Alberta Prairie in Nov 08. The main deployment approached quickly and so, whilst most were away on Ex MUDDY KUKHRI the QM took a select few out to Canada as the Pre-advance Party, to activate the relevant assets and agencies at the British Army Training Unit Suffield (BATUS). The Advance Party would be deploying just less than a month later with the Main Body following shortly after.

Meanwhile back in the UK the efforts of LCpl Karna (Squadron Boxing Coach) were to be put to the test during the pre-bouts and main Regimental Boxing Evening was attended by Comd 52 Inf Bde and the CRE 3(UK) Div. The boxers (Sappers Dil, Om, Rikesh, Nawaraj, Rashon and Shakti) did tremendously well during both sessions and the main event saw Sappers Rikesh and Om winning their fights by KO.

Soon enough the time had arrived for the Main Body to deploy to Canada. All proprietary works had been completed and the Activation and Advance Party personnel were ready to receive the Main Body in BATUS. The



former had been working around the clock to get the frozen vehicles back on the road after they had been sat outside for months in temperatures as low as -45°C. Surprisingly, the outbound flight left Brize Norton on time and soon enough the 101 strong WARPAIN deployment was in place and ready to begin work. I Tp Comd, Lt Tom Myatt best captures some of the WARPAIN experience in the following article:

### **I Troop and Exercise WARPAIN 09**

*Lt Tom Myatt, I Tp Comd*

As part of Ex WARPAIN 09, one of I Troop's tasks is the upgrade to Horden Village, located in the eastern part of the training area. On deployment, Horden Village was a large complex made up of 160 ISO containers that had been converted into representative buildings incorporating window and doors.



Sgt Purnasingh Thakuri is in command of the construction force of 12. The task site is located 50km from SHQ and involves a daily drive of up to 2 hours in demanding driving conditions, ranging from icy to muddy depending on the unpredictable weather conditions.

Once the cosy site office was established, work on site started in earnest. The movement of the ISOs was blessed by good weather but the days became less welcoming as the task progressed with temperatures of -35°C being regularly recorded. The donning of cold weather suits and masking up to endure the biting cold became routine. A shift



system became necessary at times to ensure extremities were kept warm enough. The lads often had to be forced to get inside when they wanted to complete 'just one more piece of plywood'.

The maintenance of the kit was extremely important throughout the task. Our Saturday mornings are filled with cleaning air filters, cleaning vehicles, team medic training, driver training and preparing loads of resources and stores for the next working week.

All work and no fun is quite frankly boring so Saturday evenings and Sundays are free to allow for the compulsive consumerism that took over the Squadron from day one in Canada. The amount of electronic gadgets and skiing kit accumulated so far by the Squadron is impressive and the resolute justifications will be worth listening to on our return to our loved ones. We also have plans to conduct a trip away to a destination yet to be decided as a reward for all the hard work. Support Troop's 'cultural' trip to Edmonton's Royal Alberta Museum followed by a visit to the 800 shops within the West Mall has I Troop eager to undergo a similar venture; something that is definitely in the art of the possible.

Another advantage of being in Canada during the winter months is the fantastic adventure training facilities that are available. The SSM has ensured that everyone from I Troop and indeed the Squadron attends either a week long or weekend AT package.



The only exception was LCpl Lokendra who is still exhausted from Army canoeing, skiing in France and the Malaysian Battlefield Tour to name but a few of his exploits.

*(Capt Anderson continues)* The task is ongoing and is about 22% complete and yes, the 2% is important. At the time of writing there are seven weeks left here but the winding down and handover will start to be planned in detail soon. The task is certainly understood by all of the construction team and their enthusiasm and imagination is infectious. We are certainly going to handover a valuable and realistic training environment that will prepare training soldiers in the best way possible. The production of the smells, however, will be

left to BATUS to fulfil.



Contextualisation on route to completion and LCpl Lokendra now safely squared away with some more AT; the Squadron has a number of 'Look forwards'. Nominated to deploy back to Afghanistan on Op HERRICK 12 in Mar/Apr 10, the requisite training bill is considerable. Eager to meet the challenges this deployment brings the preparatory training begins whilst we are still in Canada. Additionally a small number of Squadron personnel will be deploying on Op HERRICK 11 this winter as one of the Royal Engineer Search Teams headed by Sgt Krishna as the Royal Engineer Search Advisor, the training for which has already begun.

Despite the majority of the Squadron being in Canada, life has not stopped back in the UK. Both Capt Ek, Lt Gay and SSgt Jiwan have recently returned from a recce to Brunei to confirm the detail of a Troop(-) deployment with the Royal Marines and 1 RGR on Ex COMMANDO RAJAH for eight weeks in May this year. The WARPAINTEAR Party, under command of Capt Yog has been extremely proactive and has now thankfully completed the Regimental QM's shelter.

All these activities are taking place at a time when life as a QGE soldier is undergoing substantial and very positive change. Managing this change is a significant task and one that is compounded by the training and operational tempo we are working to at present. Despite this we remain focussed on 'the big picture'; we are all working hard to ensure the potential issues and frictions brought about by GTACOS, in particular expectations for promotion and opportunity to transfer, are effectively managed.

Jai QGE!





# 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron QGE

*Capt Rajen Gurung, Gurkha Captain*

At the time of writing this article, 70 Gurkha Fd Sp Sqn has soldiers in Turkey, Canada, Scotland and Wales. Soldiers have recently returned from Iraq and Kenya. We are also preparing soldiers for deployments on Op TOSCA and Op HERRICK 10, 11 and 12. We are concurrently planning the repair and refurbishment of a suspension bridge in West Sussex and a Squadron deployment to Cyprus on Ex PINESTICK. As ever we are busy!

Amongst the vast array of activities the Squadron has undertaken two deployments which stand out in particular. Firstly, the creation, training and deployment of a Field Troop for a Spearhead Land Element deployment to support 2 RIFLES in Kosovo on Op VALERO. Secondly, the formation, training and deployment of a Field Troop to support 40 Commando RM on Ex TAURUS.

70 Gurkha Fd Sp Sqn deployed to Kosovo on Op VALERO with 2 RIFLES from May to July 08 over a period of public unrest surrounding the formation of Kosovo as an independent state and its subsequent elections. The Battle Group deployed to Multi-National Task Force North, the French area of operations after extensive SLE training with particular emphasis on heavy and light public order capabilities. The Squadron deployed a troop of 35 soldiers, headed up by Capt Bishnu Ghale as the Troop Commander. Major Giles McCallum also deployed to advise the Battle Group Commander and command the other Royal Engineer elements. Seamlessly integrated into the Battle Group from the outset the Troop excelled during the Mission Rehearsal Exercises providing plant and combat engineer support which was critical for the successful clearance of the obstacles and establishment of order in quick time. Considerably faster than the French Battle Group!!

As the public order capability was held on notice to move, the battle group and in particular the troop seized the opportunity to conduct CIMIC operations within the area. A peach of a project presented itself in the form of the Devic Bridge. This bridge linked a Serbian Monastery and local enclaves with the MSR. The bridge was in a very poor state of repair and indeed unsafe to traffic. The Kosovan authority did not have the money or the will to repair the bridge and the French task force had the money but not the expertise. "Step forward 70 Sqn!" This was a big and bold project to undertake by a troop. Firstly the OC overcame the issue of money by "cracking on" based on verbal assurances of cash from the French Government, bold and brave! Next a combat engineer solution to a complicated design problem was hatched enabling stores and equipment to be ordered. The troop created a by-pass culvert bridge then dismantled the damaged bridge in short order. However, nothing ever runs to plan and the project "tough nut to crack" was trying to minimise the water level under the bridge. Several types and multiple configurations of

pumps were employed until a workable solution was found. Typically, as the bridge was at its most dismantled state the decision was made to begin planning the withdrawal of the SLE BG from Kosovo. Bad timing as this meant the reconstruction of the bridge had to be accelerated. In true QGE fashion all the stops were pulled out, round the clock construction was implemented and novel construction methods were employed to complete the bridge on time. The finished bridge is a shining example of what a well trained and determined troop of QGE soldiers can do in a short timescale when they put their minds to it. The bridge was completed to a very high standard, on time and within budget and was open by Comd KFOR after a Khukri dance.



*Devic Bridge Strip Out*



*Devic Bridge Reconstructed*

Numerous other projects were undertaken by the Troop including the Plemintina Village Clinic which was repaired and had a new car park constructed outside. At Banyia village the drainage system was improved to increase the output of the water mill. As a result of the determination, contribution to the operation and good leadership which Captain Bishnu Ghale displayed on the tour, he was awarded the MNTF(N) Commander's Commendation and a Joint Commander's Commendation. Capt Bishnu Ghale





has been very humble throughout and remarks that he was exceptionally well supported by his accomplished troop.

As the Troop returned from Kosovo they were greeted by a new OC, Maj Gavin Brown, who took over command at the end of June. New to QGE he was immediately impressed by the success of the operation and the considerable spectrum of activities which were going on at the time. Plant troop were in the middle of constructing a bridge gap at the Royal Engineer Training Area behind 22 Engineer Regiment's Camp for BR90 training. It was completed in Jul 08 after a visit from the CRE who was, as always, impressed by the standard of the workmanship. The Regimental Cadre was the main focus of the Regiment and 70 Squadron's Sappers performed very strongly. Spr (now LCpl) Prakash Gurung was promoted off the square and Spr (now LCpl) Suman Ghale was also promoted off the square and awarded top student. Thulo Shyabash! Capt Eddie Walsh the then QM of 70 Gurkha Fd Sp Sqn was training his 2 Trail Walker teams and lead them to a commendable 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> place overall. Very impressive indeed! In Aug 08 Capt Rajen Gurung and his team raised over £40,000 for Gurkha Welfare Trust through a 200 mile gruelling trek across Scotland on Ex GURKHA HIGHLANDER. The mountains may not be as high as in Nepal but the going was still tough.



*Ex GURKHA HIGHLANDER*

After a well deserved summer block leave the Squadron returned to undertake a driver training package run by Support Troop. The Regimental MTWO sited the training as absolute best practice and recommended the approach be adopted across the Regiment. The Squadron drivers certainly benefited substantially from the exercise. After this the Squadron along with the remainder of QGE prepared for QGE 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebrations, followed swiftly by Dashain. This year in particular was a spectacular event as the people of Maidstone honoured QGE with the erection of the statue of a Queen's Gurkha Engineer outside their Museum.

The Squadron Section Competition was held in Sept and culminated in a very demanding section extraction march.

Each Section had to compete a river crossing before extracting a wounded soldier to a HLS, thereafter a long tab/run to an assault course. On completion, they were tested on a falling plate competition. The winning section was led by Cpl (now Sgt) Sushil. Capt Rajen Gurung presented a Khothimora Khukri to the winning Section and this will now be competed annually at the Squadron Section Competition. This prepared the Sections for a gruelling Regimental Section Competition where every section performed very strongly. The OC was particularly impressed with the grit, determination and professionalism which was displayed throughout. Every section finished with its full complement of men which no other Squadron could claim. Cpl Sushil's section was very narrowly beaten into second place by a section from 20 Fd Sqn. However, the first CO's PT challenge after summer leave was won convincingly by 70 Gurkha Fd Sp Sqn. The competition was a combination of tabbing, an equipment race, obstacle course, command tasks and shooting.



*Squadron Section Competition*

The squadron then fully focused on Divisional Engineer Group training and this involved some excellent training opportunities and a lot of hard work. Capt Rajen Gurung organised a Division wide engineer logistic study day which was superbly executed and very well received. Workshop's Troop deployed to construct the Deployable Engineer Workshops (DEWs) with 15 Fd Sp Sqn, a construction task that is not to be underestimated. In high winds and austere conditions they learned and practised this complicated process. The DEWs is a fantastic capability but slightly susceptible to leakage under heavy rain fall! The Plant Troop deployed to Salisbury Plain to complete some plant machinery familiarisation and construct some training area improvements. As ever they revelled in being busy and worked hard in the mud! Throughout the year, Workshops Troop have delivered a myriad of high quality products to the Division. These ranged from map boards, signs and Command Boards to model bridges. Resources Troop have focused on maintaining its critical support to all projects, maintaining our engineer accounts and achieving superb inspection results from the Engineer Logistic Inspection. Signals Troop worked tirelessly to maintain competency on Bowman across the Squadron and have created CPXs to practice our Squadron's procedures.





*DEW Construction*

Up to this point in the year the training had focussed on maintaining the Fd Sp Sqn core capabilities. Now we were faced with a new challenge. To form, train and equip a Field Troop to support 40 Commando RM on Ex TAURUS. The aim of Ex TAURUS was to maintain the Royal Navy's fighting capability as well as develop the UK's capacity to operate with key partners and allies from NATO countries and other nations. From a political stand point it also demonstrates the UK's commitment to the stability and security in the Mediterranean, Middle East and South East Asia. The Naval Task Force comprises 12 ships, including a US Navy destroyer and a French Navy frigate, two nuclear-powered submarines, Royal Marines, Naval Air Squadrons, Helicopter Force Sea Kings and Support Helicopter Force Chinooks. At its height, 3,300 personnel will take part in the 20,400 mile (32,831km) round-trip deployment, interacting, training and building relations with 17 nations. 70 Gurkha Fd Sp Sqn provided 1 x Troop with BGE (40 personnel) to support 40 Cdo RM. The troop may not have been the largest element of the deployment but it is certainly the most important – from our point of view!

Training started in Sep 08 with the formation of the Troop then individual and Troop collective training. It was a significant challenge to get the whole troop trained in the latest Bowman signals equipment and procedures, range work, combat engineering and to learn to drive and command the amphibious BV206 vehicles. Everyone worked hard to overcome the initial issues and in particular Signal Troop prepared vehicles and the troop for BCIP 5 training and integration with 40 Cdo RM. The troop was deployed on exercises for significant periods of time and trained hard and fast to confirm the capability. From Dec 08 through to Jan 09 the training focused on integration with 40 Cdo RM through a series of Bowman proving exercises, CASTs and live fire exercises. This was tough training and the troops performed admirably. Indeed 40 Cdo RM have commented on the outstanding infantry tactics the sections employed and the impeccable delivery of engineer support. Eventually the time came to deploy on ship. Inevitably some of our soldiers found the rough seas difficult to handle and suffered varying degrees of sea sickness! The task force completed amphibious training with other nations off

the South West Coast of the UK and in the Mediterranean, culminating in a series of amphibious landings in Cyprus and Turkey. Throughout the exercises the troop provided close support to the RM Coys and vital engineer support. In particular they practiced force protection tasks, water supply using the WPU (NBC) Saline, mobility and counter mobility tasks. Phase Two will see part of the Task Group deploy through the Suez Canal, culminating in a multi-national training package in the primary jungles of Brunei. Riverine training will also be conducted with the Bangladeshi Navy. Unfortunately our troop will recover to the UK after Turkey and will hand this over to 24 Engr Regt.



*BV206 Training for Ex TAURUS*



*Non Equipment Bridge Training for Ex TAURUS*



*Combat Engineer Training for Ex TAURUS*





The essential life blood of the Squadron has been sustained throughout by our dedicated and skilled Echelon staff. Our deployed capability has only been possible through the QM, now Capt Colin Willows and his staff's efforts. In a similar fashion our Clerks have maintained a critical grip on our administration. The Squadron is very well served by these experienced and capable men and our administration, equipment availability and inspection results are testament to that.

Although it has been a very busy time there has been time for fun as well. The Squadron arranged a Battlefield tour to Monte Cassino in Mar 08. It was a great opportunity to experience some history first hand and relax away from the Regiment. WO2 Markland (MPF 70 Gurkha Fd Sp Sqn) organised an adventure training expedition to New Zealand taking some members of QGE along. This included a truly spectacular series of mountain climbs on the North Island, including Mt Tongariro (2518m), Mt Ruapehu (2797m) and Mt Ngauruhoe (2290m). In Jan 09 eight soldiers from the Squadron were lucky enough to go skiing in Meribel, including the Second in Command and the Squadron Sergeant Major. Who let that happen? Both Alpine and Cross Country disciplines were practised and although everybody returning from France said they had a great time, it was clear that the Cross Country skiers were a lot more tired and thinner than their Alpine skiing comrades! Adventure training in Wales in March sounds like a recipe for rain, wind and hypothermia, but no, the sun shone, the wind stayed away and 35 very fortunate members of 70 Gurkha Fd Sp Sqn managed to sneak in a week of mountain biking, rock climbing and hill walking out of Capel Curig Camp. It was a superb week, thoroughly enjoyed by all. The prize for quickest ascent of the rock face went to Spr Ashok Limbu. The prize for the most numerous crashes on his mountain bike went to Capt Krishna Gurung and the prize for the most spectacular crash was awarded to Sgt (now SSgt) Dipkumar Rana. As ever there have been significant and wide ranging sporting success throughout the year which has included, taekwondo, boxing, orienteering, running, shooting, badminton and basketball. Very well done to all.



*Adventure Training in Wales*

Looking forward the remainder of 2009 and into 2010 it will be very challenging. On top of the inevitable standard Regimental business of inspections, maintenance, exercises and sporting challenges the Squadron is tasked with the restoration of Amberley Bridge; a damaged suspension footbridge in West Sussex. The Squadron will also deploy two search teams on Op HERRICK 11 and a thirteen man Resources Node to Op HERRICK 12. In addition we need to have a third search team available for training for Op HERRICK 12 if required. After summer leave we will squeeze in an Adventure Training package to the Pyrenees before deploying en-masse to Cyprus for Ex PINESTICK and Op TOSCA.

On the manning side, the Squadron bade farewell to Maj McCallum, Capt Kirkin, Capt Prembahadur Ale, Capt Walsh, Capt Tulebahadur Ale MBE, WO2 (SSM) Mohan Gurung, WO2 Jiwanpara Limbu, A/WO2 Ashok Gurung, SSgt Prakash Rai, SSgt Dipkumar Rana and Sgt Khadgabhadur Gurung. New Arrivals include Maj Brown MBE, Capt Mitchell, Capt Willows, Capt Krishna Gurung, WO2 (SSM) Mohan Gurung, WO2 (SSM) Ashok Gurung, A/WO2 Jitman Budha, A/WO2 Ashok Gurung, A/SSgt Manbahadur Ale, Sgt Samir Thapa and Sgt Naresh.

Jai 70 Sqn! Jai QGE!

### **70 GURKHA FD SP SQN QGE** **OPERATION VALERO** **KOSOVO - 20 MAY - 4 JULY 2008.**

*Capt Bishnu Ghale*

After the various planning stages and months of rigorous training preparing for our Spearhead Land Element (SLE) commitment, 70 Gurkha Fd Sp Sqn assumed the SLE responsibility on the 26 Mar 08. The Sqn was then stood at high readiness eagerly awaiting the signal to deploy at short notice anywhere in the world where our Sapper skills were most needed. Luckily, the Sqn did not have to wait too long before it was confirmed that the UK Operational Reserve Force (ORF) would deploy to Kosovo on Op VALERO to reinforce KFOR as a Brigade Reserve during a period of uncertainty leading up to the national elections on 15 Jun 08. The Advance Party, led by OC Saheb Maj GAR McCallum, deployed to Kosovo on 19 May 08. The Main Body, comprising of 37 members of 70 Sqn left Maidstone early on Tue 22 May 08 having received blessings from the Holy Temple and a farewell message from the CO, Lt Col R Wardlaw. By the 25 May 08 we had settled into our camp at Peninsula Lines, near Pristina, and could feel the hot Kosovan Sun beating down on our heads.

As part of the SLE, 70 Sqn's main priority was to provide Engineer support to the 2 Rifles Battle Group (BG). Our training during the previous months leading up to deployment had prepared us well for this role, but it became apparent very quickly that the situation in Kosovo was fairly benign and would allow for more CIMIC orientated tasks within our Area of Responsibility. The first and by



far the biggest task of this nature was rebuilding the Non Equipment Bridge (NEB) over the river Klina, near Devic, which had fallen into a state of disrepair and was perilously closed to collapse. This bridge was a key crossing point for both the KFOR troops and for local villagers as it was one of the only means of reaching the Devic Monastery, home to a number of Serbian Nuns. The monastery was destroyed during the 1999 conflict though was later rebuilt and remains under close protection by KFOR troops.

The task proved to be a very challenging considering the tight timelines and the amount of resources needed to be procured. Nevertheless the boys dug-out blind, displaying their excellent trade skills, resourcefulness and determination restoring the bridge to its former glory. After completion the bridge was renamed The MITEREE Bridge (Friendship) in memory of Lt Gareth Evans and SSgt Balam Rai who sadly lost their lives in on the 21 Jun 99. A memorial service was later held on the same day, at the same hour and on the same spot where they fell. It was a very moving ceremony and a fitting tribute to the memory of these two brave and respected members of the QGE family.



*Memorial ceremony for Lt G Evans and SSgt Balam Rai*

In addition to this task the Troop conducted a numbers of CIMIC tasks throughout the area providing dinking water, electricity and drainage systems for the local population and also refurbishing the prison cells in a local police station to a more liveable condition. Our additional duties were to provide Heavy Public Order Teams and Light Public Order Teams for the 2 Rifles BG during the signing of the new Kosovan Constitution in Mitrovica on the 15 Jun 08. The day passed off without incident and all the boys were received warmly by the local population.

The tour proved to be a very busy time for the SLE Troop, accomplishing a huge number of diverse tasks within a relatively short time-frame. We received many high profile and international dignitaries during our tour the most notable of which was the Armed Forces Minister the Right Honourable Robert Ainsworthy MP. All commented on how impressed they were with our professionalism and hard work. Special mention must be made of Capt Bishnu who

was awarded an MNTF(N) Commander's Commendation for his excellent work throughout the tour. This was an excellent tour proving to be a hugely enjoyable and rewarding experience, affording the guys a unique opportunity to work with multinational forces in an overseas operational environment.



### Plementina Clinic Task

*LCpl Buddha*

Within our first week of deploying to theatre we received a task to renovate a medical clinic in the village of Plementina, a small Serb enclave North-West of Pristina. It was to be a quick 48 hour task which would involve some excellent opportunities for the boys to display their expertise as tradesmen.

As the clinic was located right next to a road there were no existing parking spaces available. To rectify this we prepared the ground by laying hardcore as the base level using a Light Wheeled Tractor and every Sapper's best friend, the shovel and pickaxe. Within the Clinic there was a small technical laboratory where the doctors and nurses could carry out blood and other important sampling tests. The lab lacked running water and a reliable power source to assist in the drainage system. LCpl Ajay and LCpl Dev set to work providing the Clinic with drinking water by installing a basin and connecting it to the mains to allow for proper drainage, while LCpl Birendra and Spr Mohan did an awesome job providing electricity to lavatory.

The task proved a fantastic opportunity to work within the local community, providing them with a safe and secure





medical environment in which they could feel happy to use. We were sorry to have to go at the end of our two days as within that short time the people of Plementino had made us most welcome.

## **LIFE IN BRITISH ARMY TRAINING UNIT KENYA**

*LCpl Dal Ringali*

British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK) is based in Nairobi, Kenya with 26 temporary staff, 14 permanent staff and around 250 Local Employed Civilians (LEC) under



*LCpl Dal tames one of the local stray cats*

command. It is established to support LAND training in Kenya and is one of the busiest training centres in the British Army running seven Brigade level exercises a year. The deployment to BATUK for 6 months as a ME Class 1 Electrician was my first experience of working outside the Queen's Gurkha Engineers. I was led to believe that I was the first Gurkha Electrician to be posted to Kenya so it was a new and challenging role. There were 5 LEC Electricians who worked directly under my supervision and they were very helpful and experienced in their trade. During my time working with the LECs they became good friends of mine and they tried to teach me Swahili, the African culture and local traditions.

I had a busy tour and a great deal of responsibilities in my role. I had to carry out the routine inspections and testing of all the electrical systems in the camp and the married quarters. I provided technical advice during new designs and gave training to the LEC's to bring them up to date with current legislation and British standards. I was also responsible for the electrical maintenance, repair, fault finding and Portable Appliance Test (PAT) inspection and testing regime.

During the Brigade exercises my role was to run the Field Electrical Power Supply (FEPS) and provide electrical lighting and power to EX-CON/HI-CON. I found the deployment as an electrician to Kenya extremely worthwhile as I had plenty of opportunity to learn new skills, develop

my experience and gain further confidence within my trade.



*LCpl Dal checks the diagnostic panel on the FEPS*

Although BATUK is a small camp, it had lots of good facilities such as the accommodation, food, Internet, football pitch, gym and not forgetting the swimming pool. All the BATUK staff are gathered from different Regiments with various trades, and due to the intimate size of this small group we quickly bonded like a family. It wasn't all work; during the long weekends we used to organise different kinds of Safaris and this is where I got the opportunity to see and take pictures of hundreds and thousands of different wild animals such as Lions, Giraffes, and Leopards. I felt very lucky to see these wild animals of Africa in their natural habitat.



*Local Wildlife*

BATUK is the place to go during your Army career if you want to develop your trade skills, feel at one with the nature and have a truly awesome adventurous experience in Africa. I heartily recommend it. Jai QGE





# GURKHA COMPANY, INFANTRY TRAINING CENTRE CATTERICK

WO2 Dirgha KC

As I look through previous articles of the QGE magazine it is evident that material in certain articles is very similar and it is quite common that some facts and figure are repeated. This may be unavoidable and finding a different way of expressing news on a subject that is repeated every year is not easy. However, every endeavour has been made to avoid this repetition and hopefully this article will be of a different flavour.

Exactly 230 Nepalese youths have been joining in the Brigade of Gurkhas every year since the time the Training

Depot moved to the United Kingdom from Hong Kong. Recently, a rumour has been spread that the current number of 230 will be lowered. It has proved to be only a rumour since no decision has been made and nothing has changed. However, if it turns into reality, it will give a vicious blow to the recent changes made within the Company.

As of this year, the Wings System within the Company has ceased and an extra platoon formed to make six platoons in total. There are 40 Trainees and 7 Permanent Staff (PS) in all platoons except the 6<sup>th</sup> platoon. The 6<sup>th</sup> platoon has 30 Trainees and 6 Permanent Staff. Each platoon is run by 7 PS which includes; a Platoon Commander (Capt), a Platoon Sergeant (Sgt) and 5 Section Commanders (Cpls).

The Company is fully manned with 82 permanent staff from across the Brigade of Gurkhas with the majority coming from the infantry. QGE accounts for 7 of these personnel and has a Platoon Commander, a Training Coordinator, a Physical Training Instructor (PTI), 3 x Sect Commanders and a Storeman. Currently these are; Capt Tarabahadur Pun, WO2 Dirgha KC, Cpl Karmaraj Rai, Cpl Surya Tumbahangphe, Cpl Omprakash Budha, Cpl Premkumar Jabegu and LCpl Tapkumar Rai.



*Immigration procedure brief to Trainees by WO2 Dirgha KC*



*Potential Recruits on the infamous Doka Race*

The 26 weeks of Combat Infantryman Course (CIC) given to all Gurkha Trainees is in line with the training provided to all during the first seven weeks trainees learn drill in preparation for the Adjutant's Drill Test. After successful completion of the Drill Test they are eligible to go out on

their own during weekends. Post Week 7, the trainees who performed the best in each section during the first seven weeks is selected as the Section Duty Trainee (SDT) and given extra responsibilities and the opportunity for his leadership qualities to shine.

During Introductory Exercises 1, 2, 3 and 4 the trainees are trained and tested up to the section attack level. Tactical Exercise 1 generally falls in Weeks 17-18 after which trainees are given

the additional responsibility as the Platoon Duty Trainees (PDT). Opportunity to be the PDT is awarded to the one who executes the best performance and shows the best leadership potential up to that point. This appointment lasts for two weeks and then the second best individual is appointed to perform as the PDT and so on till the end of Week 37.



*Basic swimming techniques by Cpl Karma*

At the end of Tactical Exercise 3, (A defensive exercise), which falls between Week 30 – 32 all trainees are asked to choose their preferred unit and are given 3 choices although it is not guaranteed that an individual will ultimately get one of his choices. There are five criteria that need to be met in order to be assigned to the unit of their choice. They are as follows:

- The overall performance in CIC.
- Academic qualification at Gurkha Language Wing (Recommendation from GLW).



- East – West balance (Must be 50/50 in each units).
- PI Comd recommendation.
- Personal preference.

this is one of the most rewarding jobs one can undertake in their Army career, after all every Gurkha will forever remember their time at the Infantry Training Centre.

The Live Firing Tactical Training (LFTT) and Final Exercises are the culmination of the CIC and the 9 days of intensive LFTT and 6 days of the arduous Final Exercise provides almost a real operational tempo. Week 37 is the final week of CIC the highlight of which being the most renowned Pass of Parade which concludes the 9 month long CIC.

It is needless to mention that the daily routine in Gurkha Company is laborious, challenging and time consuming.

Long hours every day including many working weekends ensures the PS in Gurkha Company are workaholics. The year passes by unnoticed with little time to relax and reflect. However, the positive side is that



*Capt Tarabahadur Pun and his Platoon on the Defence Exercise.*

### 3 RSME



*Seating, left to right*

WO2 Kamal Khapung – QMSI BEW  
 Capt Uttam Sherchan – Tp Comd Cur Tp  
 Capt Bhisma Gurung – 21C 55 Trg Sqn  
 WO2 Meenjang Gurung – QMSI TSB

*Standing, left to right*

Cpl Sharad Tumbahangphe – Trg JNCO Cur Tp  
 Sgt Deepak Shrestha – Instructor CIS Wing  
 SSgt Prakash Rai – Tp SNCO Cur Tp  
 Cpl Ashok Gurung – Trg JNCO Cur Tp  
 (Cpl Ramkumar Rai – Missing due to away on course)

#### **Curragh Troop, 57 Trg Sqn RE**

We are renowned as the Gurkha Troop however, there is no separate Gurkha Troop as such and we are fully integrated with our British counterparts as part of Curragh Troop.

Within the Troop there are two sub-troops, Cur A and Cur B. Each troop consists of 5 JNCOs and 1 SNCO. Each is responsible for running Combat Engineer Courses and this year is no different to the last as we successfully ran 8 courses and with my rusty maths this means just over 300 young Sappers have past through our care and in to the Field Army. In addition, we pick up our fair share of Regular Army Assistance Tasks, (RAAT) and support to the ACF. On the top of all of these commitments we have also managed to raise some money for charity this year taking part in the 'World's Biggest Curry' and organising the 'Trans-Nepal

Cycle Run', (see below). All were a huge success and we raised approximately £6000.00 for various charities.

There has been some significant changes occurring this year but they did not affect that much in terms of training. For a start there is no longer a pass off parade at the end of the Class 3 Combat Engineer Course so you only can visualise what you have seen in the past at Hawley Lake; all those big bangs and charging towards the spectators with Kukri. However, we managed to squeeze in very successful 'Kasam Khane Parade' in Maidstone. They also took out the construction project week; hence B3 Cse is only 9 weeks long. That said the training is still challenging both physically and mentally; more importantly feed back from





our customer, (the Field Army) is very encouraging.

## Minley Station News

Outside of Curragh Troop Capt Bhisma Saheb has taken over as Sqn 2IC of 55 Trg Sqn and WO2 Meenjang is waiting to take over as the Tp Comd in Tidworth after being selected for a commission. WO2 (QMSI) Kamal replaced WO2 Mohan, (now SSM 70 Sqn) in the Battlefield Engineer Wing and he has already made a mark by stepping up as a QMSI for the Troop Commander's Course.

## 62 Training Party – Basic Combat Engineer Course Class 3

*Spr Nagesh Sunuwar*

After a year long recruit training course and a further 4 week educational package in Catterick we arrived in Minley for our Basic Combat Engineer Course in late 2008. The first few days were a bit difficult as some of our instructors were from the Royal Engineers and not the Gurkha NCOs we had been used to. On the very first day, our troop commander said, 'Right boys, from now on speak English during working hours'.

We found this a bit difficult for the first few days, but soon we got used to it.

The course was 9 weeks long and consisted of 7 modules: Basic Field Engineering, Watersupply, Demolitions, Force Protection, Watermanship,

Minwarefare and Bridging. There was both theory and practical lessons and then theory and practical tests at the end of each module. The modules were very enjoyable and everyone enjoyed taking part as almost everything was new and there was a lot of information to take on.

The physical training was very challenging and consisted of many activities including log and stretcher races, bergen marches etc. Although hard, the PT was progressive and

the facilities available such as the swimming pool, gym meant by the end of the course everyone achieved a very good level of personal fitness.

*Spr Nagesh receiving best student award from Maj Moore saheb*



*Cpl Ram and Cpl Sloan with the boys during the force march*



Everyone was self motivated about their own physical fitness as we know the importance of being fit especially as Gurkha soldier since as an unfit soldier we will make life difficult for ourselves.

There was a final exercise towards the end of the Course where we put into practice all we had learned during the previous 9 weeks. It helped to give us a better appreciation of how sappers work on the battlefield. Although it was hard and demanding it was an exciting experience and we got the opportunity to practice all the combat engineer skills we had learned. It was all about determination and team effort. After the final run-in we were presented with our stable belts by the 3 RSME 2IC (Maj I Moore Saheb) which was a proud moment for us as we had all worked very hard for this moment to arise.

There were also a number of extra activities we took part in during the course, one of which was a visit to the Royal Museum in Chatham.



*Visit to RE Museum Chatham*

It was a memorable day for many reasons as we are the part of the Royal Engineers it is always nice to know it's history. It is also becoming more important due to the increasing integration of QGE into the Royal Engineers. We already know that there is a QGE troop as part of the Commando Regiment and another one in 26 Engineer Regiment. The same afternoon we also visited Maidstone and had a religious brief by the punditji followed by a talk by the Gurkha Major Saheb on current QGE affairs. In the evening, QGE Officers and SNCOs organised a welcome function for us where we were able to talk with fellow QGE soldiers. I must pass on big thank you to QGE Officers and SNCOs on behalf of 62 Training Party

Overall, we have found the combat engineering course very challenging and useful. The instructors were very helpful and gave us invaluable guidance. We worked as a team throughout the course and learnt all the fundamental things we will apply throughout our career. It was hard to become a qualified Infantry soldier but it was even more challenging to be a sapper. We are all very proud to be a member of the Queen's Gurkha Engineers. Jai QGE.



## TRANS NEPAL CYCLE RIDE – CHARITY RIDE FOR THE ABF

*Cpl Sharad Tumbahangphe*

Having been asked by my Troop Commander, Capt Uttam Sherchan to come up with an idea for a charity event I dug out a variety of options before finally deciding to go for a Trans-Nepal Bicycle Ride and Bag Packing. The aim of the event was to raise money for Army Benevolent Fund (ABF) in order to promote the Army in the public eye and to raise the profile of the Regiment in the local area, as well as helping to uphold the name of the Gurkhas. The ABF is the Army's national charity and it supports soldiers, former soldiers and their families in times of need.



*Spr Nagesh packing bags!!*

The event took place in Farnborough and was in two parts; Bag packing took place on Saturday 20 December 08 at the ASDA Superstore whilst the cycle ride occurred on Sunday 21 December 08 at Kings Mead Shopping Centre. The aim of the Trans-Nepal Cycle ride was to cover a distance equivalent to the length of Nepal, (553miles) on spinning bikes. The manpower came from the members of 62 Training Party QGE.

The Bag Packing proved to be fun as the boys enjoyed chatting with customers at the tills whilst packing their bags and collecting donations. As it was the Saturday just before Christmas it was one of the busiest days of the year so the boys had to work hard. There was no respite at all and we just managed to have a lunch break. The customers were very interested and many questions were asked about us and the Gurkhas and most were very happy seeing Gurkha boys helping packing their bags. Maybe this was because they had not seen Gurkhas doing this kind of charity event around the Farnborough area for a long time. On the Sunday, the Trans-Nepal Cycle ride went very well as people came and watched and we found them all very generous as they didn't hesitate to put their hands in to their pockets for a good cause. We had a big map of Nepal

and many questions were asked about the charity, Mount Everest and the Annapurna Trekking Circuits.



*Team photo with the Tp Comd*

Overall both events were very successful and much hard work, dedication and effort went into achieving this.

Altogether we collected £3,917.57 for the ABF. I am sure it will make a significant contribution to those people in times of need and in addition it was very good education for our new QGE Training Party.

Jai QGE!

## British Gurkhas Pokhara Update

*Capt Tulbahadur Ale MBE QGE, QM/MTO/CAO BGP*

Having completed my tour as the Ops Offr in the 70 Gurkha Fd Sp Sqn in Jul 08 I took over as QM British Gurkhas Pokhara (BGP) from Capt Krishnabhadur Gurung QGE. I was delighted to be posted to BGP and I am extremely fortunate to be a part of such a brilliant team, commanded by Maj R Beven RGR Saheb. The post has many responsibilities and wears several hats. Apart from being the QM, I am also the Civilian Administrative Officer (CAO) for the Locally Engaged Civilians (LECs), the Motor Transport Officer (MTO), the Messing Officer, the Unit Fire Officer (UFO) and the Unit Health and Safety Advisor (USA). Quite a challenge I am sure you will agree!

The last eight months have been an extremely busy period for the Department as it fell during the Recruiting Season. Immediately after taking over I had to return to the UK on the Quartermasters Course and so unfortunately missed Regional Selection (West). I returned to BGP on 3 Oct 08 in time for Regional Selection (East) which took place over 11-27 Oct 08 in British Gurkhas Dharan<sup>1</sup> (BGD). Due to

<sup>1</sup> Editor: BGD consists of a small compound that is rented from the BP Koirala Institute of Health Sciences which occupies the site of the former British Camp. BGD is in the South East corner of the old camp near the Golf Course and British Cemetery.





the flooding of the Koshi River in early July 2008 and the subsequent breaching of the Koshi Barrage it proved to be one of the most challenging logistic tasks I have ever been involved in. All G4 stores and equipment had to be shifted in 20' ISO containers via the Indian boarder which took up to 5 days. The reason being was that the only East – West highway had been completely washed away for several kilometres and this was only fully repaired in Feb 09. The only internal East to West connection was either on foot through the hills or via domestic air travel.

On return from the East and after a short break for Tihar, Central Selection started. During this period 900 men including potential recruits and visitors had to be accommodated in BGP, which was no small task. In total 230 recruits for the British Army and 80 recruits for the Gurkha Contingent of Singapore Police Force were selected from the 15000 who originally applied. Maj Gen S V Mayall, (late QDG) currently ACGS attested all British recruits on 3 Jan 09 watched by over 1300 proud family and friends of the recruits. During the Recruiting season, hundreds of visitors have paid official visits to BGP including; CGS, ACGS, CinC Land, (who is also Col Comdt Bde of Gurkhas) and QGE Col of Regt to name but a few.

Being located in Pokhara presents its own unique problems at times especially communication with UK and the rest of the world. On top of this, the current situation in New Nepal is no different to that of previous years. Bandhs or Chakka Jaams (blocked of road/transport) are called on almost on a daily basis. There is a fuel crisis and load shedding occurs for up to 18hrs a day and on top of all this the disruption caused by the road damage in the East means it has certainly added an extra burden to the G4 administration within BGP.



I have been fortunate enough to host and meet many Senior QGE visitors from UK both on official and private visits. The first high profile visit was from Comdt and GM QGE who paid an official visit to a number of Area Welfare Centres in East Nepal and in Kaski, the home district of the GM in West Nepal. Lt Gen DR Bill CB and many UK QGEA members visited the BGP during the QGE 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration all of whom showed great interest in Recruiting and the work of the GWS. So much so that the briefing over ran by an hour and a half! It was a great moral boost for the Old and Bold QGEA members to meet so many of their UK counterparts. Since the Birthday Celebrations we have seen yet more QGE Officers including Capt G Drysdale, QM 69 Sqn and his wife, OC 70 Sqn, Maj Brown and Maj GAR McCallum

(previous OC 70 Sqn) and his wife.

As I write this article, Lt Col S J Hulme MBE RE Comdt QGE (Des), GM QGE and WO1 (RSM) S Clewley MBE RE have completed their official trek to East and have just returned to Pokhara from a trek in the West. All were welcomed by the QGE 'A team' during a function held in Hotel Barahi in Lakeside. Capt CJ Mitchell 2IC 70 Sqn will arrive for his duty trek at the end of this month and so the cycle goes on.

I will start my long awaited leave on 24 Mar 09 for two weeks. Although the routine work here is not as hard as on an operational tour it is busy. Having said that, Anita and I are enjoying the stay in Nepal and in Feb 09, I was fortunate to take my family to the Bardia National Park, some 600km west of Pokhara for a five day visit. This has been the highlight of 2009 to date and I am hoping to arrange further treks before the Recruiting Cycle starts again.

Jai BGP, Jai QGE.

## BOAT SECTION – BRUNEI GARRISON

*SSgt Manjitsingh Gurung*

In terms of the number of boat holders, Brunei Garrison Boat Section is one of the largest fleet holders in the British Army.

Currently it holds 12 Hard Hulled Riverine Craft (HHRC), 10 MK 6 Boats, 3 Boat Raiding Inflatable Gemini, 40 out board motors and more than 180 life jackets. The Brunei Boat Section is responsible for the servicing and maintenance of all riverine equipment including sea survival equipment. It is also responsible for the provision of boat support/training to the Resident Infantry Battalion (RIB), Training Team Brunei (TTB) and other visiting units.

As there are insufficient boat operators within the Brunei Boat Section and it is the only unit holding HHRC in the British Army, the Boat Section is also responsible, (under the approval of the AI Boats, Chatham) for the running of the HHRC operator's course for RIB personnel .

The formation of the Boat Section in Brunei Garrison is now approaching its 6<sup>th</sup> year. Over this period the Boat Section has gone through a series of ups and downs but with the tireless and upbeat efforts from section members it has upheld its good reputation. The members currently serving in the Brunei Boat Section are as follows:

SSgt Manjitsingh Gurung	- IC Boat/WSO (A)
Cpl Minbahadur Gurung	- OBM Maintainer/AWBO
Cpl Narbahadur Gurung	- Boat Maintainer/AWBO
Cpl Mekhabahadur Gurung	- SSE Maintainer/AWBO







*Boat Sect Members with the Comdt QGE and the Gurkha Major*

Recently Boat Section successfully conducted the first “All Arms Watermanship Safety Officer Basic Course” for Jungle Warfare Advisor Course Students and RIB personnel. This is the first time the Boat Section has conducted such a course in Brunei. The Boat Section also remains busy providing boat support to the TTB, the RIB, outside unit exercises and SF selection courses.

Last year the Boat Section had the opportunity to host a handful of MOD dignitaries including our own Commandant Saheb and Gurkha Major Saheb who spared time from their busy schedules to visit us here in Brunei. Regardless of busy schedules the Brunei Boat Section has been observing all festivities and enjoying the social life, as well as congregating with our family members at every opportunity and being very much involved during all social events with the RIB and TTB.

Yet again the Boat Section has had a very successful year and is looking forward to an equally challenging, but more rewarding year ahead. Jai Boat Sect, Jai QGE

## QGE Commando Troop

*(Ed: The following articles come from the QGE Tp within 24 Cdo Regt RE who have just returned from Op HERRICK 9. The Tp was based in numerous locations and the following 3 articles give a flavour of what they have been involved in).*

### Engineer LO to the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team

*Sgt Khadka Gurung*

The five long weeks mentoring the Afghan National Army (ANA) in Nawa has been a huge success for the 6 man team of the Engineer Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team, (OMLT) lead by Capt Baker and seconded by myself. When we carried out a Relief in Place, (RiP) out of Nawa it was memorable to all of us because it had been our first mission and we had achieved a lot generating a huge sense of satisfaction.

After couple of days down time we were briefed of a new tasking to send Recce Sgts to different Forward Operating Bases (FOB) as Engineer Liaison Officers (LO). I was tasked to go to Musa Qal’eh (MSQ). I flew there where I met the OMLT consisting of A Coy 1 Rifles and a contingent of Afghan National Army, (AMA).

Salaam Alikum, aap kaisa hai? (Hello how are you?) My native Urdu kicked in from day one and I was fortunate that 50% of the ANA understood me. At this stage the week Dari course I did back in Chepstow went out of the window. I started by delivering pioneer training to 10 volunteers. Basic subjects were covered including carpentry, sangar construction, winterization, fencing, HESCO and basic



combat engineering skills. I was impressed how well they listened and adapted into engineers even though all of them were infantryman. However, sometimes I had to work and think hard to find the best and most effective method of teaching because most of the time British Army standard teaching practices did not make any sense to them. It did not take me long to think back to my teaching experience in Nepal where I used a method I call “experiential learning” where students progress at their own pace and find out what happens one step after another. This maintains the willingness to learn and keeps the students interested. Long term planning and detail programming is not their bread and butter hence training and mentoring the indigenous forces sometimes became frustrating and challenging. Especially



*ANA Warriors with Afghan type toilet in at the background*

so for those mentors who do not have a basic understanding of the culture and people from developing countries like Afghanistan. At the end, they were able to refurbish an old sangar, winterize their accommodation, construct proper latrines, perimeter

fencing and a whole host of other engineer tasks whilst under my supervision. My initial thoughts were how to gain



the mutual respect and trust of the ANA so that I was happy to lead them on the front line and carry out crucial engineer tasks and close support to the Infantry OMLT and ANA Infantry Kandak<sup>2</sup>. During the training period I spent most of the time trying to get to know their backgrounds, experience and feelings. Some of them had seen fierce fighting and lost many good friends and some of them had served with the Taliban! The most important part is to understand their culture and respect them. If you are not willing to do this or offend them, the last thing you may see is M16 Assault rifle pointing at you!! Fortunately I got on well with the ANA and the tasks I wanted to complete were accomplished.

With constant support from WO2 Chris McLennan (QMSI) back at the OMLT HQ in Camp Shorabak<sup>3</sup> I managed to get the stores to MSQ. Were it not for his relentless effort of mentoring the ANA G4 Chain we would not have been sustained on the ground. When I was confident with the ANA soldiers' skills and standards I sent them un-mentored with supplies to patrol bases, (PB) and informed ANA the Sergeant Major what to do and how to do it over the radio net. At every available opportunity I visited the PBs to check on progress and was pleased to see all was being built with little error.



*Sgt Khadka  
meeting PM  
Gordon Brown in  
MSQ DC*

A sunny afternoon was interrupted by the sad news that the master sniper from Recce Plt 2 RGR, CSgt Krishna Dura was killed when the Warrior he was travelling in was hit by an explosion. It touched me very personally; Krishna was not only a friend of mine and brilliant soldier but had spent a year teaching the children in his village. At this difficult period I would like to express our heartfelt condolences to his wife and two daughters.

I also led the ANA on a search operation supporting Sp Coy 1 Rifles North of PB WOQAB and found lots of interlinked enemy defensive trenches. The local knowledge of the ANA and their natural sensitivity to the threat and enemy was beyond belief and without a doubt something we can learn from. It was good to see the ANA leading the operation full of energy and enthusiasm and committed to bringing peace to the country they love. I was humbled when they said "Tashakor / Manana (thank you) for your help when the situation gets tough". I feel fortunate to have taught, mentored and lead them and it gave me a great sense of achievement. Most importantly however it is their country

<sup>2</sup> A Kandak is the Afghan word for Battalion

<sup>3</sup> Camp Shorabak is the ANA Camp situated adjacent to Camp Bastion

and they should be leading it, we are just there to help them.

## **OP HERRICK 9 – Engineer Section Commander, KAJAKI**

*Cpl Bhabendra Muktan*

The preparation for Op HERRICK 9 started soon after Easter leave in April 08 with pre-deployment training comprising of various packages at various locations in the training grounds of the UK. The packages were concisely designed for the forthcoming tour and consisted of a live firing range package, combat engineering training, live demolition training and various infantry exercises all of which culminated with a Mission Rehearsal Exercise in the Brecon Beacons. After the intensive training and thorough preparation 24 Cdo Engr Regt consisting of 59 Cdo Sqn RE and 54 Cdo HQ and Sp Sqn finally deployed to Afghanistan in early September. Soon after arrival in Camp Bastion the Regt conducted the RSOI package followed by intensive package run by 9 Para Sqn RE designed around the current threats in the theatre.

After the training packages the various sections from the Sqns deployed to their respective Forward Operating Bases. From the QGE my section comprising of 6 x sappers and 2IC LCpl Chandra Limbu headed towards FOB Zeebrugge in Kajaki. Kajaki is a strategically important place in Helmand Province due to the presence of the dam and hydroelectricity power station which together help to supply electricity and water to a large number of Afghans. With the limited re-supply and basic living conditions Kajaki is the final frontier at the Northern end of Helmand province.

Upon arrival at the FOB, the section immediately initiated the winterisation tasks and was started with the construction of an overflow ward for the medical centre followed by rebuilding of the kitchen facility as the existing kitchen was just a tent even after 2 years. After 5 weeks in the FOB the 2 Para Bn left the FOB and were replaced by V Coy, 45 Cdo.



*Engineer Section, Kajaki*

During this changeover period the engineers played a vital role providing ground familiarisation for the newly arrived troops. For the first 9 weeks the engineers were responsible for providing 4 to 6 personnel for close support to the patrols





programme while the remaining engineers dug out blind to winterize the observation posts located on the exposed mountains above the FOB. The difficult aspect was shifting stores from the HLS up to the top of the hills and this was mainly achieved by man handling.

The word “UBIQUE” was shown to be true when troops from V Coy moved to Sangin to fill a void created by the withdrawal of some US troops. As a knock on effect all the engineers had to become members of close combat sections as well as provide close support and route clearance for both the Cdo Patrol Tp and the ANA OMLT.

I stepped up as a close combat section commander with LCpl Chandra Limbu as my section 2IC. With the direct involvement of all the engineers in the close combat role whilst on patrol all the engineering tasks had to be done on the equipment care (non-patrol) day. It was a frustrating time for the sappers, carrying out the engineering tasks while everyone else in the FOB was stood down. It was only pride in our cap badge that kept the spirit and motivation of the section going and ensured life was made comfortable for people in the FOB even with limited resources.

At the half way point in the tour I took the post of a section commander for the ANA whilst LCpl Chandra Limbu continued to support the Patrol Troop from V Coy. Offensive spirit was key for maintaining the upper hand against the insurgents in such a hostile environment. Throughout the duration of the tour the patrol had numerous contacts with enemy forces. During operations many Taliban fighters were killed including the local Taliban Commander. On average there were at least 3 heavy fire fights per week throughout the duration of tour. At the beginning of the tour the local villages situated in the AO were completely deserted but towards the end of the tour quiet a few villagers were beginning to return to the area with their families. The new life in the villages which were once ghost towns symbolised the positive signs of improvement that the troops hard work and sweat had gone into securing over the previous months.

The engineers also worked closely with the local nationals constructing a Hesco barrier to channel the water for the irrigation canal from Helmand River and also helping them on various small engineering tasks in order to win the ‘Hearts and Minds’ battle.

The IED activity was relentless and during the tour 57 IEDs were discovered. The tour came with a heavy price when 2 soldiers were killed and 1 serious injured in an IED strike. The two killed were Marine Ale Lucas and Marine Travis Mackin whilst Spr Stevenson (59 Cdo Sqn RE) lost both his legs. It was a shocking moment for all the troops and may their souls rest in heaven with almighty God.

The rest of the engineers returned home with more experience, a more mature eye, some trouble hearing and many near misses. More importantly all have learned important definitions of life from various perspectives. Jai QGE.

## OP SHAHI TANDAR – 1

*Cpl Mohan Thapa (59 Cdo Sqn RE)*

We were lifted by 2 x CH47 and 3 x Sea King helicopters in different waves early in the morning of 5 Jan and deployed to the Nasar area, 60 km North of Kandahar. There were 6 different objectives named as; DIAMOND, GOLD, SILVER, BRONZE, SAPHIRE and RUBY. Of those my troop, 5 Troop was tasked to clear GOLD, SILVER and BRONZE. H-hour was exactly 0600 in the morning of 5 Jan. We were initially dropped off at the wrong HLS from which we had to yomp a further 800m to hit the LUP and once in place we were told 2 min until H-hour. 3 Section pushed forward as the break-in force for the first compound on Objective GOLD while 1 Section provided fire support from the NE side of a ridge line. 2 Section was dropped at the rear as a reserve section. Once 3 Section secured the compound I then pushed forward with my fire team to carry out a thorough search both inside and out of the compound. We couldn't find anything in that compound and so remained there whilst 1 Section launched forward to seize Objectives SILVER and BRONZE.

While they were doing that 3 Section, including my fire team pushed to a further compound 200m further West of GOLD. There were two large haystacks inside this compound and I detailed Spr Robinson to start vallonning<sup>4</sup> the first hay stack where he managed to find a reel of det cord, a bag of detonators and about 200x 7.62mm rounds hidden inside it. While he was doing that I searched the rooms where I found 2 full AK-47 magazines wrapped up in a tyre tube. Spr Robinson found an American entrenching tool and 9mm pistol wrapped up in a piece of cloth. After clearing all rooms and haystacks we were able to relax for a bit. After a sitting around doing nothing for a while, I told Spr Robinson to go and search a haystack in the SE corner of the compound. After couple of minutes he then saw a small loop hole in the middle of the hay stack and so I then went to have a look for further exploitation. I carefully removed more dry hay and



mud in order to see inside. I then managed to see the dark entry point of a trench system leading deep down in to the ground. I then informed the lads about the trench system to in order to make everyone alert because there could be

<sup>4</sup> The Vallon is the new and improved in-service hand held metal detector.





anything inside. The entry point was just big enough to get in without osprey body armour on so I took my osprey off and dropped down into the trench with my 9mm pistol and head torch only. I looked to see if there was anyone hiding down there but luckily there was not. However, there was a massive ammunition cache.

If anyone had been hiding inside that hole, (which was about 2m long and 1.5m high complete with overhead protection) then we would have had a fight to the death. I saw 6 massive HME black plastic containers and other 4 big bags full of ammunition. Once I left the trench I asked the American EOD lads to go and take all the stuff out. Once emptied it was discovered the trench held amongst other things:

250m detonator cord.	PE x 5 kg.
10,000 x 7.62mm rounds.	50 electric detonators.
100 flash detonators.	10 x pressure switches.
9mm pistol x 1.	PPIED x 47.
American NVG.	Satellite phone x 1.
Hand grenades x 5.	Chinese T65 rocket x 1.
Russian UGL rounds x 80	
HME x 6 boxes (150 kgs in total).	
Russian 81mm mortar sight system x 1.	
Important documents on arming IED devices.	
Phone sim card with important telephone numbers.	

On examining the list OC K Coy RM believed that we had found one of the biggest caches of the HERRICK Tour to date. Once I finished making a full list of the items, I handed the site over to the EOD guys to deny it and then moved out heading towards the South of the AO. We carried out further compound searches and in one was a big family which included

one fighting age male. We asked him about the items found next to his compound but he claimed the other compound did not belong to him. We suspected he had hidden the stuff and so we detained him. This was about 1600hrs on the day we deployed. Finally we got the message from OC to move to Objective GOLD where we stayed the night.

On 6 Jan 5 Troop stepped off at 0430hrs and headed South, 1.3km away from GOLD. As it was still dark we hand railed the Western bank of a big wadi and reached our objective. At one point the leading section found a legacy mine in the middle of the track which we marked with an IR cylume. After breaking into the first compound we spread out to

cover more compounds in that area as 1 Sect assaulted 2 further compounds to the South East.



We moved back to GOLD on foot ready for a helicopter extraction and reached the HLS at 1415hrs. At this stage ISTAR saw a suspicious looking vehicle parked about 2 km away. This was passed to the Apache giving overwatch which engaged and destroyed it in less than two minutes. Shortly after 2 x CH47 and 3 x Sea Kings turned up to lift us and our 7 detainees out of the area.

In conclusion Op SHAHI TANDAR 1 was a very successful clearance rapid in the heart of the Taliban's area. Senior ranks from 42 Commando have praised all involved for biggest find on Op HERRICK to date. It goes to show the

extremely good job our boys are doing on the ground.



*QGE Soldiers with 24 Commando Regiment*

## 8 Mechanised Gurkha Troop, 33 Armoured Engineer Squadron

*Capt S Hudson RE*

On the 14 Oct 2008 a new troop of the Queen's Gurkha Engineers was formed at 26 Engr Regt in Tidworth. 32 personnel from both 69 and 70 Sqns were selected and joined 33 Armd Engr Sqn. The Tp settled in quickly under the watchful eye of SSgt Govinda Rana and the new Sqn and Regt made every effort to welcome and accommodate the Queen's Gurkha Engineers personnel.





The Tp had to hit the ground running as they commenced Pre Deployment Training for Op HERRICK 10 straight away. A lot of the training took place in Northern Ireland where 38 Engr Regt, under whose command the Sqn is deploying, is stationed. After mandatory OPTAG training further skills were honed during an excellent live firing package followed by a bridging and engineer skills phase. Pre Deployment Training was a long and tiring process for the men, with few spare weekends however, they worked very hard and assimilated the information well.

Initially, the 15 families have not moved to Tidworth as they have chosen to remain in Maidstone or Nepal until after the operational tour. 26 Engr Regt however has gone to great The QGE personnel deployed on 02 Mar 09 fit, well trained and ready for the tough work ahead of them.

The majority are deploying as 8 lengths to ensure that the families' needs will be met when they arrive in October 2009 and the wives are still very much felt to be part of the Tp.

Tp however a section is part of a mixed, British and Gurkha Tp. A further two are working for the QM and one is remaining with the rear party. 8 Tp is based in Musa Qaleh in Northern Helmand Province but others are working in Lashkagar, Gareshk and Camp Bastion. For some it is a new experience but others are returning having deployed on HERRICK 7 and Op FINGAL in 2001.



We have been in Afghanistan for two months now have just come back from our first and challenging task at the south of District Centre. There are many tasks and challenges awaiting us but we have now identified many of those these and know what is required of us and we are prepared for the unexpected. The men are eager to make progress in the Country, to further the good name of the QGE and we look forward to returning to our friends and families in September.

Jai QGE!





# Miscellaneous Regimental News

## QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS 60<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY

LCpl Kishan Gurung



The 28<sup>th</sup> September 2008 marked a huge milestone in the history of the Queens Gurkha Engineers and the Brigade of Gurkhas as it was the QGE's 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday. After 6 decades of successful service in operational theatres all over the world the Regiment celebrated in style. The journey for the Queens Gurkha Engineers started in Kluang, Malaya back in 1948 with the formation of 67 Gurkha Field Support Squadron. The title of 'The Queens Gurkha Engineers' was bestowed upon the Regiment by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth on 21 April 1977. Numbers of personnel and Squadrons have fluctuated over the years however, at its peak the Regiment numbered over 1400 men in Hong Kong. Following weeks of careful planning and preparation, one of the equipment hangars was converted into a small piece of our beloved Nepal in order to celebrate the event in the appropriate manner. All QGE Members & their families, QGEA Members and high profile dignitaries, including the Colonel of the Regiment, Lt Gen D R Bill CB gathered for what was to be a unique and special day.

The traditional Inter Ranks Football went well with no injuries and all guests gathered at 1130hrs to witness a fabulous display from the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas. Comdt Saheb then welcomed all guests to the party and thanked the dignitaries for their presence. Following the welcoming speeches, Comdt Saheb announced the winner of the prestigious Bowring Trophy which is awarded to LCpl Prithi Chantyal for being the best LCpl in QGE over the previous 12 months. The Commandant then announced the winner of the Durand Medal, Capt Devkumar Gurung for his outstanding achievements throughout his career.



The QGE Birthday cake was then cut by Lt Gen Bill Saheb, Comdt Saheb and GM Saheb. The cultural show was spectacular and thoroughly enjoyed by all. A whole range of dancing was performed by the children and their families and the traditional final Cocktail Dance was blessed with all of the Gora Sahebharu strutting their stuff on the dance floor and impressing everyone with their moves.

Eventually this joyous occasion for QGE came to an end and it was clear from the faces of all present that the event had been a complete success. It was also a time for reflection and a good reminder that we must continue to push ourselves to meet the high standards set for us by our predecessors for the next 60 years and beyond.

## THE QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS STATUE UNVEILING CEREMONY 2 OCT 08

Capt CJ Mitchell RE

The bronze figure, standing no more than a meter and a half high, stood proudly at ease on his granite plinth, clutching his rifle and staring determinedly ahead over the town which he can now call home. For over 15 years the QGE have been based at Invicta Park, Maidstone. In recognition of the long and proud association that the QGE have had with Maidstone and the surrounding area, and in fitting celebration of the Diamond Jubilee year of the raising of the QGE, The Worshipful Mayor of Maidstone (Councillor Denise Joy), and Maidstone Borough Council saw fit to commission a statue of a QGE soldier.

The story behind the statue itself began back in 2000 when Councillor Dan Daley was elected Mayor of Maidstone. As part of his Welcoming Parade 36 Engr Regt marched through the centre of Maidstone and it was here that His Worship the Mayor of Maidstone came into contact with the QGE for the first time.

As his time in office continued his awareness of the impact that the QGE have had on the Borough increased. So





*Councillor Dan Daley (the man responsible for commissioning the statue) giving his speech*

impressed by the various construction and fundraising projects that the QGE undertook in the local community, and realising what a small but significant part of that community the QGE and their families had become His Worship the Mayor of Maidstone was keen to recognise their contribution. The notion of a statue of a QGE soldier first came to fruition once His Worship the Mayor of Maidstone discussed at length his desire with Councillor Trevor Gasson (Deputy Chief Executive) in 2006. In late 2007 Trevor Gasson became aware that the following year the QGE would be celebrating their Diamond Jubilee Anniversary and the prospect of erecting a statue in tribute to the QGE was once again raised.

The Council immediately took on the fundraising for this project with a target set at £15,000 for the cost of commissioning a statue. Money was raised through the Maidstone Trust, with various donations being submitted by local companies, (the Kent Messenger Group donating £3,000). The target of £15,000 was quickly met, though donations are still coming in, with all donations in excess of the original target being donated to the PAHAR Trust.

Thus, on a bright October morning, over 150 serving QGE soldiers from both 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn and 70 Gurkha Fd Sp Sqn stepped off from Maidstone County Hall for the short parade through the streets of the town, destined for the Maidstone Museum where the unveiling of the statue would take place. The QGE marching contingent were led by the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas, who played rousing music throughout, much to the delight of the onlookers who cheered encouragingly as the parade marched past.

The parade came to a halt outside the Museum, where a large crowd of school children and citizens of Maidstone had gathered to watch the event. With the Parade having been prepared for inspection, Officer Commanding 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn, Maj R Walker marched forward and invited the Worshipful Mayor of Maidstone, Colonel of the Regiment Lt Gen DR Bill CB, Deputy Lieutenant of Kent, Edwin Boorman

OBE DL MA, and the Comdt QGE Lt Col R Wardlaw to inspect the parade.

The invited VIPs and local dignitaries, which included the Right Honourable Ann Widdecombe MP, watched from the courtyard of the Museum as the Inspecting Party conducted their inspection of the Boys. A great deal of time elapsed before the Inspection was complete and there was a fear that the Band would run out of music to play, such was the delight of the Inspecting Party to chat with the Boys on their way around the ranks. At last the Boys could stand at ease and enjoy the unveiling ceremony itself.



After a brief introduction from Councillor Brian Moss, (the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism) and Councillor Dan Daley, the individual most responsible for the commissioning of the statue stood up and addressed the assembled crowds as to the rationale and history behind the statue. It was a truly moving speech, and one that will live long in the memory of the QGE. It would be safe to say that all serving and ex-QGE that stood there that day would have been justifiably proud of their history and heritage yet humbled by the sentiments of the people of Maidstone. The Adjt 36 Engr Regt, Capt D Hirst read a short history of the QGE before The Worshipful the Mayor of Maidstone and the Col of the Regt stepped forward to unveil the statue proper. Cloaked in Corps Colours and flanked by the serving Queens Gurkha Orderly Officers (Capt Prem Ale, and Capt Yambahadur Rana) the Statue was unveiled to rapturous applause. The statue, bathed in sunshine, was blessed by the Pandit, Premprasad Gaire, who handed over to The Worshipful the Mayor of Maidstone, imploring all those watching from the Bandstand to "come forward and get a better look at this marvellous statue".

The ceremony was brought to a close by the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas striking up and leading the QGE



*Lt Gen D R Bill CB and Deputy Lieutenant Edwin Boorman OBE DL MA inspecting the parade*





marching contingent back to Maidstone County Hall. The ceremony and parade over, the invited VIPs, local dignitaries and assembled onlookers continued to gather around the statue, exchanging stories, taking pictures, and just marvelling at the statue for a great deal of time after the sound of marching had faded.

The statue, very much like the parade and ceremony that followed, was a very simple but dignified tribute to the QGE. The attention to detail by the Sculptress Mary Cox was remarkable and successfully captured the pride and dignity of a QGE soldier. The QGE statue erected at the Maidstone Museum is only the second such statue commemorating the Brigade of Gurkhas on the UK mainland, (the other standing in Whitehall). To date, this is the only statue that honours the QGE, and is indeed something we can all be proud of.

### **QGE OFFICER HONOURED WITH MBE**

Major Brown is currently serving in the Brigade as OC 70 Gurkha Fd Sp Sqn QGE. Immediately prior to this appointment he spent

one year as 2IC of 529 Specialist Team Royal Engineers (STRE) and 2 years as OC of 527 STRE. During these 3 years he was deployed extensively including tours of Afghanistan



and Iraq. After his last tour of Iraq he was nominated for recognition of his achievements over the period. He was appointed MBE on the New Years Honours List at the end of 2008. His investiture took place on 27 March 2009 at Buckingham Palace and he was presented his medal by HRH The Prince of Wales. His wife Mrs Laura Brown, his Father Mr George Brown and his Sister Miss Audrey Brown where guests at the ceremony. Major Brown explained that he was "flattered and thrilled" to receive the honour.

### **QUEEN'S GURKHA ORDERLY OFFICER (JULY 2008 – JULY 2009)**

I could not believe it when on 30 April 2008 Comdt Saheb rang me and said that I was selected as the next Queen's Gurkha Orderly Officers (QGOO). This prestigious position was started in 1876 by Queen Victoria and I was truly honoured to be the 11<sup>th</sup> Gurkha Officer to be selected from my Regiment.

It is needless to explain my job because it has been written by my illustrious predecessors in the previous magazines. I would like to inform you however, that unlike with previous years some investitures are being held at Windsor Castle. Although my primary role is to carry out my duty during investitures I have also been providing much needed support to the Gurkha Welfare Trust (GWT) and representing the BG on various events. One of the

highlights I have had whilst working with the GWT was receiving a cheque for £180,000 for the GWT in Edinburgh and I must take this opportunity to thank Maj Adamson and Capt Archibald Sahebs for making my trip to Scotland so comfortable.

For those QGEA members who do not know me very well, I would like to introduce myself; I am 21166747 now 555996 Capt Prembahadur Ale and I joined the BG in Feb 1985 in Pokhara, Nepal. I was born and educated in the Tanahun District, Bhanumati, Gandaki Zone. As a soldier I served with 67, 68 and 69 Sqns and the Royal School of Military Engineering as a training instructor. As an officer I have served in Gurkha Coy Catterick as a platoon commander, as Res Tp Comd in 70 Sqn with whom I deployed to Iraq on Op TELIC 6 in 05. On completion of my tenure as Gurkha Captain in 70 Sqn I was posted to the RHQ QGE as the Manning Officer. I am married to Pabitra and have three children all of whom reside with me here in Maidstone in Invicta Park Barracks. To reach this dizzy I was fortunate to receive the following QGE awards:



- Best Combat Engineer Class Three 1986.
- Best Student JLC 1988.
- Best Combat Engineer Class One 1991.
- Bowring Trophy Winner 1992.
- Durand Medal Winner 2004.
- QGOO 2008.

I am very grateful to those personnel who steered me throughout my career and helped me achieve this unique position. I never anticipated becoming a QGOO when I joined the BG and my dream really has come true. For those Gurkha Sahebharu and Bhaiharu who are determined to be a QGOO I wish them good luck.  
Jai QGE.



## QGE GURKHA FAMILIES NEWS

The QGE Families of Maidstone have seen another enjoyable and remarkable year. Although QGE families are scattered across the Medway Valley families always manage to gather at every possible opportunity. Currently there are approx 245 families living in the area. The Army Welfare Service (AWS) has funded 2 x Gurkha Support Workers (GSW) for Maidstone. The hasty transfer of Mrs Ambika Limbu one of GSW (wife of WO2 Jiwanpyara Limbu) to Cyprus led to Mrs Shanta Gurung, (wife of SSgt Ganesh Gurung) having to organise various activities and competitions alone. Some of the highlights of the year were as follows:

### Early Years First Aid Course

A 2 day, Early Years First Aid Course run by Mid-Kent College was organised by the Gurkha Welfare Office, Maidstone.



Be nice and calm, memorize the procedures, look for bleeding and fractures; these were just some of the things we learnt during the

Course. It was important to understand how significant first aid can be for saving someone's life. We enjoyed the course and got a great sense of achievement from it. Finally, we would like to thank GM QGE for subsidising this course from QGE Welfare Fund.

### QGE Ladies Badminton Competition 08

25 Dec 08, Christmas Day - it was a fantastic day. The Badminton Competition took place in the afternoon and was organized in order for families and children to have fun and create new friendships and relationships. The games were amusing, competitive and were supported by a great number of spectators. All winners and runner-ups were presented with trophies and prizes by the GM QGE and the overall winner was Mrs Manmaya Pun (wife of SSgt Balaram Pun). Thanks go to all individuals who helped organising this event including Chefs and PTIs.

### Families Funday 29 Jul 08

It was a day where everyone had a chance to relax and enjoy a day full of colour, excitement and fun. A day such as this can not be a complete without music whether it as a centrepiece to the event



or as a background to create atmosphere. Families ran a Nepalese food stall and served delicious momos where they managed to raise £364.54. This was split between Invicta Widow Trust and Sunrise Children's' Association Inc Nepal. The money for the Sunrise Children's' Association was handed over by CO and GM QGE during their Nepal Trek.

### SSAFA Big Brew Up, 15 Oct 08

Even if it was only for a single day, QGE Families also care for the families of both Gurkha and British soldiers. It was amazing how something as small as buying a cup of coffee and a fairy cake can make such a huge difference! A total of £246 was raised for SSAFA.



*Gurkha Ladies from the Queen's Gurkha CO Memsahab and GM Didi are serving Coffee for Customers Engineers of 36 Engineer Regiment, Invicta Park, Maidstone*

### Donation to Maidstone Hospital

A cheque was handed to the Community Midwife Matrons, Alison Mendes and Lindis Harris on Tuesday 3 March 2009. The money will go to the Maternity Ward.



*Gurkha Ladies handing the cheque over*

### Educational Visit

As part of a Gurkha cultural and educational visit members of some QGE families paid a visit to Buddhapadia Temple in Wimbledon, London on 21 Mar 09. On reaching the Thai Temple a Buddhist Monk was waiting to give us a brief on Buddha and the Temple itself. It was a great to see everyone enjoying the feast of Indian cuisine that was provided as well as some expensive shopping in Southall on the way back.





# EXERCISE MALAYSIAN GURKHA SAPPER 2008- BATTLEFIELD STUDY TO MALAYSIA



*LCpl Lalbahadur Rana and Spr Binodkumar Rai*

After long and gruelling negotiations at various levels a group of 29 Sappers and Officers from The Queen's Gurkha Engineers finally embarked on a Battlefield Study to Malaysia "Ex MALAYSIAN GURKHA SAPPER" on 28 Nov 08. The Battlefield Study was the brainchild of Maj R G Walker RE, OC 69 Gurkha Fd Sqn who developed the concept whilst on Op HERRICK 7 in order to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Queen's Gurkha Engineers. The intent was to study the successful UK led Counter Insurgency (COIN) campaign conducted during the Malayan Emergency (1948-1960). A key strand to the exercise was to study the COIN principles and compare the differences between Malaya and Afghanistan drawing upon our own recent operations in Helmand and the OC's experience of the Operational and Strategic levels of command working within the US & NATO Commands in Afghanistan. The entire package was expertly organised by WO2 (SSM) Yambahadur Pun and the study aspect enabled by Lt ETM Gay RE.

WO2 (SSM) Yambahadur Pun led the daunting planning process that begun in Nov 07; seeking approval and funding for the Battlefield Study but the final approval from the Chain of Command was granted just two weeks prior to the departure. This was a unique and challenging task for the Regt as the current policy for Battlefield Study only supports activities within Europe and with budgets far less than our requirement. As a part of the package, the team received a special Counter Insurgency briefing from Dr Garth Pratten (Senior Lecturer, Department of War Studies RMA Sandhurst), followed by a lengthy group discussion. Subsequently we conducted an additional day long study session where individuals were given responsibility to research and brief topics relating to both the Malayan Emergency (1948 – 1960) and current operations and doctrine.

After approx 15 hours of travel we arrived in Kula Lumpur and on the first evening Col Paul Edwards, (Defence Advisor to the British High Commission, Malaysia) delivered an impeccable briefing regarding the history of the country, the background to the Emergency and the strategies adopted by the British Army during the Emergency. Maj Subramaniam Narayanan from Malaysian MoD was appointed as our Military guide and remained with us throughout the Battlefield Study. Having fought the terrorists himself in the jungles during the 1980s (the Terrorist finally surrendered in 1989 although the Emergency was declared over in 1960!) he was well placed to offer first hand input based upon his own experience as a junior officer.

In the morning of 28 Nov 08, the actual field study began in earnest. Initially we proceeded to one of the very large and oldest Malaysian Barracks at Sungei Besi in a suburb of Kuala Lumpur. Formerly this camp used to be a very important base for the British Forces during the Emergency and is best compared with Camp Bastion in Afghanistan. Soldiers used to deploy to

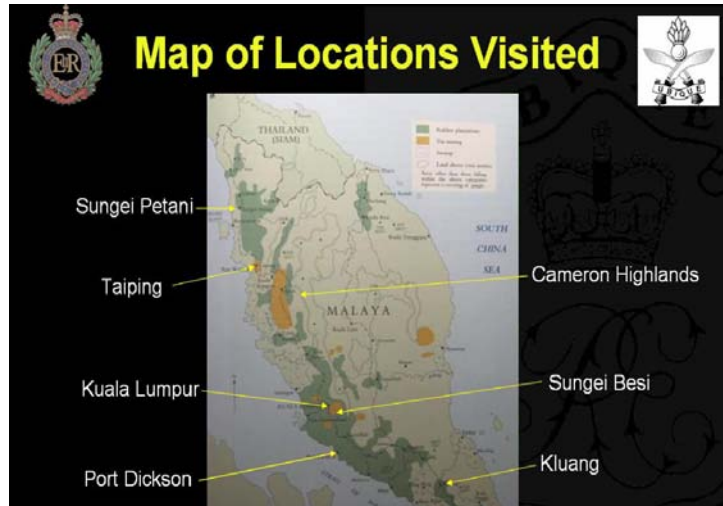


fight the insurgents for eight months and be brought back to Sungei Besi for recuperation for four months before

they were sent back out again. The place is of equal importance to the engineer as this used to be the central resources location from where the engineer stores and resources were used to supply to front lines. Additionally it was the one time home to 50 Fd Engr Regt which is inextricably linked to the formative years of the QGE.

After spending a night at Batu Pahat, a small town to the far south of

Peninsular Malaysia, we headed towards a nearby Army Barracks at Kluang – the home of the Malaysian Engineers & the true birthplace of the QGE. Officers and members of the Malaysian Engineers were eagerly waiting to welcome us along with local media. Kluang has a special connection and importance for QGE as this was the place where the first Gurkha Engineers were formed up in 1948. Some 300 infantrymen were drawn from the Brigade of Gurkhas and trained in Kluang at the Engineer Training Centre to convert them into sappers. The remains of the works done by them are still in existence. The Malays still use the Temple, (Mandir), the engineer workshops, the watermanship



lake, bridging hards, the cinema and a handful of married quarters. Later that morning, we arrived at a well maintained nearby Gurkha Cemetery where hundreds of our brave ancestors rest in peace. We remembered them and paid our tributes with a 2 minutes silence.



In the afternoon we drove back to the North towards Port Dickson to observe a newly constructed Malaysian Military Museum. We were very proud to read the Roll of Honour and witness the names British, Gurkha, Malayan and Commonwealth soldiers who fell during the insurgency.

On 30 Nov, after visiting British and Gurkha cemeteries at Batu Gajah near Ipoh (another key Brigade of Gurkha Operational base now turned over to the Malay Infantry), we travelled further north towards Sungei Petani – former Training Depot of the Brigade of Gurkhas. Early in the morning of 01 Dec, we went to visit Sungei Petani Camp. We were delighted to see the old offices and buildings; the building used as a Depot Headquarters is still in good shape and it is being used as Admin Headquarter (see below right). All the married quarters are still in existence; however, sadly we may have been the last visitors to witness those old structures of nostalgia as they were subject to be demolished just after we left! The temple is still being used by the Hindu community. That afternoon we headed towards the Cameron Highlands, (named after the RE Officer who surveyed the area) for a rigorous terrain appreciation. Unlike other terrain, Malaysia's mountains have unique characteristics. Its majestic tropical forests cover the Malaysian highlands but the treacherous swamps hide underneath making movement very challenging indeed. I think all in the group, both Gurkha and Gora (many with Jungle experience from Belize, Brunei & Sabah) were surprised by the challenges presented in this jungle. On the 02 Dec, partly as adventure training and for the sake of



terrain appreciation the whole team climbed the Cameron Highlands penetrating through the notorious jungle along the frustrating swampy and steep trails. This part of the exercise really made us think as to how our ancestors fought against the insurgents during the Emergency. It was clear to us that determination and physical fitness were vitally important!

Towards the end of the exercise our study concentrated in and around the city of Kuala Lumpur to appreciate the historic beauty, its culture and gigantic changes that have taken place in the city that is at the heart of the country. This beautiful and modern city preserves a blend of old and new art, culture and traditions of all the diverse races that make up the Malaysia. This was a fitting end to a challenging field study and allowed the team a little time to reflect upon how Malaysia had evolved since the end of the Emergency. Sultan Abdul Samad's Building, the National History Monument and Batu Cave became parts of our cultural visit. Lunch at the revolving restaurant of Kuala Lumpur Tower and shopping around the world's tallest twin towers were some of the activities that we couldn't miss.

Finally, on the night of 03 Dec, we left Malaysia and started our journey back. Every second we spent there during the battlefield study was enjoyable even with a very busy schedule. We had a very long list of places that were essential to visit in order to gain a complete understanding of the country and the Counter Insurgency. Credit and thanks go to those local experts, Army representatives and our guide Eddie Ooi for their help and unforgettable contributions during our study.

Overall, it was an exceptionally well balanced Battlefield Study, reinforced with adventure and entertainment of which we all are proud to have been part of. This really was a once in a lifetime opportunity where we gathered a great deal of knowledge of the history of Brigade of Gurkhas. The Queen's Gurkha Engineers and above all the differences between Counter Insurgency in Malaya & the current campaign in Afghanistan. Finally, special thanks goes to OC Saheb for his obstinate direction that was the mainstay to the success of the visit and heartfelt thanks goes to WO2 (SSM) Yambahadur Pun for his tireless work to make the study extremely successful, enjoyable and memorable. It is clear to us all that the exercise would not have happened without the support of The Commandant QGE and Lt Gen DR Bill CB who applied leverage at every level to support the venture "Jai QGE – Jai Brigade of Gurkhas."





# The Regiment in Action



*GM, Comdt, Mrs Mary Cox (Sculptress) & Col of the Regt at the Gurkha Statue unveiling ceremony at Maidstone Museum in Oct 08*



*The Worshipful the Mayor of Maidstone flanked by Col of Regt and Comdt QGE*



*Dashain Celebration – GM and Pandit with Pujare toli*



*QGE Gurkha wives selling “Momo & Aludam” for Invicta Widow Trust.*







*Serving and former officers of QGE attending the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner 2 Oct 08*



*Gurkha Major, Comdt (Des) and RSM with the family of the late SSgt Balaram Rai's, Mar 09*



*RSM, Comdt (Des) & GM being welcomed in Bhachok (GM's village), Mar 09*



*Comdt and GM fully laden with phulmala in Bhachok (GM's village), Nov 08*







*QGE Soldiers in action during Regimental Boxing Evening*



*Not all work and no play...*



*Sub zero temperatures yet the work must go on.  
Construction in BATUS*



*The animal enclosure nearing completion at Howelts Zoo*



*Spr Santosh showing off his ice climbing skills in Canada*



◀ *NBC Drills being tested on the Regimental Exercise.*







▲  
◀ The Devic Bridge, Kosovo



*The Armed Forces Minister, Rt Hon Bob Ainsworth MP visits 70 Sqn in Kosovo*



*Plemintina Village Clinic Staff*



*A service of remembrance for Lt G Evans and SSgt Balaram Rai on 21 Jun 08*







*Spr Prakash providing mobility support*



*Cpl Mohan and LCpl Dipendra with SSgt J Dolman (59 Cdo Sqn RE)*



*LCpl Chandra Limbu encouraging section members during the construction of the cook house*



*Cpl Muktan and his section in action on Ant Hill*



# QGEA Chairman's Letter

Tony Harking



Looking back over the year, it has certainly been an eventful one for the Association with the highlight being the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations at Maidstone and in Nepal. The Regiment very kindly allowed Association members to be part of their superbly organised celebrations in

September. The weather and the setting were very reminiscent of Hong Kong and Perowne Barracks and I'm sure I was not alone in allowing my thoughts to wander back a few years.

Those celebrations were an excellent precursor for the reunion in Nepal for which some 40 or so UK members gathered in Pokhara. Another beautiful sunny day heralded a gathering which was enormous fun and we owe a huge debt to Hukumraj Saheb and his "A Team" who had planned the day over many months and who produced such a memorable day for us all. Sadly, few had been able to make the journey from East Nepal because of the road conditions but there were still a very large group of ex QGE soldiers and their families present. More details of the Reunion are featured elsewhere in the magazine but may I say a big thank you to Dom Verschoye whose arrangements for the UK contingent and those living further afield were flawless and provide the basis for when we do it again. The 60<sup>th</sup> Reunion was a marvellous opportunity to gather a large group spanning much of the Regiment's history and what we need to do is build on that gathering in anticipation of the next Nepal reunion, albeit that is a few years away!

For the forthcoming year, we are using Minley for a lunch in June and with the agreement of CO 36 Engineer Regiment, the Regimental Birthday at Maidstone in September (at which we will also hold our AGM), as the main opportunities for members and their families to get together. I encourage as many of you as possible to attend, particularly those serving with the Regiment, so that we can build on the tremendous efforts of last year. As you will see, the Regiment goes from strength to strength and in all areas of the Corps, Gurkhas continue to enhance the reputation of QGE. May I thank the current CO, Richard Wardlaw, for his tremendous support for the Association and for his work in support of the QGE structure and organisation necessary as a result of the change to Gurkha Terms and Conditions of Service.

I am grateful to Iain Adamson for his work on this magazine and for Andy Gooch for assuming his responsibilities and for producing another superb magazine. I am also grateful for the work of Jim Stuart over many years and for John Wheeley taking on his mantle without me even having to twist his arm!

I wish you all a good 2009 and I look forward to seeing you at the 2009 QGEA functions.

Jai QGE.

## NEPAL UPDATES Pokhara

*Hon Maj Hukumraj Thapa, Chairman QGERAN Pokhara*

### QGE DAY 2008

2008 was very special to members of the QGE because the Regiment celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday. The grand 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion was held in Pokhara in November on top of the usual annual QGE Day celebrations which took place around 28 September by QGERAN Branches in Nepal and Darjeeling. In Pokhara members and families of the QGERAN had an enjoyable day on 27 Sep 08 celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday. A fun day was had by all and the Committee organised a few rounds of tombola, a raffle with the first prize a large goat, as well as an excellent curry lunch. As ever it was a day to meet members of the Regiment and go through those bitter and beautiful memories of the past. On behalf of all the burho party may I convey very many thanks to the Chairman and all members QGEA UK for their kind thoughts and the annual grant. Jai QGE



*"Cake Cutting Ceremony" 21132619 WO1 (Ret'd) Singha Bahadur Gurung with Maj (Ret'd) Hukumraj Thapa and Capt (Ret'd) Mohankumar Gurung.*





## VISITORS



*Lt Col R Wardlaw RE (Comdt) and Maj Dudharsad Gurung MVO (GM) being greeted by Capt (Ret'd) Gangaprasad Gurung*

It was nice to meet GM, Maj Dudharsad Gurung in Pokhara on two occasions within a very short interval. He was accompanied first by Lt Col R Wardlaw Saheb (Comdt), and later with Lt Col SJ Hulme Saheb (Comdt Des) and WO1 (RSM) S Clewley to act as a guide during both of their treks.



*Ek dui kura for the A Team by Lt Col SJ Hulme MBE (Comdt Des).*

On both the occasions the A-Team<sup>1</sup> organised dinner for the visiting team and received an update on the Regiment's activities. 8216 WO2 Mohan Gurung who was on leave in Pokhara also managed to join the dinner organised for Hulme Saheb and his trek party.



*Lt Col SJ Hulme MBE (Comdt Des), Maj Dudharsad Gurung MVO (GM), WO1 (RSM) S Clewley MBE and WO2 Mohan Gurung with dance troupe.*

The A-Team also had the opportunity to congratulate Mohan for being selected for commissioning. We would also like to thank the outgoing Comdt, Wardlaw Saheb for his dedication towards QGE and keeping the Regiment in excellent form. We wish him and his family a successful and enjoyable time in the future.

<sup>1</sup> For those intrigued about the A-Team see the Nepal Updates in last year's magazine. Editor

## Kathmandu

*Lt (Ret'd) Ravindra Sahi, Secretary QGERAN Kathmandu*

### THE REGIMENTAL BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

The Regimental Birthday was celebrated on Saturday 27 September 2008 and it showed that there is still a healthy membership who finds it worthwhile to meet. To add to the occasion the weather was dry and sunny. About 100 Kathmandu based members and their wives gathered at the Crystal Party Palace at Man Bhawan to celebrate the 60th QGE Day. At around 1200 hours the Secretary drew the attention of all members and read out the Special Routine Order of the day. This was followed by a cake cutting ceremony by the President, Honorary Major Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE assisted by WO2 Kumar Gurung RE. The cake was sponsored by WO2 Kumar Gurung RE and Sgt Subash Rai QGE (both serving members in BGN). Afterwards the President distributed certificates to life members of the Association and addressed the gathering giving an update on the Gurkha Welfare Scheme and the Regiment. The day came to an end at about 1500 hours when all members bade farewell to each other, promising to see each other in Pokhara in November 2008.



*21151239 Cpl Ekbahadur Gurung is receiving his life membership certificate from the President*

Many thanks must go to Vice President, Honorary Major Surjabahadur Thapa MVO and his team for the effort they put in to make the day an outstanding success. Finally, as ever we would like to thank the QGEA (UK) for their generous funding towards the day which would not have been so successful without their financial support. Jai QGE!

### REMEMBRANCE (POPPY) DAY IN KATHMANDU

**"When you go home  
Tell them of us and say  
For your tomorrow  
We gave our today"**

Like every year, Remembrance Day was celebrated in British Gurkhas Kathmandu on Tuesday 11 November 2008 with all members of the British Camp, both serving and civilian staff and their wives attending the Parade. It is a tradition that the British Gurkha Kathmandu also invites some members of the Regimental Associations Nepal (RAN) and therefore there was also a large number of old Gurkhas attending from various units.



At 1100 hours the parade formed up under the RSM and he reported to the Officer Commanding who subsequently reported to the Commander. He and the Gurkha Major gave a brief explanation on the significance of the parade following which, the OC brought the Parade to attention and the last post was played by a bugler of Nepalese Army. After a 2 minute silence and Reveille the flags were raised and the Commander and the Gurkha Major each laid a wreath on behalf of the members of the British Gurkhas Nepal and the Brigade of Gurkhas respectively. Similarly, the Civil Labour Officer laid a wreath on behalf of all Locally Employed Civilians in Nepal followed by Honorary Major Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE who laid a wreath on behalf of the RAN.



*The President, Vice President and some other members posing for camera with the two QGE SNCOs serving in BGN at that time*

Immediately after the Parade, tea and biscuits were provided on the basketball court for all attendees which was followed by a curry lunch in the Kathmandu Mess for it's own members and two committee members from each of the 9 Gurkha RAN. It was a unique day in the BGN as not only was it a day during which we were able to honour those who served and died in numerous conflicts around the world, but it was also an excellent opportunity to bring together the serving and ex-servicemen's community to meet and socialise in Kathmandu.

## Darjeeling

*Mrs. Rahel Limbu w/o Hon Lt. Yakub Limbu*

### The 60<sup>th</sup> QGE Birthday Celebration

The 60<sup>th</sup> QGE Birthday was celebrated on Saturday, 27 September 2008 at the Disha Centre, S.U.M.I., Kalimpong. Although fewer people attended this year's gathering compared to last year, the spirit of the celebration remained undimmed as members strengthened their bonds of brotherhood, reminiscing over their "golden days" in service.

The party was organised by the Kalimpong members who put in a lot of effort and energy in making the gathering possible. Members came from far and wide including Darjeeling, Siliguri, Kurseong, Sukia Pokhari and Mirik. The event commenced at 11.30am with a welcome speech

by Hon Lt Yakab Limbu followed by the presentation of the khadda to the President, Lt AK Zimba and the senior most member present, SSgt Purna Bahadur Chettri. The President then took over the proceedings and called for a minute's silence to be observed in honour of those members who had passed away that year. He then read the special routine order issued by Lt Col R Wardlaw, Comdt QGE after which a toast was raised to QGE. The honour of cutting the cake was given to SSgt PB Chettri (he enlisted in the Army in 1954 and retired in 1970).

It was a great gathering with drinks, tit-bits and lunch all made spicier with generous doses of "guph-sup". As the evening drew to an end members left with more than just revived feelings of comradeship, they left with a reinforced feeling of pride in being "QGE Wallahs".



The contributions made by all those who helped make the event a success and those of the President QGEA cannot go unmentioned and also thanks go to Maj. H. Thapa, Lt. R Sahi and Mr. Dawa Zimba who helped to deliver the funds and the QGE Magazines. Many thanks for a successful celebration!

Jai QGE!

## Dharan

*(Editor Comment: There is no text accompanies these photos but they show the celebrations in Dharan in Sep 08).*





# WELFARE NEWS

## RSWP Update. Daugha Naudrha Ra – Horizontal Water Drilling Success

*Capt (QGO) Ret'd Bhakta Bahadur Rai, Programme Director RWSP*

Daugha Naudhara is one of the driest villages in the Gulmi District. The hamlet is about 1300m above sea level and has no water sources nearby apart from some ancient water holes yielding only drips of water. Therefore, the villagers are totally dependant on rain and survive with great difficulty the whole year by rainwater harvesting. In the past several NGOs and INGOs have attempted to construct a water supply system but without any success. The Drilling Team of the Gurkha Welfare Scheme, Rural Water & Sanitation Programme (RWSP) recently initiated an experimental vertical deep tube-well drilling in this dry village of Daugha but unfortunately the vertical drilling did not produce any water. The villagers were neither surprised nor impressed. The Drilling Team later opted to drill horizontally about 200m below the settlement at a probable site where they thought water may be found. To everyone's great joy the miracle happened and water suddenly gushed out of the drill pipes. Considering there has been over 5 months of drought in Nepal this winter the bore has been found to be reliable and sustaining with a constant yield of 15,000 litres water a day.

The success has indeed become a highlight in the District and beyond. Several local government bodies visited the project and were amazed to see the results. Also the local



FM radio station broadcast news of the brilliant achievement. RWSP is now monitoring the yield in order to develop a proper water delivery system to serve the village which has just over 80 households.

The horizontal drilling technology is only practised in Nepal by RWSP and provides drinking water in small scales in rural hill communities. The Drilling Team is currently led by 57100 LCpl (Ret'd) Pahalsing Thapa ex QGE. Like Pahalsing, there are nine other ex-Sappers of the QGE in RWSP who are committed to help the deprived ex-servicemen and their communities in alleviating their hardship and improve their livelihood.

**Sappers, would you like to join us?**

## Life as the Gurkha Welfare Service Project Engineer

*Capt RD Grant RE, Project Engineer GWS*  
proj\_offr@hqgws.org

Having arrived in Nepal in early November 2008 to take over as the new Gurkha Welfare Service (GWS) Project Engineer, with more luck than design I was fortunate enough to have timed my arrival to coincide with the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the Regiment held in Pokhara. However, on meeting with many ex-members of the Regiment it quickly became apparent that not many people had any real understanding as to why a very junior Captain from the QGE had arrived in Nepal to work for the GWS.

Smelling blood in the air our new Editor was very quick in pouncing to ask me to write a short article for the QGE Magazine which explains the role of the Project Engineer (PE) within the GWS and to explain what work is undertaken by the Project Cell under the guidance of him.

As many of our readers will know, based in Nepal with headquarters in Pokhara, the GWS is the field arm of the UK based Gurkha Welfare Trust (GWT). The Mission of

the GWS is, by using resources provided by the GWT, "to provide aid for Gurkha ex-servicemen, their dependants and their communities in accordance with the policies laid down by the GWT". In order to achieve this aim the GWS operates several departments through which financial aid is delivered to the ex-serviceman community in Nepal. The principal areas of aid are the provision of welfare pensions and education grants, medical assistance through access to medical practitioners and medical camps and the provision of safe drinking water and hygienic sanitation through the Rural Water & Sanitation Programme (RWSP). The final way in which aid is delivered is the provision of Community Aid through the Project Cell under the guidance of the PE.

The post of the Project Engineer originally began life as the Assistant Brigade Welfare Officer, (ABWO) who oversaw the construction of schools in Nepal through the GWS Community Aid programme. Originally it was not an RE tied post and a number of Officers from across the Brigade of



Gurkhas filled the position. It quickly became apparent the post required a degree of engineering knowledge and in 2001 the decision was taken to create a new post exclusive to the Royal Engineers known as the ABWO (Community Aid) who would provide engineering advice to the Brigade Welfare Officer<sup>2</sup>. It thus left the other ABWO from the RGR to focus on Individual Aid<sup>3</sup>. The post of the PE remains a RE wide posting and is not exclusive to the those who have served with QGE although many of you will recognise a number of ex-QGE Officers among the roll of previous ABWOs / PEs in the table below:

<b>Assistant Brigade Welfare Officer (Community Aid)</b>			
Capt	M J L Commander	RE	Feb 01 – Apr 02
Capt	D J Humphreys	RE	Apr 02 – Apr 03
Capt	A A Gooch	RE	Sep 03 – Sep 04
Capt	M D Hendry	RE	Sep 04 – Aug 05
<b>Project Engineer</b>			
Capt	S D Evans	RE	Aug 05 – Nov 06
Capt	A J H Miller	RE	Nov 06 – Nov 07
Capt	C F Thoms	RE	Nov 07 – Nov 08
Capt	R D Grant	RE	Nov 08 -

For RE officers with no previous experience within QGE they first attend and must pass the Nepali Language Course. All RE Officers fulfilling the post are permitted to wear the QGE cap badge during their tenure with the QGE GM usually very quick in 'inviting' all Officers to join the QGEA!

## THE PROJECT CELL

The Project Cell is currently comprised of ten Nepali civilian staff, including two ex-Gurkha Sappers from 68 Sqn QGE and an-ex Singapore Police Officer (Gurkha Contingent).



*GWS Project Engineer & Project Manager (Mr Resham Pun) discuss community labour rates with the SMC and the Project Sponsor, Gumdi village, Dhading district (Western Nepal).*

<sup>2</sup> Currently in post is a RGR SO1 as the GWS Field Director.

<sup>3</sup> In 2004 this post became the Ops Offr, British Gurkhas Pokhara when it merged with Adj British Gurkhas Pokhara.

The core function of the Project Cell staff is the supervision of all major & minor school construction projects. With a huge variation in the ability of local contractors to deliver a product which meets the standards demanded by the GWS the ability of the Project Cell to monitor projects is crucial to not only delivering a lasting product but also in protecting the GWS as a brand name both in Nepal and in the UK.

Additional staff are also employed for the reconnaissance of future tasks and Area Welfare Centre (AWC) maintenance.

## COMMUNITY AID

Once the Project Cell's annual budget has been authorised from the GWT all Area Welfare Officers (AWOs) across Nepal are notified of the prospective plan for the coming Financial Year. Each of the 19 AWCs in Nepal<sup>4</sup> are given an allocation of Community Aid Projects. The amount of funding available reflects the status of the AWC as either a Key AWC e.g. Dharan and Kaski, or a satellite AWC such as Bheri in the West and AWC Phidim in the far East of Nepal.

The application process takes into consideration the number of ex-serviceman living within the local community, the number of ex-serviceman's dependants who are likely to benefit directly from the project and the wider impact across the community. The application is supported by a project sponsor who must be an ex-serving Gurkha soldier from either the British Army, Indian Army, Singapore Police Force (Gurkha Contingent) or even the Nepal Army. This is key as an enthusiastic sponsor is extremely important for the success of the project as he is the vital link between the Project Cell and the local community.



*Previous GWS Major School Project constructed at Diktell Bazaar, Diktell, Khotang district (Eastern Nepal).*

<sup>4</sup> Due to political sensitivity with the Government of India the Project Cell is unable to undertake community based construction work from AWC Darjeeling in India.





For each project the local community is asked to contribute 10-15% of the overall cost seeking to ensure community interaction and responsibility through a vested interest in the project due to a degree of ownership. Due to the economic situation in many rural areas of Nepal the communities are usually unable to contribute financially and so community labour through the collection and transportation of building materials and other unskilled work such as excavation is provided. The Project Sponsor plays a vital role in mobilising the community in this work which may include tasks such as collection of sand from local riverbeds or portage of material from the road head. Prior to construction an agreement between the School Management Committee (SMC) and the GWS formalises the commitment from both sides for the duration of the project.

The flagship Community Aid project remains the Major School Construction programme which aims to build new, 2 storey, 4 - 6 classroom school buildings with accompanying latrine blocks. For these projects a Project Supervisor remains on site to oversee construction from start to finish, (4 - 6 months) in order to ensure a quality product is delivered to the SMC.

For smaller construction projects the remaining Project Cell staff are deployed across Nepal in a roaming supervisory role periodically checking the project at critical points during construction. These may be the installation of concrete banding and vertical columns or the pouring of concrete floors. This allows Project Cell staff to meet with contractors to discuss design parameters and the quality of workmanship demanded by the GWS.

The transparency of the processes used by the GWS has been crucial to its success over recent years and especially during the insurgency. The equal distribution of projects across Nepal is another critical element which reinforces the equality of GWS policy. By rigidly adhering to a policy of transparency, equality and quality construction the reputation of the GWS is now such that communities in Nepal understand the GWS is committed to deliver first class, lasting structures where 100% of the cost is channelled into the project and not into funding the petty bureaucracy which is commonplace throughout all levels of business in Nepal. During the recent Insurgency the GWS was permitted to continue working largely unhindered across Nepal becoming one of the very few aid organisations allowed to do so. This is testament not only to the public reputation of the GWS as a force for good but also to the commitment of its staff to continue delivering Community Aid.

## RECENT ACTIVITIES

Of late the Community Aid programme had grown to become unnecessarily complicated and as a result was streamlined in FY 08/09 to provide a more concise, user friendly category system. The current Community Aid project categories together with the number of projects undertaken

Project Category	Sub-Category Projects	No. of	Amount / Project (£)	Total (£)
Major Schools	Major School Construction <sup>5</sup>	2	NA	93,565
Major Schools	Major School Refurbishment <sup>6</sup>	4 min	NA	13,737
Major Schools	Major School Education Enhancement <sup>7</sup>	6 min	2,580	15,483
Minor Schools	Minor School Extension <sup>8</sup>	17	4,301	73,118
Minor Schools	Minor School Refurb <sup>9</sup>	Key AWC - Min 8 Non-Key AWCs - Min 4	17,204 / Key AWC 8,602 / Non-Key AWC	206,451
Misc	Misc <sup>10</sup>	N/k	N/a	36,129
			<b>Total</b>	<b>438,488</b>

and the allocated budget for FY 08/09 is shown above.

The application process has also undergone fundamental changes in order to meet the requirements of the new Government of Nepal which demands all aid projects are forecast one year in advance – a somewhat complicated task resulting in a double burden of project reconnaissance and selection in the current FY. FY 08/09 saw the completion of the 120<sup>th</sup> Major School Project in Nepal and although the numbers of new major school built each year has been considerably drawn down over the past few years the programme remains the flagship activity of the Project Cell.

The Project Cell has also begun to extend its programme beyond the provision of school buildings. During last year a number of roof top water collection systems were installed in schools in areas with an acute water shortage. This year also saw a joint project between the Project Cell and the RWSP in Singla, a remote Tamang village in North Gorkha District. In addition to the construction of a Major School project in Singla the Project Cell, in cooperation with the RWSP embarked upon a considerable sanitation programme by constructing over 80 individual and community latrines in the village. The hand over ceremony is scheduled for May 2009 where it is hoped a number of representatives from the 5th Gurkha Rifles (Frontier Force) Regimental Association will be in attendance in recognition

<sup>5</sup> New two-storey, 4-6 classroom school building.

<sup>6</sup> Refurb and repair of previous Major School constructed by GWS.

<sup>7</sup> Provision of library books, science equipment and computers to previous Major School Projects.

<sup>8</sup> Construction of additional classrooms at existing Government schools.

<sup>9</sup> Minor repairs & cosmetic refurb to existing Government school not require engineering supervision

<sup>10</sup> A wide range of schools including the provision of sports facilities & the construction of libraries.



of their significant contribution toward the cost of the project. The Association meet the full cost of the school in recognition of the late Rfn Thamang Gurung V.C who came from the village.

Elsewhere the Project Cell has been proactive in raising the standard of construction and site Health & Safety for workers in Nepal. Although a Nepali Building Code does exist it is seldom recognised or adhered to outside of the major urban areas. The Project Cell has worked closely with the National Centre for Seismic Technology in Nepal and all Project Cell staff are trained to ensure new school buildings are constructed to protect against seismic activity. In turn this information is disseminated down to local contractors working on GWS projects to not only ensure all GWS projects are constructed to the correct standards but that contractors are shown how to construct seismic proof buildings in the future. All Project Cell staff also receive training on site management, site organisation and Health & Safety in a bid to establish and encourage 'best practice' amongst all civilian contractors employed on GWS projects.

Recently contact has been established with the INGO, 'Room to Read' which has an office based in Kathmandu. It was established in 2000 to provide libraries to Government schools in Nepal. Not only does it construct classrooms to accommodate school libraries but also provides reading materials printed in both English and Nepali in addition to the provision of a comprehensive librarian training programme delivered to teaching staff. The two Major School Projects constructed by the GWS in this financial year will include two bespoke libraries fully resourced by Room to Read and further collaboration is planned for FY 09/10.

Having confirmed that the Western Major School Project for FY 09/10 will be constructed within the Annapurna National Park, extremely close to a popular tourist route, the Project Cell is currently investigating the possibility of installing an agricultural based income generation scheme whereby it is hoped the schools future dependence upon the GWS for subsequent financial assistance can be reduced and the school become financially self-sustaining and if successful, the Project Cell plans to incorporate further income generation schemes into other schools.

## OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

The PE is also responsible for the maintenance of 19 Area Welfare Centres across Nepal the vast majority of which were constructed during the 1970s and as such were constructed in a manner that would not be acceptable by today's building standards. Almost forty years on, through a constant programme of refurbishment and maintenance the AWCs remain in a remarkable condition. However, there is a constant need for upgrade and expansion in order to meet the requirements of GWS staff and of the ex-serviceman community who now not only rely upon the AWC for the receipt of pensions but also for the provision of medical

treatment. In the current financial year the Project Cell has embarked upon a considerable Rolling Enhancement Programme which aims to provide a much needed 'mid-life upgrade' for all twenty AWCs over a three year period. The programme aims to extend the useable lifespan of the AWCs by another 10 years through comprehensive refurbishment.

Although not directly responsible, the PE also advises the Field Director on any engineering issues pertaining to the construction of the ex-serviceman's Residential Home currently under construction at AWC Kaski in Pokhara. Recently this has become more limited as the project has been designed by a UK based architectural firm and will be delivered by a Kathmandu based company. Site mobilisation began in January of this year and work is now closely monitored by a Project Supervisor from the Project Cell with Capt (QGO) Khem Thapa (ex QGSigs) taking a lead on all matters relating to the Residential Home. At present it is hoped the project will be completed in the Spring of 2010.

## IN CLOSING

In short, the job is immensely rewarding and provides a degree of understanding of Gurkha soldiers and of Nepal which is otherwise unattainable from anywhere else within the Brigade of Gurkhas. The job also presents an opportunity to work as part of unique organisation. As a charitable organisation which falls under the administration of BGN and staffed by a core of ex-QGOs, the GWS is unique in that it brings together a capability, commitment and a drive to succeed from its members found only in military service. Such is the organisations strength it has ensured success in an environment where many other similar organisations have at best stagnated and at worst failed to deliver tangible results. The strength of the GWS lies in the capability of its staff, both civilian and ex-British Army.

Finally in thinking of a way to not only close this article but also to best describe the job I currently find myself in I am reminded of a long running beer advert in the UK; 'Unfortunately Carlsberg don't provide jobs in the British Army.....but if they did.....'



*The author and friends returning from a long day at the office, lower Dhading Valley*





# THE QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS 60<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY RE-UNION 1948 - 2009

**22 NOVEMBER 2008**

*photo montage by  
Hon Maj Surjabahadur Thapa MVO*



Welcome address by Hon Maj Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE  
President QGE Regimental Association Nepal



Cutting the Birthday Cake by Colonel of the Regiment flanked by President QGERAN and  
Capt (QGO) Dillram Thapa, (oldest Sapper at the function)



**Welcome Garland Ceremony  
by  
President QGE Regimental Association Nepal  
to  
QGE Regimental Association UK**





## PARTY MOOD





# RE-UNION



Maj (QGO) Dharamal Thapa (4<sup>th</sup> GM) with Comdt and GM (he was a Cpl PT Instructor when Maj (QGO) Deobahadur Thapa carried out his recruit training in Attotbad, Pakistan, 1938



Capt (QGO) Dillaram Thapa flanked by some of his old BO Sahebs



17 Training Party - 1965 Wallahs



Past and Present Commandants and Gurkha Majors with the Colonel of the Regiment



Maj (QGO) Deobahadur Thapa surrounded by his old BO Sahebs of the 1950s



Spr Gangasing Thapa from Palpa talks to an old comrade





# RE-UNION



Registration of Nepal Members



Old comrades meeting again



Capt (QGO) Durgaprasard Gurung and Maj P Lavies



Capt (QGO) Manilal Thapa and Brig M Stephens



B Troop 67 Sqn



Ladies greeting one another





# RE-UNION



◀ 1987

2008 ▶

OC and  
Gurkha Capt  
69 Sqn



H Tp 69 Sqn, 1982 (Falkland Islands)



Line boys and girls of the Regiment



**See you at the 70<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary  
Re-union (2018)**

**“PHERI BHETUM-LA”**





## **QGEA Reunion - 3 Generations**

*Graham Price*

### **Note:**

There is no strict definition of generations X and Y. Literature doesn't define the pre X generation so let's call it W.

Generation X born late 1950s to 1970's

Generation Y, The Millennial Generation, born late 1970s to early 2000s.

### **The Plan (Graham Price)**

I was absolutely certain that I would attend the 2008 Regimental reunion in Nepal – having attended the 1998 reunion this was a must!

I was able to impart my enthusiasm to Anthony my brother, my father was keen to come having come along for the ride ten years ago and my son David was in Hong Kong having recently graduated from Durham. Reluctantly he was prepared to take his chances "Will I be the youngest person there?"

And so three generations set off from Hong Kong, one Tuesday evening in November, accompanied by Ian McEvoy. In true Hong Kong style I was able to do a full days work, catch the airport express and flight and be in Kathmandu just in time to catch my numerics in the Summit Bar. It was the closest thing to time travel you can experience, office in Hong Kong at 6, Summit bar at 11. Little seemed to have changed in the Summit Hotel over the last 10 years, but Kathmandu has of course continued its outward sprawl.

As an Association we seem to have moved on over the 10 years. Where previously we had had a party laid on in the British Camp, for this trip the celebration was to be held in the Himalaya Hotel.

### **The Senior Generation - (Sam F Price) – The Jangal. Generation W?**

My first invitation to join the Queen's Gurkha Engineers in Nepal was in 1992 when I joined my son, Graham on a water survey in Eastern Nepal. It was quite a strenuous exercise since we took in 3 outlying villages but we were made welcome at each one and we left feeling very satisfied and that the survey had been successful.

In '98 I again joined Graham for the Regiment's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations in Kathmandu and Pokhara followed by the well organised "Royal" trek, which was nowhere near as strenuous as the project recce that we had undertaken six years before.

In 2008, for the 60th anniversary Graham and I were only half of the Price contingent as my other son, Anthony, (the first family Gurkha engineer) and my grandson David joined us. I hope that David will follow in the footsteps of his father and uncle and serve with the Regiment. This year, Graham and I declined the trek in favour of the visit to Chitwan National Park leaving Anthony and David to undertake the trek.



*Sam, Anthony, David and Graham Price at the Reunion in Pokhara*

The Chitwan National Park Excursion was a complete contrast to the few days spent in Kathmandu and Pokhara, enjoying the jungle experience during the day time and staying in huts with electric lighting - for a couple of hours each evening.

The safaris by elephant, land rover and boat were very special although the wildlife was not as plentiful as we had expected. The QGE party had been divided into different groups for logistic purposes. On the first elephant safari which took place shortly after we arrived at the base, Graham fell asleep as the elephant moved forward with well measured steps, however the jungle was quiet and he did not miss anything of great significance. By way of consolation my group was the most successful and was called by the guides "Lucky Sam's group." From comparing notes, we were very pleased that we saw a larger selection of wild life than the others had seen, sadly no tigers, but plenty of rhinos. Perhaps the most frightening time was the huge crocodiles on the riverbank– they looked very threatening, and one slid into the river in our direction but fortunately he did not trouble us as we passed by in our boat. By way of diversion we were treated to the great elephant "bathtime" and some of our brave contingent joined them in the river I think it was John Pinel who remained on the elephant and guided it on to the sandy bank. All too soon, we returned to Kathmandu and then for me back to Hong Kong with Graham. I brought back many happy memories and was very pleased that General Bill said to me as I left "see you at the next celebration"



## Generation X - (Anthony Price) The Trek

Those readers with an encyclopaedic memory may recall that I served with the Regiment as an SSLC officer in 1975. I was the one that followed Hughes Saheb the year after his SSLC. As my elder brother Graham was posted to 67 Squadron about two years later I was able to manipulate the benefits of being in the TA so that I could undertake some training on the occasional visit to Hong Kong.

When the notice about the reunion arrived, it gave me the perfect opportunity to visit Nepal, dust off my copy of the FARELF

Gurkhali Language Training Course, and check the spelling of Meerendonk. Memories came flooding back, along with a copy of the Malayan Highway Code in Gurkhali and English which had fallen out from between the foolscap stencil duplicated pages of the language course where it had been undisturbed for 32 years. (I think Training Wing on Gordon Hard had given the Highway Code to me after seeing my attempts to back a Bedford into the OC's Land Rover.

I had planned to do the jungle trip, but was persuaded by my brother that going to Nepal without going on trek just was not an option.

So what did I make of it all? Nepal was fantastic, the trek was most enjoyable and dare I say it, civilised. I have written an account of this which appears elsewhere in this magazine.

## Generation Y (David Price) – The worry

When I was first told of the reunion in Nepal I jumped at the opportunity to go, (albeit at my father's expense). This was not my first trip to the country. When I last went in 1993 I was only 6 so I was keen to piece back together some of my earliest memories. It was only after I had read through the trip briefing it began to sink in that I was almost certainly going to be the youngest one there, and by a long way too.

I arrived in Kathmandu late on the first day, where we were whisked off to the Summit Hotel as my father was hoping to catch a few of his old fellow officers in bar before bed, as the next day was going to be the first of many formal reunion events. I wasn't used to packing Blazers and shirts for trekking holidays, but then again I had not experienced

an Army do like this before. We were only in Kathmandu for a couple days, but we did have one formal event to attend. I was lead into room full of Gurkhas and a kata was placed around my neck.

It was at these moments where I wished we were in

Pokhara already as I knew no one and the older generations were all very keen to meet their old friends. Luckily the trip to Pokhara was the next day, and my father deemed it a necessary character building experience to take the 8 hour bus journey. Let's be honest, the Nepalese are a far more slender people and although there

were enough seats on the bus it really didn't feel that way. The road to Pokhara was not exactly like the M25/Tolo Highway, very narrow, with a sheer drop off one side and it made for an interesting journey. It must be noted that in Nepal and in fact many other Asian countries the horn is not used in the same way many of us are accustomed to. They honk at every opportunity but, unlike the horns of any western bus or car they can only be described as crudely constructed musical instruments which differ dramatically from vehicle to vehicle.



68 Squadron Troop Commanders, 1975

Pokhara was the location of the main formal event of the trip and yet again I had to get up and don my blazer, shirt and tie, but this time it was after a night out which a couple of the younger serving officers stationed there. This event was absolutely huge, held at the Fulbari Hotel which has an amazing back drop of the Anapurna Mountain Range.





As the event wore on, and after I was nudged by some of the old boys and asked, "have we convinced you yet?" the dancing began. I had been previously warned about how important this was and so strategically decided it would be a good idea to walk around the grounds of the hotel I did however catch a glimpse of the Colonel of the Regiment having time of his life on stage. It must be said, the Nepalese know how to throw a party.

There were two options on the trip, the trek or the visit to Chitwan National Park. I was informed that I would be doing the trek which I was really looking forward to. However, I was a little apprehensive about spending a week with a load of crusty army officers reminiscing about days gone by. In hindsight I have no idea why I was so nervous about a trek; however I did get a little concerned when 3 separate groups of ex QGE officers were unable to locate our position even with the help of more than 1 GPS device. Luckily we had an army of porters looking after us. Those of you who have been trekking in Nepal will know that it isn't exactly a rough experience, arriving at camp each evening to find all tents already set, toilets dug and even a mess for the evenings.

The trek was the highlight of the trip for me. Waking up each morning to see each and every one of the ex-officers there with their bowls of water meticulously shaving away, it seems old habits die hard!

### The return

All too soon the Himal Toli and the Jangel Toli left behind the solitude of the Nepal countryside and converged once more on Kathmandu. Friendships had been renewed, and in many cases new ones forged.

It would soon be time for us to go our separate ways. On those last evenings in Kathmandu, Adjutants dined with Head Clerks, Troop

Commanders relived adventures with their Troop Staffies, and last glimpses of Kathmandu – until probably the next reunion. In every city there are places to see and places to be seen. For 3 generations, we tried to retrace our steps to Rumdoodles. It had moved, and changed but the story in the book remained, as did the cardboard feet of the intrepid conquerors of the mythical peak. It seemed a fitting photo to remember the 3 generation visit, before we went our separate ways to Hong Kong and the UK.

## QGEA 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Trek Report

*Anthony Price*

We used to say that there is nothing more dangerous than an officer with a map. Today, the modern equivalent must be an officer with a GPS. The extension is that three or four officers, (or retired officers) with GPS in various incarnations is close to lethal. I found myself in this position having signed up for the trek option after the QGEA reunion events in Pokhara.



*The 3 Generations in Rum Doodles Bar, Kathmandu*

One of the options for those attending the reunion was the opportunity to take part in a trek in the Pokhara area. Signing up was easy, I only had to tick a box on Dom's excellent return notice. Shortly before leaving for Nepal, a short list of long instructions appeared by email, warning of the dangers of altitude sickness, non rechargeable batteries and saheb's knee. The description of the weather for late November seemed almost perfect, so with camera in rucksack and an extra pair of walking socks, we were ready. Advice from all quarters came flooding in. The mere mention of a trip to Nepal invited helpful comments on everything from the excitement of bus travel to the dangers of itinerant Tibetan hawkers.

The geographic problems had started soon after the luxury bus left Lakeside in Pokhara heading towards the hills.



One by one, various sahebs produced maps of dubious provenance and tried to calculate by dead reckoning or dead guessing where we might be, or perhaps where we had just been. Needless to say no one agreed on where we were, let alone where we were going. At a bend in the road, the bus stopped, we alighted, looked around and were immediately welcomed by the customary band of Tibetan jewellery sellers who assured us that there was no reason to start haggling over their wares straight away as they would be hanging onto our group like leeches until our money was extracted from our pockets in return for trinkets. Hamish and Mark must have been a frightening sight for the hawkers, but even the delayed effects of runny Sunday bhat which had caused them to be a shade of cricket pitch green failed to dissuade the Tibetans from plying their beads and baubles to the group.

We looked around and saw our porters disappearing up the hillside with our essentials balanced in their dhokas. For those unfamiliar with the Nepalese way of carrying things, this was jaw dropping stuff as the porters picked their way up the hills, with footwear typically just a pair of flip flops. In contrast, our trek instructions had given us suggestions for solid, comfortable boots and strict precautions against saheb's knee, which apparently is an occupational hazard of walking downhill. Faced with steps uphill, this hardly seemed relevant as we started the climb. Those suffering from Delhi Belly persuaded their limbs to move them uphill, turning ever greener as the altitude increased. The younger members of our group were up and away in no time. The camp followers with their Tibetan wares spaced themselves out amongst the group, trying to work out which wallets had the most generous or gullible owners. Some of us just formed the rear party so we could admire the view.

After what seemed an age, but was probably only one quarter of the distance of a BFT course, except angled at 45 degrees, we were greeted by the cook wallahs, and our guides who had set up a camp kitchen with copious tea and hot lime squash. This was soon followed by a delicious meal and the cabaret chorus of the song of the Tibetan Traders.

As the trek continued, the gap increased between the walkers, and we arrived in small groups at a school where the doors were open for us to go and visit. Of course, it had taken us hours to get there, but presumably the pupils made it there in a just few minutes each morning from their homes in the hills.

The school was immaculately presented. The children made us very welcome and gladly showed us around, savouring the opportunity to practice their English. Once again, knowledge of Meerendonk's helpful translation of "my postillion has been struck by lightning" failed to be the conversation starter that it might have been in former times. My language skills had taken a fair beating earlier in the

week when a shopkeeper told me that he would offer me a discount on a selection of Yak wool scarves, because I was obviously a "proper visitor and not a tourist" as I could speak some Nepali, but "Frankly sir," he said, "I have never heard anyone speak Nepali as bad as you."



Meanwhile, our map readers began to upgrade themselves, and one by one various GPS units started to appear. It was not clear to the untrained observer whether the GPS was actually producing any useful information, as it seemed impossible to match up GPS co-ordinates to the maps. It is reported that some ex GE and QGE officers had joined RE Survey later in their service. For reasons of security we shall keep quiet about that. Nevertheless a mini Survey Reunion was held at various points along the way.

The steps began to blur a little and distances seemed to increase, but as if by magic, we turned the corner and our campsite for the evening was there ready for us. We had reached Bhumdi. Several cups of tea later we were enjoying the late afternoon sun before our evening meal. Civilian camping experience clearly showed as Mandy produced a clothes lines, laundered her team's shirts and had them hanging up to dry before you could say "Pedicure?" Lady Baden Powell would have been proud of her.

Fru, our news reporter and film maker, took the opportunity to capture some more footage for her documentary. By this stage, our green men had managed to shake off some of the gloom and were now ready to present a more public profile. Hair was combed, teeth were polished and normality was resumed.

After supper, Lakbahadur gave us a briefing for the next day, with full details of reveille, first parade, and breakfast. As an incentive, luxuries such as tea served to our tents and a bowl of hot water for shaving were added to tomorrow's programme.

It was too much the next morning. The mountain air had revived most of us and we were nearly all ready to go. The competition was on for the bowls of hot water, shaving





brushes and razors to appear and for folk to see who could be first to scrape themselves clean. Young David (as he was the youngest in the group) was clearly unimpressed by this display of one-upmanship and resolutely stayed in his sleeping bag until the last possible minute. He was forced to arise when he found the tent dismantled around him and the probability was rising that he might end up in the dhoka as well as his kit. Breakfast was delicious, with porridge and a fry up to provide enough calories to see us through to elevenses.

We climbed higher and entered the jungle. Patrolling skills were completely forgotten, no RV's were marked on the maps (for we didn't really know where we were anyway). As someone mentioned leeches, the members of the Tilley Hat Owners' Club pulled their eponymous headgear down to stop the leeches dropping down inside the collar and on we went. The views through the trees and across the valleys were staggering. On one side we could see the Annapurna range and on the other side we could see the summits of the hills clearly marked by mobile phone masts.

Crossing from the south side of the ridge line to the north side, put us in position to start getting the best views of the Annapurna range. As we dropped down from one summit to our campsite near the village of Panchase, we could enjoy the effects of the changing light on the hills. The village had been holding an ecology day, and was full of visitors. We were told that tomorrow would be a big festival on the Stupa and Temple at the summit of Panchase and this would be attended by thousands of visitors. Our campsite was probably at about 2100 metres altitude, although we couldn't get agreement between the altimeters, GPS and maps. We had another splendid meal, a full English style roast, which was wonderfully served and presented by our trek team. The cooks followed this with the production of a birthday cake for Audrey Watson. We sang and let her blow out the candles.



On Wednesday morning, most were up even more promptly than before, and the ascent of Panchase beckoned. Mindful that my insurance policy

was only valid for treks up to 2400 meters and the summit of Panchase was listed at 2403, I decided to play it safe and take my hat off when I got to the top. David was briefed that if lightning decided to hit me and not the position, then for insurance purposes I would have to be taken 10 metres downhill before the formal rescue operation could begin. As we came close to the summit we met some of the thousands of pilgrims who were making their homage at the Hindu

and Buddhist shrines on the top of the hill. The scene was a blaze of colour with brightly coloured clothes, flags and smiling faces everywhere. We understood the ceremony to be a blessing of the seeds for the following season. Quite why the insurance company should decide why the top of the hill was such a perilous place seemed out of keeping with the numbers of pilgrims who had walked up the hill in simple clothing, and seemingly inadequate footwear.

As Panchase was the highest point of the trek, it was in, theory, all downhill from there. A steep path through woods was clearly marked by the empty crisp, sweet, and food wrappers carelessly discarded by the penitent pilgrims. It is quite shocking at how much litter there is in the Himalayas, which ought to be safeguarded as a special and beautiful place.

We regrouped at a crossing of the paths and headed off again to our final campsite. Once again, the campsite gave us almost perfect views of the Annapurna range. The beauty of digital photography meant that it was possible to take too many photos, and then try and choose those which had the best combination of colours and scenery. As the sun set and rose the next morning, we were treated to the snow capped mountains glowing orange and red. That evening was a birthday celebration for Mandy McEvoy, and somehow another birthday cake had managed to appear.



Next morning it was a short walk to where the bus could collect us and take us into Pokhara where we collected the rest of our reunion gear and then to the airport. We said our farewells to Ale Saheb at the airport and flew East to Kathmandu.

Looking back on the trek after a few months, I remember the amazing views of the mountains, the clear air and crisp evenings. The quiet and efficient way that camp was pitched each afternoon, amazing meals were prepared and the camp disappeared around us next morning and was taken away on the backs of the porters. On the last evening, our lady trek guide (a Sherpina) sat at the edge of the campsite, washing her long hair and dying it in henna as



her way of marking the end of the trekking season. We had the chance to talk to those we hadn't seen for years, and to make friends with some whom we had not met before.

Those who had been to Nepal before were able to comment on how much things have changed and what has not changed. We could all see the impact of modern communications on Nepalese society. The ladies in our group commented on how easy it was now to talk to the Gurkha wives and children now, as they all speak English, and can talk about their trips to the UK, USA, and Canada. This was in contrast to days in Hong Kong where conversation was limited to a few smiles.



*We finally made it to Everest*

Dom Verschoyle had made some perfect arrangements with Summit Trekking and Mike Reynolds, the Trek Commandant, liased efficiently between everyone, making sure that we were all counted out and all counted back again.

### **VISIT OF THE QGEA (UK) MEMBERS TO GURKHA MEMORIAL MUSEUM IN POKHARA**

One of the highlights of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion in Nepal was the visit to the Gurkha Memorial Museum by the UK Members on 23 Nov 08. While visiting the museum all were able to vividly reminisce about the good old times with QGE in Malaya, Borneo, Seria, Hong Kong, Nepal and

lately the UK.

The Museum Management Committee has been doing its best to raise the standard of the Museum ever since it was formally established in 1996. This relies entirely on financial support from family and friends and it was a very pleasant surprise when the members of the QGEA UK, led by Lt Gen David Bill announced the donation NCR One Lakh (£908). The names of the members are displayed in a brass plate on the Corporate Donors' board inside the Museum.

Anyone wishing to know more about the Museum may contact it at the following address:

**GURKHA MEMORIAL MUSEUM NEPAL**  
C/o British Gurkhas Pokhara, BFPO 4

or Pokhara PO Box 50 Tel/Fax: 061 541966,  
e-mail: [gmtmuseum@fewamail.com.np](mailto:gmtmuseum@fewamail.com.np)





## Further Miscellaneous Reunion Photographs









# BITS AND PIECES

## A Sapper Sword

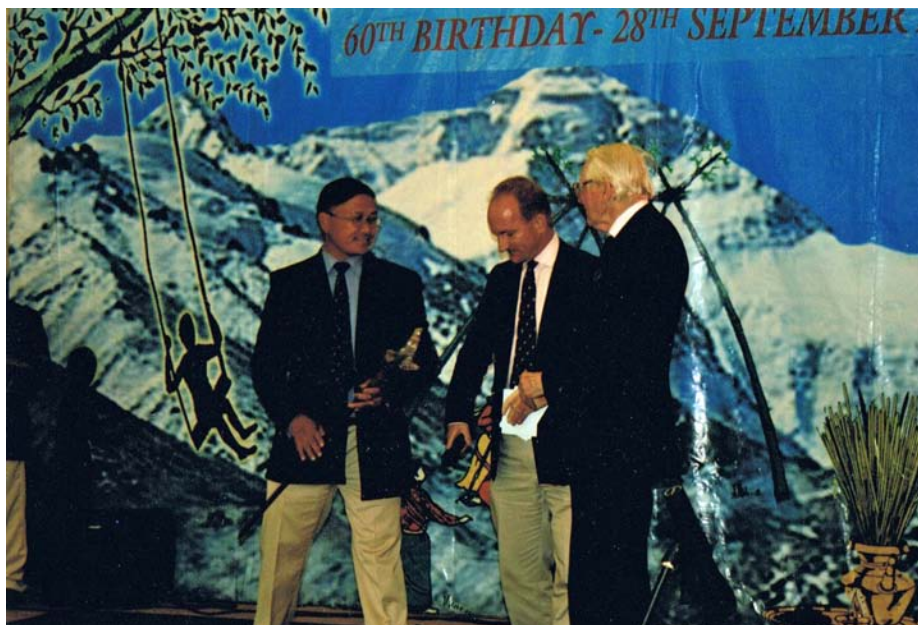
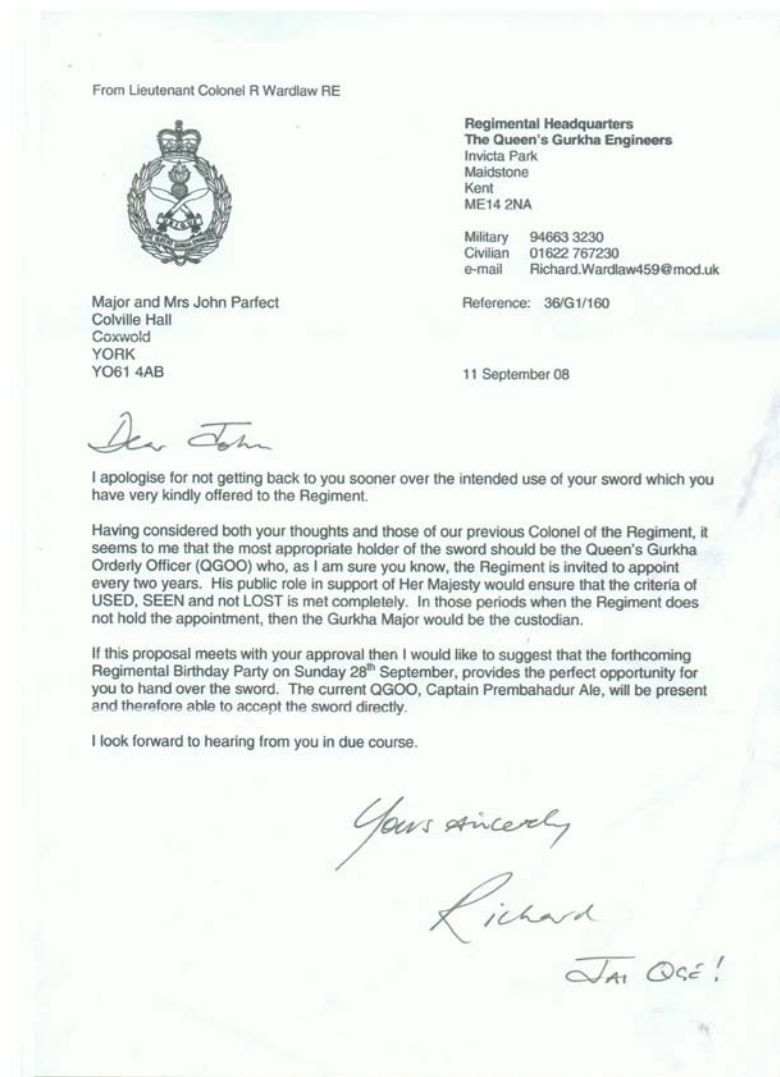
John Parfect

*In 2008 John Parfect approached Commandant QGE about the possibility of donating his sword to the Regiment. The Commandant gladly accepted this kind offer and the sword was formally handed over at the Regimental Birthday on 28 Sep 08. Below is a note from John about the sword's provenance.*

"The provenance of the sword is interesting. Sixty years ago Heather and I were married in the Garrison Church in York. One of our bridesmaids was Jane Reid who's father was Brig Sir Francis Reid CBE (late RA). As a wedding present he gave us this sword which had originally belonged to his brother 2Lt Robert Reid RE. Robert commissioned at the School of Military Engineering in July 1915 and a year later was sadly killed in action during the Battle of the Somme whilst serving with 130 Fd Coy RE.

Shortly after our wedding I flew to Singapore to become one of the founder members of 67 Gurkha Fd Sqn in Kulang. The sword is a joint token of our and the QGE's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary."

*Having considered the offer the Commandant gratefully accepted the offer and his reply to John's offer is below:*



# Reminded of Happy Memories

*Brian Taylor*

The 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday Reunion in Nepal brought back a wealth of happy memories for me of life in the Regiment in the early 70s. I was unable to make the 50<sup>th</sup> but hope to be around for the next whether it be the 70<sup>th</sup> or 75<sup>th</sup>. I was OC A Tp 67 Sqn when we celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> Birthday in HK and as such had the dubious honour of marching at the head of the parade behind a number of well known figures.

The reunion in Nepal was very nostalgic. At the reception in Kathmandu it was great to meet up with my old Troop QGO, Capt Tikaraj Rai who apart from a little less hair hardly looked different to how I remember him nearly 35 years ago. Another favourite was Bhimbahadur Gharti Saheb who had been with B Tp but with whom I worked with for awhile as Sqn Gurkha Capt when I was 2IC 67 Sqn and Embahadur Saheb was on leave. Sadly EB Saheb was unable to make the Reunion because of the troubles around Kathmandu on that day but I received a nice message from him via Surjabahadur Saheb. I have many happy memories of EB Saheb particularly his shooting prowess which helped us perform so well we were able to qualify in Hong Kong to return and shoot at Bisley in the Army Championships for the first time in 1975. I was usurped as Shooting Officer by my OC to be, Harry VC preventing me from returning to Bisley again in 1976 as the Sqn could not lose both the OC and 2IC. However, I was able to take the Sqn to Brunei without him!

In Pokhara it was amazing to see how many of those we saw in Kathmandu made the trip as well as so many others. We had a troop photograph which included two other BOs, one being Mike Reynolds from before my time (even though we were on the same degree course at Shrivenham). The Gurkhas of note (ranks being those they had when I was in the Regiment) LCpl Milanchandra Gurung and Spr Hombahadur Rai who accompanied me on my very first project recce within days of arriving.

This was for a finger jetty to be designed by me (fresh off my civil engineering degree course at Shrivenham) and built by A Tp at Pak Lap on High Island on the Eastern extremities of the New Territories. It involved our driving up to a place on the mainland to the North East of High Island and then getting in an assault boat with OBM and motoring along the North Coast of the island and out into what were often quite ferocious seas and round to the South side of the Island. An eventful trip on the best of days. During the construction phase of the project this route became closed off to us as they dammed up the inlet to form the High Island Reservoir and we had to cross over to the North side by boat and then trek all the way over the island to the South side. It was a challenging project for all sorts of reasons but one which was immensely satisfying to see right from early recce and

design through construction and opening. I missed much of the early construction stage because of my language course immediately followed by a jungle warfare course in Brunei! The Troop lived on the island for the duration returning only for odd weekends and important events.

Others I have fond memories of include Sgt Sherbahadur my Tp Recce Sgt who had his father at the Pokhara Reunion, at 93 the oldest ex QGE soldier present.

It is nice to think that maybe one had a tiny part to play in the successful careers of people like Milanchandra, who like Judbahadur Saheb was a mere Spr when I first knew him and Capt Bhaktabahadur Rai (who was Master of Ceremonies for the Pokhara party) who was sporting his Royal Engineers Corps Colours blazer badge at the reception and who in his first year as a recruit in the Regiment (and A Tp) was a member of the shooting team to Bisley in 1975. Talking of shooters it was particularly nostalgic to see LCpl Pahalsing Thapa at the Tamasha. Although from B Tp (whose Tp Comd when I first arrived and my predecessor as 2IC, namely Adrian Riss, was no mean shot himself), he was the star of our shooting team and was the first member of QGE to shoot rifle for the Regular Army VIII in the Inter Services Match at Bisley. The following year at Bisley Pahalsing (or Junghe as he was affectionately known because of his moustache) came 3<sup>rd</sup> in The Queen's Medal Competition winning the coveted Bronze Jewel. His name can be seen on one of the Honours Boards in the Army Rifle Association Clubhouse Dining Room at Bisley. I eat there frequently as I still shoot for a hobby and always feel very proud to see his name there knowing I had some involvement in helping him get there. Other names have followed him into the Army VIII including Prakas Rai, a Spr in A Tp during my time and the previously mentioned Capt Bhaktabahadur.

## Gurkha Engineers, circa 1958

*Charles Spottiswoode*

A posting to The Gurkha Engineers in 1958 was the start of the most rewarding and enjoyable phase of my army service. However the cultural change was the most remarkable part of the experience.

I will come to the 'Gurkha' part shortly, but first I want stress the extraordinary difference in lifestyle between 1950s Britain and the sub Somerset Maugham colonial atmosphere of Malaya. Army regulations at that time still did not recognise officer's married status until they reached the ripe old age of 25 (30 in my father's day) so, having married 'under age' in 1956, I was in the process of struggling out of financial stringencies and with a young family, I was just about able to live (frugally) on a basic UK salary. From being a penurious subaltern, overnight I found myself living in a spacious bungalow with 2 servants,





driving a large car, being a member of 2 smart clubs (clap your hands to summon a servant) and the expectation of being out at least two nights a week. To add to the slightly surreal atmosphere we were at war, fighting the Communist Terrorists (CTs) and therefore on active service – hence my sole, lonely GS medal ribbon –and in some areas out of station we carried loaded weapons, with reports of CT kills still coming in.

Joining the Brigade of Gurkhas almost 50 years ago was also something of a transmutation in time. Shadows of Empire and the Indian Army still hung over every aspect of daily life and I am certain that officers posted to the Brigade in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century will not notice such a chronological dislocation. Talking with the new breed of Gurkhas I see a very different world – most of it to be applauded and inevitable – but with some feelings tinged with sadness and regret. A subject perhaps for an entirely different article (and author)?

My first experience of a new style of life came after about 10 days when I was told that we were to be at Kuala Lumpur railway station to see off the outgoing Colonel (Bowring) on the night train to Singapore. I was not expecting to find that about a third of the capitals 'down' platform had been taken over by the Regiment for a full dress occasion. A complete bar had been set up, with white cloths, silver goblets for the cold beer and uniformed mess waiters. The Regimental Pipes & Drums played whilst startled civilian passengers had to slip past as best they could outside the Gurkha Engineer's magic circle. Incidentally I was told that a good trick on such occasions was to hold back the departing officer whilst the only train which would connect with his flight home slid out of the station with his wife, children and baggage on board, (though perhaps not to be tried with such senior officers). A fast car would be standing by for a hair-raising dash of about an hour to reunite the unfortunate fellow with his distraught family at the next station down the line.

Turning now to more personal matters, the introduction to being helped to dress for parade by one's orderly stands out in my mind. In those days we wore the wide bottomed Gurkha shorts - each leg width being the same as one's waist – and, having finished putting on my Sam Browne, it came as quite a shock to find my orderly thrusting his hands up my shorts. Suppressing my alarm I discovered that this manoeuvre was merely to pull down my shirt tails. Now stories concerning orderlies are legend, but my favourite relates to the one who was handing over to his replacement and came to explain about the Sahib's golf clubs. "I don't know what they are for," he said "but I call them his 'drunk sticks', because every time he takes them out he comes back drunk."

Life in the mess also had its own style. In order to take advantage of the cool mornings we had first parade at 0700 and broke for a substantial breakfast at 0900. Unusually it

was acceptable (with discretion) to talk shop to someone because it might be the only time you could catch him, since work finished at 1400 and 'married pads' often went straight home. On Saturday and Sunday mornings as well as the fruit, cereal, kippers, egg, bacon etc and coffee, mulligatawny soup was always served on the premise that the Sahibs would have been out the night before and it was the perfect antidote for a hang over.

Being out on detachment did not avoid some fairly large bar bills. One of the Adjutant's jobs was to keep an eye on birthdays, promotion exam successes, new fatherhoods etc and to inform the assembled company so that all could join in celebrating the happy event. So, sitting out in the dripping jungle, you could 'console' yourself that your friends back at base were sharing your joy - on your bill. And, talking of births, the story goes that when one of the Regiment's officers was out on detachment the Adjutant rang the British Military Hospital to find out whether the officer's wife had safely delivered their baby, so that he could pass on the happy news. A very starchy ward Sister pompously replied that this information could only be passed direct to husband. "To hell with husbands." said the Adjutant, "What about fathers?"

Sleeping accommodation for visiting officers and marrieds staying overnight after guest nights was in the form of the standard 'bashas' – concrete floor, timber frames with attap sides and CGI roof. Furnishing was on a lavish scale – standard metal-framed bed, a chair, a cupboard, a chest of drawers and coir matting on the floor. History has it that one guest who had 'over enjoyed' himself awoke early the following morning complaining to himself that the mattress was extraordinarily hard and the blanket very rough, only to discover that he had gone to 'bed' on the concrete floor and pulled up the coir mat to his chin. Another, in a somewhat similar condition, had got so far as to undress and start crawling under the mosquito net, only to fall asleep in the prayer position half in and half out of the net, where the mosquitoes had a fine feast on the target so presented.

In those days we did two consecutive tours, 3 years and 2 years, with 6 months inter tour leave between. One adventurous officer of my time decided to go on his leave overland, promising to keep us in touch with his progress en route. One postcard from India intrigued us as it contained the information that "Last night I saved this hotel from burning down. Will explain when I get back." We awaited clarification with interest and finally learnt that he had been drinking with the manageress of the hotel, who had threatened to burn the place down if he did not go to bed with her.

These reminiscences cover only the more domestic tales of life with the Gurkha Engineers almost 50 years ago. I have written before of being adrift at night in the South China Sea on a capsized dugout canoe, but there are other tales,



like helping to collect blood pheasants for London Zoo from above the snow line in Nepal, winning a buffalo in a raffle, mushrooms which were not in the 'kukri' book and more, but I expect I have written quite enough already and the Editor must decree whether this selection needs severe editing and/or he would like more later. It has been a great life.

## NEW Nepal

*Hon Maj Hukumraj Thapa*

In the last issue I touched on *New Nepal* as our leaders were very confident of transforming Nepal into Switzerland



after the Constituent Assembly Elections. We too all thought it was time to move on from Old Nepal. Sure enough, since the *new* government was set up exactly one year ago the general Nepalese, who wondered what is meant by *New Nepal* are slowly, although a little puzzled, realising its true meaning. The *New Nepal* episode is in ten parts. In summary:

1. Immediately after the election Nepal had a *new* title and has become the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal but no one can explain what it means.

2. Since the Royal family moved out from their palace the ruling government has become deeply involved in spending considerable resources just to replace the historical names of streets, places and districts named after the Royals. Sadly along with this strategy the ancient statues of the kings and queens have been removed or destroyed. Therefore, *new* names and titles are seen in the streets.

3. The present Constituent Assembly formed to draft the *new* constitution is the largest in the world with 602 members. Within that about 25% of the Members are illiterate and are struggling to complete their mission within the given time of 2 years. It is said that some can not even communicate in the Nepalese language and most are attending literacy classes. More interesting is that they are all over the world in various small groups in the name of fact finding missions at public expense.

4. Nepal has to rely on imported fuel and cooking gas but on the water front Nepal is known to be the second richest country in the world due to its water resources. However, lack of hydro-electricity has meant the Nepalese are suffering without electricity for over 18 hours a day. *New Nepal* has taught us to utilise candles and oil lamps which is a *new* experience for the *new* generation. Battery operated inverters are expensive and can not sustain through the darkness because the self charging time is not long enough. Generators are out of question due to acute scarcity of fuel. We are used to darkness and have literally forgotten to switch on the lights even when the supply is running. It is reported that there will be a huge change in the next National Census due to increased rates of pregnancy and child birth!

5. Nature has also helped to change the country because this year we had the driest period. We have learned to drink very little water and buy expensive water for cooking food and go without proper showers for days. One litre of water is costlier than one litre of fresh milk. In the capital city many houses padlock their bathrooms and are changing to *new* routines to save water. People trying to pump water from their reserve tanks can not do so due to lack of electricity. The private water tankers supplying potable water have a long list of consumers waiting for weeks for their turn to fill their household reservoirs.

6. The unpopular word "Bandh" meaning the entire or some part of the Nation comes to a stand still is gaining popularity. The *new* occurrence is that there is not a single day without a 'Bandh' somewhere in the country. We are used to staying put inside the house or being stuck on the highways for days in cramped busses without food and money due to sudden Bandhs caused by a traffic accident or political turbulence. Closely associated with this are long traffic jams and the smell of burnt tyres on the main road junctions.

7. We are not surprised to see heaps of smelly garbage not collected due to political unrest. I hear due to the smell and darkness wild animals, especially leopards are roaming the capital city feeling much comfort in their *new* homes.

8. The price of basic commodities have sky rocketed inviting more corruption within the system. There is no control in this *new* system. The affect of the global recession has cut short many jobs abroad, the Middle East in particular and Nepal is losing considerably in its foreign cash remittance.

9. Every now and then some sort of *new* political party is formed with the good reason of making *New Nepal*. Students and small children are also attracted to form such parties and stir the Nation one way or the other. The former King Gynendra's son, Paras, who lives in Singapore these days is planning to form a party and go into the next election in Nepal.





10. Finally, the number one agenda of the Nepalese people, namely to bring back 'PEACE' after many years of instability is still beyond the horizon. Tussles and even killings of cadres of different political parties, theft within the community, unruly mobs etc. have a threatening effect on general public. The present popular word now in New Nepal is 'Impunity' as opposed to 'PEACE'.

Well, the above points on Nepal are not very encouraging but factual. However, our Minister for Tourism Mrs Hisila Yami, wife of Finance Minister Baburam Bhattari, both Maoist leaders has declared 2011 a "Visit Nepal Year". Following her announcement we Nepalese, as always are very confident that by 2011 there will be two more airports built to cater international flights, electric trains will run to Pokhara all the way from China and India, households in Kathmandu and Pokhara will have a non-stop water supply and many other attractive development projects are in the pipeline. I can assure you that at present Nepal is completely different to what it used to be and it will keep on changing. So, why not plan a visit to experience New Nepal?

## Naturally Nepal – An Experience of a Lifetime

*Ms Smriti Chand*

This is an article about our experiences in Nepal after an absence of four years. As we were preparing for our trip to Nepal, our parents (Maj Dhan Bahadur Chand QGE and Sunita Chand) were already in Nepal having completed a 9 day trek to Everest Base Camp, (for Nepalese the cost is NCR 1500/per /person/day and NCR 6000 for a return flight to Lukla). As we had completed our university assignments we joined our parents for a winter holiday. We spent a day in Kathmandu and then headed down to the Trisuli River to begin an activity package which included white water rafting and a jungle safari in the Chitwan National Park.



The first day consisted of white-water rafting down the Trisuli River finishing at Mugling. For all of us it was our first time rafting, (except my father who had previously experienced rafting in Wales in an artificial river). Although travelling over some rapid parts of the river felt rather frightening it was also very exciting. The weather was perfect with sunshine beaming down on the spectacular scenery. I recommend rafting to anyone with a sense of adventure. It is definitely

worth trying. The cost of the rafting for a Nepalese citizen is NCR 1500 compared to US\$60 for a foreigner.



After finishing the rafting we were picked up by the agent's car and taken down to a resort in Chitwan to begin the second part of the adventure, a jungle safari. That evening we watched an excellent performance of the Tharu dance by the local Tharu people. The next day was occupied by various activities including canoeing on the Rapti River, hiking through the national park and finishing with an elephant ride. This is a great way to see animals in the jungle such as rhinos, deer and maybe even tigers.

After finishing the package holiday we were eager to see our grandparents who were waiting patiently for our arrival. They live in Gumlek, a village in the Tanahun district. Whilst we were there we had an opportunity to visit the school in Gumlek which was built by the Pahar Trust.

As they say, everything good must come to an end and so we headed back to Kathmandu and then on to Doha, Qatar. Our uncle works in Doha and it was great to see him after such a long time. We stayed there for two days and although not long we tried to make the most of it by touring around the City. The City is highly developed and is covered by tall and creative buildings next to a beautiful stretch of the Arabian Sea. Nepali people are seen everywhere in Doha and there are about 300,000 of them currently working there.

Overall the trip was extremely busy but enjoyable. The highlight of the trip has to be rafting and reunion with our family after such a long time.



## FAMOUS SONS - Major Mahendraprasad Gurung

*The Reverend Lieutenant Colonel (ret'd) Tim Treanor  
(Training Officer, Hong Kong 1991 - 93; OC 69 Gurkha Field  
Squadron 1995 -96)*



(In preparing this article on Mahendra's career, I am hugely grateful for detailed notes that he prepared. It was a joy to be reminded that his written English is more lively than mine!)

Mahendraprasad Gurung has had an extraordinary career. Between enlisting as a Boy soldier in 1969 and retiring as a Major (SSC(G)) in 2004, he served The Queen's Gurkha Engineers with great distinction. He was intimately involved with many important milestones in the Regiment's development and its integration with the Royal Engineers.

His father was Captain (QGO) Harkabahadur Gurung, who retired as Gurkha Captain 67 Gurkha Field Squadron. Mahendra enlisted as a Boy soldier but was allowed to complete his education at St John's School, Singapore. In 1971 he travelled from Nepal to Hong Kong. He was with the last recruit party to travel by train from the recruiting Depot in Paklihawa to Barrackpore. However, this was also the first recruit party to train at the Training Depot in Hong Kong. Mahendra remembers being cold and hungry throughout his training. The recruits were not issued with enough warm clothing, there was not enough fuel for hot showers for all and never enough bhat. Money was also scarce and when he passed the English Colloquial Test, he was disappointed not to receive immediately the £10 (half a month's pay)! The 11 months of training was compressed into 6 months. The Gurujees however, who were all veterans of the confrontation with Indonesia, never stopped reminding the recruits what an easy time they were having. Looking back, Mahendra enjoyed his time at the Training Depot, but did find it difficult being unquestioningly obedient!

Only 4 of the party joined the then Gurkha Engineers. They were attached to field troops for 6 months until the next recruit party arrived and Combat Engineering could be undertaken. Mahendra would be excused stripping out so

that he could train with the Nepal Cup squad. He was a member of the team for 12 years. When the Regiment won for the first time in 1974, he played in the first round only due to an ankle fracture. However, he was a member of the winning team a couple of times in later years.

He was posted to B Troop, 67 Gurkha Field Squadron. However, he had been identified as a potential Sandhurst commission officer and for this he needed the recommendation of an Infantry CO. So, even though he had less than 2 years experience, he attended the Junior leaders Cadre with 1/2 GR. He thoroughly enjoyed the experience, even when his whole platoon was killed on the final exercise! He had been selected to be Platoon Commander on the advance to contact phase and led 6 platoon attacks over the hills of Sha Tau Kok on a sweltering July day. Unfortunately he was not selected for Sandhurst. However, he was selected for a Design Assistant course at Chatham. Here he worked hard and played hard. He made the most of being in the UK and, in his words, "engaged fully with British culture". He spent 3 weeks in the summer of 1976 hitchhiking with a friend in Scotland. The net financial result was he was so overdrawn he received no pay for two months on return to Hong Kong and the traditional treat of a "sungur" messing for his troop had to be bought on credit!

Mahendra was promoted to LCpl and returned to Chatham for the Class 2 Survey course which he passed as top student. After Class 1 Combat Engineer training at Minley, he was posted to the Design Team 70 Support Squadron as the first Gurkha Surveyor, part of the "Gurkharisation" of the Squadron. He was also proud to be the first Gurkha Bar NCO of the Jago Arms (the 70 Squadron bar)!

After attaining top position in the first ever Field Section Commander's course run in the Training Wing, he was posted back to B Troop. From his four years as a section commander, two tasks in particular stand out. In Brunei the section was dropped in the middle of Labi jungle, equipped with explosives, tools, rations and an HF radio, and left to clear a helipad. He was also tasked with building a school in a remote village in Fiji. Mahendra comments upon being a section commander, one of the best jobs of his career: "The responsibility of independent command of a group of men in a difficult environment executing a challenging task was extremely rewarding and fun, and something which I had always envisioned the life of a soldier to be."

On promotion Mahendra was briefly B Troop Recce Sergeant and then became Mess Sergeant in the combined BO/QGOs mess whilst the BOs mess was renovated. He was then posted to 69 Squadron as I Tp Staff Sergeant. This posting included deployment to the Falkland Islands and detachment for 6 months to UNFICYP in Cyprus to support 3 PARA. He was one of only two students to achieve a B grade on the QMSI course and was recommended for employment as an instructor at RSME.







Instead, he became B Troop QGO, initially as a WO2 and then as Lt(QGO). This period included a construction exercise in Sabah and he took the opportunity to climb Mount Kinabalu. He then returned to the UK as I Troop QGO. This tour included deploying to the USA on Ex TRUMPET DANCE with the Light Infantry and a 6 month tour in Belize.

Mahendra was selected for a GCO commission and for further training on the Junior Command and Staff Course (JCSC). So, on 1 April 1993 he, Bina and Bivek flew to the UK. At midnight at 33,000 feet somewhere above the Indian Ocean he became a GCO. I happened to be on the same flight and, on behalf of the Commandant, presented his new pips; British Airways produced the champagne! (see below) Mahendra was concerned about his lack of 'main stream' experience, but did very well on JCSC. The tour in Belize may have helped for the 10 hour appreciation exercise involved Rideau Camp which he knew well! As Support Troop 69 Squadron, he supported 3 PARA in the Falklands. This was physically demanding, for it included commanding a troop on the Paras' live firing final exercise at the age of 40. It was also a challenging tour because many of the troop knew that they would be heading to Nepal on redundancy. It is a testament to his leadership and their professionalism that the deployment went so well. On return to the UK, he took a group to Wales to learn to hang glide. Mahendra understood the theory of "lift, drag, thrust and gravity", but that did not stop him crashing from 30 feet!

Mahendra was very keen that he, Bina and Bivek should enjoy their time in the UK. He bought an Austin Maestro and drove all over the country from Glasgow to Carnarvon, as well as visiting the touristy bits of London and Paris. He had no savings at the end of 2 years so he was delighted with a 2 year extension in the UK as the Operation Officer of 69 Squadron as it became part of 36 Engineer Regiment in Maidstone.

He was the key person in planning and executing a 4 month construction exercise in Canada. The tasks were technically demanding and plant-intensive. It was only later that it was discovered from David Bill that the original intent was that an Airfield Support Squadron would undertake the exercise.

Mahendra was the first Sapper to plan such an exercise using Microsoft Project. It is very much to his credit that the tasks were completed to budget, on time and to the complete satisfaction of the Canadian clients. It is also to his credit that the Canadians were persuaded to present the Squadron with a live bison for 'messaging'. The offer was withdrawn when they saw the ceremonial kukri with which the task would be done! This exercise was ideal preparation for the Squadron's 6 month operational deployment to Bosnia in 1996 as part of the NATO Force. At the time of draw-down this was an important opportunity for the Regiment to demonstrate its operational competence. It was the first time a Gurkha unit had deployed to the Balkans and 69 Squadron was under command first of 38 Engineer Regiment and then 36 Engineer Regiment. Mahendra had the vital task of co-ordinating a wide range of construction tasks, including civil reconstruction.

Mahendra then took Nepal leave, during which he trekked with Bina to Everest Base Camp. They then returned to the UK where he assumed an SO3 appointment in HQ RSME Chatham. This was followed by a short tour as Operations/ Training Officer at 3 RSME Regiment Minley. He was selected for an SSC(G) commission and promoted to Major at first look. His next posting was to Nottingham as Training Major 73 Engineer Regiment(V). Mahendra thought that a good way to make an impression with the TA Sappers would be a tough exercise ending with a march and shoot. Ian Wright, the CO, took the view that this might not be the best way to encourage retention! Mahendra says of this period: "In my two years in Nottingham, I came to realise how dedicated and professional the TA soldier is and, considering the limited training they receive, their output and performance is remarkable by any standards." In the midst of this busy job, he found time for fun, including adventure training trekking across the Pyrenees and a 5,000 mile drive around Europe with Bina. He also had the pleasure of welcoming Nigel Fenn as the new CO.

It is fitting that the culmination of Mahendra's remarkable service should be another Gurkha first: command of a regular Royal Engineer squadron, 24 Training Support Squadron. During this period, he prepared himself to return to Nepal with a view to improving the lot of the people in the hills. So he completed the London Marathon and obtained a Diploma in International Development from the Open University. However, personal circumstances and the deteriorating situation in Nepal meant that he had remain in the UK when he retired. He is currently living in Farnborough and is employed as the Cadet Executive Officer for the Army Cadet Force looking after some 1200 cadets and 150 adult volunteers in North West London. He still flies the QGE badge as a TA Major when in uniform.

Mahendra is a remarkable person, who has had a huge impact upon everyone with whom he has served. He has always set and achieved the highest possible standards.



In many ways he typifies the traditional values of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers. However, he has also been a pioneer, grasping hold of opportunities and opening up new possibilities for Gurkhas in the British Army. In an understated way, he exudes competence and this engenders confidence in his leadership. He is also tremendous fun to be with. Perhaps my abiding memory will be of Mahendra dancing in the midst of a Squadron party wearing a 'topi' (a Serbian helmet) and 'jhola' (a Serbian respirator case). It is possible that a beer may have been involved!

The last word belongs to this famous son of the Regiment: "I consider myself extremely fortunate to have had such a long and varied career and hugely proud of being a member of the QGE family. I would not have done it without the unswerving support of my wife Bina who has uncomplainingly followed me and set up home wherever the Army.



## Gurkha Terms and Conditions of Service (GTACOS)

*Editor. A request was received asking for a summary of the new GTACOS announced last year. The following is taken from the Brigade of Gurkhas Website and can be found at: [www.army.mod.uk/gurkhas/7563.aspx](http://www.army.mod.uk/gurkhas/7563.aspx)*

### Nationality & Status

- Gurkhas should continue to be selected and recruited in Nepal, and remain Nepalese citizens throughout their service.
- Formed units consisting entirely of Gurkhas except for British officers and a few specialists, should be retained as the Brigade of Gurkhas; and Gurkhas should be recruited

only to those units.

- The practice of compulsory discharge in Nepal should be discontinued.

### **Wider Employment & Transfer**

- Gurkha soldiers should be eligible to apply for transfer to Corps/Regiments outside the BG, on the same terms as the rest of the Army, after a minimum period of 5 years service in BG.

### **Recruitment & Selection**

- Recruiting and selection of Gurkhas is to remain in Nepal.
- Recruiting and selection of Gurkhas should be owned by the Army Recruitment and Training Division.
- Selection standards for Gurkhas to be aligned with British selection arrangements in due course.
- Nepalese women to be recruited into the Brigade of Gurkhas.

### **Gurkha Welfare Trust (GWT)**

- The GWT support the British Army's recruiting and selection process should be formalised.

### **Training**

- The current Gurkha training regime should be retained for the time being.
- The current regime is unlikely to be sustainable and ARTD should lead a programme aimed at alignment with the UK training regime.
- ARTD should commence a programme to develop an acceptable training regime for Gurkha women.

### **Engagements**

- Gurkhas to be enlisted to the Versatile Engagement when it is introduced for the wider Army.
- The use of Continuation of service as a manning tool should cease (also applies to QGOs).

### **Commissions**

- Nepalese DE officer recruits should be sought from within BG.
- The QGO commission, the Short Service Commission (Gurkha) commission and the current system of awarding honorary rank should end.
- The existing QGO population should be transferred to the Short Service Commission (Late Entry) (SSC(LE)),





subject to meeting the standard.

- Non-DE candidates in future should be commissioned to the SSC(LE) within the BG.
- Gurkha Other Ranks (GORs) may seek commissions in other Arms and Corps.
- Current Short Service Commission (Gurkha) officers to be transferred to Intermediate Regular Commission (Late Entry) (IRC (LE) and will compete for posts alongside those from the wider Army.
- Gurkha SSC (LE) officers in future may be selected for conversion to the IRC (LE) according to the same rules as for British SSC(LE) officers now.
- GORs should be given access to employment opportunities outside the BG on the same basis as British personnel.
- Gurkha LE officers should be permitted to seek transfer to other parts of the Army according to normal rules after 3 years commissioned service.
- Gurkha LE officers are to be career managed by the Army Personnel Centre and be able to compete equally with their British counterparts.
- BG units should be permitted a higher proportion of LE officer posts than corresponding units in the wider Army, for practical and cultural reasons, but that this should be subject to review.

#### **Pay, Allowances, Charges**

- Gurkha pay adopts full UK rates based on Employment Qualifications.
- QGOs are assimilated on to the normal Army pay scales.

#### **Leave of Absence**

- Gurkhas to be given the same leave arrangements as set down in Tri-Service Manual for Leave and Other Absences (including all special leave such as parental leave, career breaks, and carers' leave).
- Cease Nepal Long Leave.
- Gurkhas with less than 3 years service given the option of a "Get You Home (Early Years)" package.
- Gurkhas should have the same arrangements available to Commonwealth personnel. Set out in JSP 760.
- Compassionate leave for Gurkhas should be brought into line with JSP 751.

#### **Pensions**

- Gurkhas recruited after 1 December 06 should join the

Armed Forces Pension Scheme 2005 (AFPS 05).

- Gurkhas serving on 1 October 07 who joined on or after 6 April 05 but before 6 April 06 (the 06 intake) should be offered the option to transfer from the Gurkha Pension Scheme (GPS) to AFPS 05.
- Gurkhas serving on 1 October 07 who were serving before 6 April 2005 should be offered the option to transfer from GPS to AFPS 75 or AFPS 05.
- Gurkhas who retired between 1 July 97 and 5 April 06 should be offered the option to transfer to AFPS 75 or remain in the GPS. Those who retired from 6 April 06 but before 1 October 07 should be offered the option to transfer to AFPS 75 or AFPS 05 or remain in the GPS.
- Gurkhas transferring from GPS to AFPS to be given actuarial value for any service before 1 July 1997, but service given on or after 1 July 1997 to be transferred on year-for-year basis.

#### **Welfare & Education Issues**

- Gurkha children should have the same educational opportunities as their British counterparts.
- Additional welfare support staff should be available to the Army Welfare Service to cope with the additional family welfare issues relating to the introduction of Gurkha MAS.
- Comply with all compassionate arrangements (JSP 751).
- In conformity with practice elsewhere in the Armed Forces, repayment of Gurkha dependants' medical and dental claims is to stop.
- Gurkha Chronic Conditions arrangements to be phased out and brought in line with the Sickness Army Management (SAM) scheme.
- Discharge procedures for Gurkhas to be brought into line with wider practice.
- Aftercare provision for Gurkhas and their dependants are to be the same as available for British personnel.
- Present establishment of Pandits to be increased.
- Cultural support to continue within units.
- Headquarters Brigade of Gurkhas secretariat support to be reinforced to become the focus for the provision of Benevolence and Welfare Support to Gurkha ex-servicemen in UK.

#### **TPA**

- Let the present TPA lie, and produce a bi-lateral MOU between the UK and GoN.



# Settlement in the UK for Gurkhas Discharged Before 1 July 1997

*Editor. The following was released as Army Briefing Note 24/09 on 21 May 09. It covers the announcement on resettlement in the UK for Gurkhas who retired before 1 July 97.*

## ISSUE

- The Home Office has announced today that all Gurkhas who served for longer than four years and retired before 1 July 1997 will be eligible to apply for settlement in the United Kingdom. Those retiring after 1 July 1997 already have automatic settlement rights.

## KEY POINTS

- On 24 April 2009, the Home Office announced a governmental decision on handling applications from those who retired from the Brigade of Gurkhas before 1 July 97. This followed a High Court ruling in September 2008 that, whilst 1 July 1997 as a cut-off date for Gurkhas to settle in the UK was fair, the guidance used when making decisions on those discharged before that date had to be much clearer.
- We believed this new guidance would enable around 4,000 ex-Gurkhas, together with 6,000 dependants, to come to this country.
- However, on 29 April the House of Commons expressed a clear view that all those who served in the Brigade of Gurkhas before 1 July 1997 should be entitled to settle in the United Kingdom.
- Today new guidance will be published which will make it clear that all former Gurkhas who served between 1948 and 1 July 1997 for longer than four years will be eligible to apply for settlement in the United Kingdom. They will also be entitled to bring their spouses and dependent minor children. There will be no time limit on applications from former members of the Brigade of Gurkhas.
- These arrangements will have no impact on the serving Brigade. The Brigade has a significant place in the Army. We value immensely the contribution it makes and want it to continue.
- In 2004, the immigration rules were changed to grant automatic settlement to those who served on or after 1 July 1997, with discretion for those who served before that date.
- Today's announcement is about settlement rights and not pensions. Pension entitlement depends on whether a

Gurkha retired before or after 1 July 1997. There will be no change to this arrangement.

## Colonel Jim Stuart becomes a Patron of The Britain Nepal Medical Trust

*Mr Ian Baker*

Colonel Jim Stuart served with The Gurkha Engineers during his military career in Malaya, Brunei and Hong Kong. He is well known to readers as the former Secretary of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers Association. He agreed to become a Patron of the Trust (BNMT) in early in 2009.

The Britain Nepal Medical Trust has had a long association with the Gurkhas. The Trust's HQ was for a long time in Biratnagar at the far end of the road to the former cantonment at Dharan. Lt Colonel Charles Wylie of the Brigade of Gurkhas was a founder Trustee and also a Patron until his death in 2007.

BNMT supports the National Tuberculosis Programme in Nepal and recently began working with two Nepalese NGOs in rehabilitation and reconstruction of families and health services, which were badly affected by the insurgency in the country.

HRH The Prince of Wales is the Trust's Royal Patron. Amongst other Patrons, Colonel Jim Stuart joins the distinguished company of Sir Christian Bonington and Sir John Crofton, a chest physician with an interest in tuberculosis, who is still breathing well at 97!

[www.thebritainnepalmedicaltrust.org.uk](http://www.thebritainnepalmedicaltrust.org.uk)





# Archive



*Above:* Gurkha and British WO and SNCOs from 50 Fd Engr Regt on the occasion on the EinC visit. Hong Kong 1954.

*Left and right:* Gurkha soldiers in the newly formed Regiment wearing RE capbadges.

*Below left:* Ofrr and SNCOs of 50 Fd Engr Regt. Hong Kong 1950

*Below right:* Regimental Open Day 1954. Tam Mi Camp, Hong Kong.

*Photos courtesy of Peter Johnson*



Sgt Harkabhadur Gurung



Spr Chandrabhadur Gurung





# QUEEN'S GURKHA ORDERLY OFFICERS



Capt(QGO) Narbahadur Thapa 1957 - 1958



Capt(QGO) Dhojbir Limbu 1962 - 1963



Capt(QGO) Sherbahadur Limbu 1976 - 1978



Capt(QGO) Bhimbahadur Gurung 1974 - 1975



Capt(QGO) Sunar Gurung 1978 - 1979



Capt(QGO) Kharkajang Gurung 1985 - 1986







Capt(QGO) Surjabahadur Thapa 1991 - 1992



Capt(QGO) Budhikumar Gurung 1995 - 1996



Capt(QGO) Dalbahadur Limbu 2002 - 2003



Capt(QGO) Dudhprasad Gurung 2006 - 2007



# Ex QGE Deaths 2008-09

Hon Maj Hukumraj Thapa

Number	Rank	Name	Died
	LT COL	GEORGE RITCHIE	9-Jan-09
	MAJ	TOM Le MESURIER SPRING-SMYTH	30-Apr-09
447951	CAPT(QG0)	NIMBDR CHHETRI	7-Jun-08
474665	CAPT(QG0)	JOHN TENZING LEPCHA	25-Feb-09
21132631	SGT	KULBDR THAPA	5-Apr-08
21132638	CPL	GOKULBDR GURUNG	15-Apr-08
21132730	SPR	DHANBAL GURUNG	19-Dec-08
21132787	WO2	GAMARSING THAPA	26-Apr-08
21135649	SPR	CHHATRABDR LIMBU	24-Jan-08
21136771	CPL	KRISHNABDR THAPA	29-Jan-09
21137279	LCPL	MANBDR PUN	13-Jul-08
21137281	SPR	NIRBAHADUR GURUNG	4-Apr-08
21137914	SPR	DAMBARBDR LIMBU	14-Apr-08
21139368	SPR	LOKMAN RAI	13-Jan-08
21139369	WO2	DALSER RAI	1-May-08
21140805	WO2	DALBDR RANA	11-Jan-09
21142071	CPL	LAKHBDR RAI	10-Oct-07
21145945	SPR	DHIRKHAMAN GURUNG	18-Mar-08
21150092	SPR	JAGATBDR RAI	11-Jan-09
21150141	SPR	TEKBDR PUN	3-Nov-08
21151255	CPL	BUDHIMAN GURUNG	5-Dec-08
21151294	SPR	KHARKABDR THAPA	9-May-08
21151526	SPR	SYAMBDR RAI	30-Mar-08
21152467	WO2	HARISING GURUNG	21-Feb-08
21154382	CPL	AITABIR LIMBU	4-Feb-09
21155341	SPR	PREMBDR LIMBU	6-May-08
21155426	WO2	RAMBDR GURUNG	4-Oct-08
21157700	SPR	MANBDR GURUNG	3-Mar-08
21158681	CPL	LACHHIMIPRASAD LIMBU	2-Mar-08
21161761	CPL	TANKAPRASAD GURUNG	18-Mar-09
21163346	SPR	URKENTHELE SHERPA	13-Apr-08





# Obituaries

## Lieutenant Colonel G. N. Ritchie

*Born 8 September 1926, died 9 January 2009*  
by John Croft



If you had been in the oppressive heat of the mangrove swamps of Brunei on 18 May 1963 you would have witnessed one of the last operations that successfully brought to an end the rebellion there when the hard core of rebels was captured. In the eerie darkness you would have glimpsed boats of 69 Gurkha Independent

Field Squadron filled with heavily armed Gurkhas of the 2/7 Gurkha Rifles. The call for boats from the 7<sup>th</sup> Gurkhas had come unexpectedly and urgently, late in the evening when the Squadron officers were discussing, 'over a glass or two', the difficulties of operating boats in Borneo. With alacrity the officers manned the boats and flying his 'admiral's flag' in the lead boat, Major George Ritchie as their commander, navigated the way stealthily along the twisted maze of waterways. Twelve hours later the operation had accounted for all the major figures of the Revolt except Azahari, the rebellious prime minister. George's swift, effective response and his part in this event were typical of his good leadership and soldierly qualities. He will be remembered by many as 69 Squadron's colourful and charismatic commander in the early 60's in the Far East. The Squadron was in Borneo on two operational tours during the Confrontation whilst under his command. He was warmly regarded and respected by both British and Gurkha members of the Squadron who appreciated his style of leadership and his infectious enthusiasm for soldiering and military engineering. Although widely deployed, mostly in remote jungle locations and in small troop and section numbers for much of the time, control of the Squadron was indeed demanding but George's personality contributed much to its cohesion and consequently it enjoyed his full support and guidance without a heavy hand. He led the Squadron with a light but firm touch and had the welfare of his officers and men very much at heart. The making of airstrips and roads and the provision of life sustaining services using limited resources for the forces in theatre in this challenging environment exercised considerably their engineering skills and ingenuity. The indigenous peoples also gained a great deal from their work bringing deep satisfaction to all in the Squadron for the benefits they brought. George remembered this in later years and used the experience to advantage in his work

after leaving the Army.

George Newbigging Ritchie was born in Linlithgow on 8 September 1926, the only son of William and May Ritchie and brother of Myra. He was educated at Linlithgow Academy and he entered fully into school life with his characteristic enthusiasm doing well in the classroom and enjoying the sports field. He showed an aptitude for academic studies and by the time he was 18 years old he was drawn to a career in medicine. To this end he gained a place at Edinburgh University in 1944 but he was keen to take part in the war before it ended, his appetite for soldiering having been whetted in the school cadet force. Consequently he postponed his University course.

On joining the Army in 1944 George attended No.9 University Short Course at Manchester University. Basic Army and Corps training followed at Formby, Clitheroe and Crickhowell; on completion, he was commissioned into the Royal Engineers in 1946 and travelled by the troopship, SS Orontes to India, serving there until after Partition in 1947. Remarkably, a companion throughout his university course, military training, passage to India and return on HMT Franconia was Mike Wright, a future fellow Gurkha Engineer Squadron Commander.

On return to UK in 1948 George was offered a regular commission in the Corps which he accepted even though his place at Edinburgh to study medicine had been held open for him. He served in Neimberg in Germany with 21 Engineer Regiment from 1950 to 53 and it was whilst he was there that he met and married Joan on 5 December 1951. This was indeed a strong, loving union that lasted a lifetime with Joan providing wonderful support as homemaker, mother and army officer's wife through the wide variety of postings they experienced together. They went to Scotland in 1953 when George was made Adjutant of 52<sup>nd</sup> Lowland Division Engineers, based in Rutherglen.

In 1955 George joined the Gurkha Engineers in Malaya and after a few months in the jungle with 67 Squadron building a bridge and part of the road between Gemas and Rompin, he was made second in command of Boy's Company at the Brigade of Gurkhas Depot in Sungei Patani, near Penang. Whilst providing an excellent opportunity to get to know Gurkhas the separation caused by the poor quartering situation did little for the harmony of early married life but his tour with the Regiment was cut short when he gained an early place on the Staff College Course and he went to Camberley in 1957. On completion of the Course George spent the next three years working in the War Office in London. It was during the turbulent years of the '50s with its many moves and indifferent married quarters that their three fine sons, Jonathan, Quentin and Neil were born. He proved to be a warm and loving family man and father.

George started his second tour with the Gurkha Engineers as its Chief Instructor based in Kluang, Johore in 1961, then in 1963 he took command of 69 Squadron in Brunei during



the Rebellion and also became OCRE of Force HQ. During his time as its OC the Squadron successfully completed a very wide range of engineer tasks in Borneo and in Malaya. When back in Malaya those who had been with him in Borneo quickly learnt of his and Joan's generous hospitality and many enjoyable gatherings were held in their quarter in Kluang. The tour, which ended on 16 October 1964, was considered by him to be a highlight of his military career.

Back in UK he served in the EinC's HQ at Chatham before moving to Hameln in 1966 where he spent two happy years as the second in command of 35 Engineer Regiment. Remaining in Germany he moved to a staff appointment in the NORTHAG HQ in Rheindahlen. In 1972 he took up a grade one appointment at the Defence Operational Analysis Establishment in West Byfleet. His experiences here and in the Far East together with his aptitude for staff work pointed the way to his second career in the field of global disaster preparedness and when the opportunity arose he took a Defence Fellowship in this subject at Manchester University from 1974 to 76. After this he completed his military career on the staff at Shrivenham retiring in 1979, having served in the Corps for 33 years.

His long time friend and colleague, Dr Ian Davis, Visiting Professor in Disaster Management at Cranfield, Oxford Brookes and Kyoto Universities recalls how it all came about.

"George Ritchie, one of the pioneers of Global Disaster Preparedness, while studying at Manchester and with support from IBM, developed the first computer aided Disaster Simulation Exercise called 'Atlantis'. It was developed on a main frame computer in the era long before PC's. One day in the mid 1970's he arrived at my house in Oxford to ask how we could collaborate in what was at that time the rather narrow field of Disaster Preparedness. Thus began a long friendship where we worked together on research projects, sat on the same committees and ran courses together in Oxford, Tanzania, India and Cranfield for a period of over 15 years. Eventually in 1998, thanks to George's work, I became the first Professor in Disaster Management at Cranfield University. George thrived on teamwork and this led to the foundation of the Cranfield Disaster Management (CDMC) Centre in about 1985, with its first international course taking place in 1988. The long term impact of this initiative is demonstrated by the 20<sup>th</sup> annual training course planned for the summer of 2009. He also ran courses in the Bramshill National Police Staff College, and in numerous countries particularly in Africa, India and Asia. In 1986 George's close friend and RE colleague, Colonel Brian Ward, invited George, Joan, and me, to join him at the Ritz in London. The aim was to pick our brains, during a ridiculously expensive and luxurious lunch, about ways to organise courses and conduct research and consultancies in the 'Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre' (ADPC). At the time this centre was being established by Brian in the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok, and went on to become a leading

global centre for disaster research and training. George regularly attended ADPC to run Atlantis and brought many skills and insights to all aspects of Disaster Management. Dr Walter Hays, founder of the Global Alliance for Disaster Reduction, (an international network first chaired by George) noted his contribution as a natural leader and innovator and his ceaseless quest for '*ways to achieve a breakthrough*'. In 2005 George wrote a typical memo advocating urgent action by the forthcoming Commonwealth- Heads of Government Meeting. His final recommendation : '*disaster mitigation and preparedness planning should start from the existing vulnerability of communities to analyse which vulnerabilities they perceive need addressing most urgently*' sums him up: tireless enthusiasm, always down to earth, ever practical, technically 'on the ball' and always the advocate of those most 'at- risk' from disaster threats".

George retired from his second career in 1996 and lived with Joan in their home in Bampton but continued in a consultancy role for some years. Sadly he became unwell in 2007. His illness became progressively worse until eventually he needed the support of a nursing home and he died on 9 January 2009. He is survived by his wife, Joan, their three sons and three grandchildren. He will be greatly missed and will be remembered by many with warmth and affection as a true friend, a great character with a stout heart and a convivial companion.

## Major Thomas Le Mesurier Spring-Smyth

*Born 25 October 1923. Died 30 April 2009*

By Maj (Ret'd) Dick Francis

Tom Spring-Smyth was known as such to a host of relatives and friends. He was born on 25 October 1923, the latest son of long, long lines of Springs and Smyths. Records of these families and the ladies who married into them are known as far back as the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and Tom's mother, a Le Mesurier, to the 13<sup>th</sup> Century. They include one General of the British Army, (a VC and MC); a cavalry subaltern who drew his sword in battles in the Sikh Wars; a Princess of Caupa; and landed proprietors of Ballynatary in Eire with 15 000 acres!



Tom grew up and matured in time to leave Bedford School in the middle of the World War II. By that time he knew what he wanted to be, like his father, a professional military engineer, and that in the Indian Army. He went therefore to the Royal Engineer Officer Cadet Training Unit in Newark, whence he was commissioned and then posted to the King





George V's Own Bengal Sappers and Miners. At their depot in Roorkee he learned to speak Urdu and to train Sikh, Punjabi, Mussulman and Brahmin Hindu recruits. His first posting was to the Sirmoor Field Company which took him to Imphal, Kohima, Kalewa and the banks of the Chindwin River. He progressed from Platoon Commander to Officer Commanding, a remarkable progress for a 23 year old!

Tom's Field Company was appointed to 45 Indian Beach Group and started preparations for the sea borne invasion of Malaya. Happily this did not take place, for the war was ended by the atomic bombs dropped on Japan. Tom returned with his company to the Northern Shan States where he operated inland water transport and worked on road and Bailey Bridge maintenance. 1946 brought a return to India, the reformation of his Company as an all Sikh unit, then appointment to 7 Field Company of the 8<sup>th</sup> Indian Division. He went back to Central Burma and was in Rangoon for the Indian Independence on 15 August 1947.

Tom's return to the UK after Indian Independence and Partition took him to a 2 year post-war "Young Officer" retraining course based in the School of Military Engineering in Chatham. By this time he had acquired a wealth of experience and the characteristics which lasted all his life. He had a dignified presence, was never fussed or excited, never hurried, always coped, was invariably well-dressed and had a vast fund of unexpected phrases and words which were always to the point and witty and often caused laughter in all who heard them. He was posted to 68 Squadron of the Gurkha Engineers in Hong Kong in Sep 1950 and was an immediate success. He was more experienced, more assured and more capable than any other subaltern officer, and later as the adjutant he served some very demanding Commanding Officers in Hong Kong and the Malayan Emergency. Unfortunately Tom was no theorist, and never succeeded in passing all 6 subjects of his Captain to Major promotion exams, although, taking them in groups of the 3 he did succeed in passing every paper twice but never in the right order. In the end he was obliged to resign his commission and the Army lost a quite exceptional officer.

Being now a civilian, Tom took a sabbatical and spent 6 months plant and seed collecting in East Nepal while attached to a British Museum Natural History expedition. He then joined and later ran the hydro-electric power feasibility study on the Karnali River in West Nepal under the UN Special Fund.

In 1968 he was back in Nepal working for the British Overseas Development Ministry to retrain and resettle redundant British Gurkha soldiers. This led to working for the UN FAO in Nepal and then as Project Officer, Nepal for the UN World Food Programme. In 1975 he joined Sir William Halcrow and Partners, (consulting civil engineers and architects) for whom he set up their office in Singapore as Resident Representative South East Asia. His parish extended from India to Taiwan and his mission was to find

new work for the firm which until then had been mainly based in the Middle East.

It was after Tom left the Army that he met and married Jennifer, and she was a wife who would have graced any company. Many years later, when Tom's health seriously broke down, Jennifer proved her worth in the selfless, faultless way in which she cared for him to the very end.

Tom eventually retired to his home in Hampshire. There he pursued his love of plants and also became an ardent supporter of the New Forest Parliamentary Constituency Party. There his personal qualities of being interested, willing to have a go, being undaunted by opposition and a calm amusing manner with all comers were instantly successful. Over the years he held various positions, eventually becoming President of New Forest East after the Constituency had been divided into two. It was a field in which he thrived; a wide circle of acquaintances, public speaking, letters to newspapers, the fringes of power, good friends, lots of amusing activity and a worthy cause.

Horticulture and gardening had been a lifelong interest. He introduced into the UK various plants from Nepal including a now well-known shrub *Daphne bholua* "Gurkha". His main focus was however rhododendrons and he was always proud to have been associated with both the RHS and the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens and Arboretum at Romsey near Winchester.

Tom died at home on 30 April 2009. He was a very rare character who never did anything by halves and was strong, bold, kind, amusing, competent and popular. One could be pleased and proud to have known him well, and all will be deeply sorry that he is no longer with us.

## 474665 Captain John Tenzing Lepcha QGE

*Born 1 November 1931, died 25 February 2009*  
by Brig H Bowen and Hon Maj Hukumraj Thapa

Capt (Ret'd) John Tenzing Lepcha died in his home in Kathmandu on 25 February 2009 at the age of 77. He was a devout Christian and his last rites were conducted by a Nepalese Padre at his local church where he played an active role and to which he was devoted.

He was born on 1 Nov 1931. His ancestral home was in Kalimpong, India although on retirement he resettled in Kathmandu. At the age of 18 he was enlisted into QGE as a clerk on 1 Jul 1949 at Jalpahar Recruiting Depot, Darjeeling, India. He joined the Regiment



with the first batch of Gurkha Engineer recruits and was first and foremost a Gurkha Engineer.

He was Chief Clerk of 68 Squadron before becoming the Orderly Room Quartermaster Sergeant. On his promotion to Lt (QGO) on 1 Jan 1963 he became the first Record Officer QGO and established the Regimental Records Office. This was a most important role within the Regiment as it expanded to a Regimental Training Centre and three Independent Field Squadrons, serving in UK, Hong Kong and Malaysia. With his great experience his was the guiding hand to keep track of postings, trade training, inter-tour leave and qualifications for promotion. He was promoted to Captain (QGO) on 1 Jul 1967 and became the Regimental Head Clerk. He was one of the extremely dedicated and powerful group of clerks, led by Aitahang Subba, who served the Regiment so well in the first twenty five years. He was respected and trusted by every British Officer who had the good fortune to serve with him and was equally respected and trusted by the Gurkha Majors, QGOs and men who served with him. Lt Col John Speight RE, the Commandant QGE, when he was Head Clerk, praised him for his honesty, loyalty, administrative and managerial capabilities.

He was Head Clerk of the Training Centre Brigade of Gurkhas from August 1971 to December 1973. His final posting was as Head Clerk British Gurkhas Dharan, from May 1974 to February 1977. He finally retired on 5 August 1978 in the rank of Captain (QGO). He had served in India, Malaya, Borneo, Hong Kong, Singapore and Nepal.

After his retirement John served as an Administrator for the Canadian International Water and Energy Consultants (CIWEC) for 15 years (from 1978 to 1993). CIWEC was supported by both the Water and Energy Resource Development Project (WERDP) and Water and Energy Commission Secretariat/Nepal Electricity Authority Institution Support Program (WISP). Here he demonstrated excellent administrative skill and effective management of project staff and a multi-million rupee bank account. He was highly respected and loved by his colleagues and staff.

John was also a dedicated social worker. As a manager for Nepalese Youth Opportunity Foundation, a non-profit public charity, he competently managed and supervised the 'Home' taking care of the children and their needs as they embarked on the journey of their lives. He was affectionately called 'Uncle' by the children of the home. He was a devout Christian and was always helpful to the needy and the poor. He was an active member of Aradhana Church from its establishment in 1977 and served the Lord and his people. He was committed to the service of the Gospel, venturing far and wide across Eastern Nepal involved in church ministry activities. He had a vision to outreach to the people with the word of God and supported staff members of the church in their mission works.

John is survived by his wife Neema, sons Sonam and

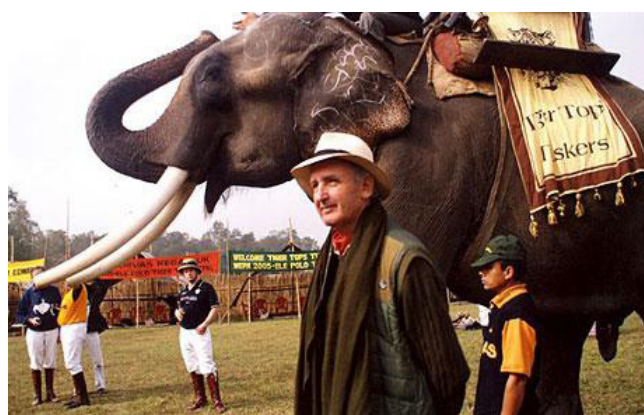
Anand, daughters Shanti, Sashi and Sharda and seven grandchildren. He was a caring and loving husband, a dedicated and protective father, a supportive brother and a loving grandfather.

His is a great loss and his many friends, both in UK and Nepal will miss him and join with the family in their bereavement. We console ourselves with the old adage in mind that "great soldiers never die, they just fade away"!

## Mr Jim Edwards founder of Tiger Mountain Travel, Nepal

*Born 24 November 1935, died on 23 March 2009*

*(Although not a QGEA Member Mr Jim Edwards will be known by many both in Nepal and the UK. This obituary appears with permission of the Tiger Mountain Group)*



Jim Edwards, who died recently in Kathmandu, was one of the pioneers of tourism in Nepal, along with his friends Boris Lissanevitch and Colonel Jimmy Roberts. A far-sighted man, gifted with luck and charisma, Jim had the vision to see the future for conservation-based wildlife tourism, in the Himalayan mountains and jungles that he loved.

A.V. Jim Edwards was born on 24th November 1935 in Hampshire, England. In his teenage years, Jim was an adventurous youth and enjoyed sailing and swimming. He did national service with the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment and then joined Lloyds Bank, Tonbridge Wells before being transferred to Sweden, a posting he found more convivial. Dreaming of seeing more of the world and always the adventurer, Jim drove overland on a Saab car promotion, through Europe, the Middle East, and the Indian sub-continent before arriving in Nepal in May 1962. Enraptured by the splendours of the country, he decided this was where he wanted to live. Travel further afield was put on hold and he spent a year exploring the Terai jungles, hunting and fishing largely in the remote Karnali region in far west Nepal.

In 1964 Jim teamed up with American anthropologist turned wildlife ecologist Dr Charles (Chuck) McDougal and started the first wildlife tourism company, Nepal Wildlife Adventure, to operate jungle treks, fishing and hunting expeditions. In





Kathmandu there was a small community of foreigners who all knew each other. On a tip-off from Boris Lissanevitch, Nepal's pioneer hotelier, Jim heard of Tiger Tops, a small camp in the Chitwan Rhino Reserve that was in need of improved management. Elected a fellow of the prestigious Explorer's Club in New York in 1967, Jim met the owners of Tiger Tops and at their request in 1971, Jim and Chuck McDougal took over the Tiger Tops Jungle Lodge. Jim used his contacts to help lobby the Nepal government to turn Chitwan into a National Park and it was gazetted in 1973.

In 1974 Jim teamed up with Colonel Jimmy Roberts, the pioneer of Himalayan trekking who had started Mountain Travel, the first trekking company in the World. Thus was formed Tiger Mountain, very much Jim's group of adventure travel companies throughout Nepal and India. A chance meeting with explorer, Col John Blashford-Snell, led to pioneering descents of Nepal's Trishuli River, resulting in the establishment of Himalayan River Exploration. Jim's last major project was the establishment of a permanent lodge on Prince Charles's "Royal Trek" route and Sir Edmund Hillary opened the Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge in 1998.

Seeing the effective manner in which tourism, carefully and sensitively managed could be a positive force for conservation, Jim and his colleagues formed the International Trust for Nature Conservation with a mandate to support conservation initiatives around the World. At a time when Nepalese corporate management was in its infancy, Jim's constant concern was to provide opportunity to many Nepalese, often with limited education and to set the standards for caring and inclusive management that remains the hallmark of Tiger Mountain today. It was a matter of great pride to Jim that Mrs Gandhi commented, "Why do we have to look to Nepal to learn how to manage wildlife tourism lodges."

For his contribution to Nepal's tourism industry, Jim Edwards was the recipient of many awards and accolades. Jim founded the World Elephant Polo Association in 1981 with James Manclark and ran the annual World Championships at Meghauli, Chitwan, a tribute to his sense of humour, marketing acumen, and enjoyment of a fine party. A man of immense charm and love of life, Jim could bowl people over with his inspirational energy, hospitality, self-deprecating sense of humour and monumental generosity. Jim defied stereotypes, yet sought an element of conformity and was immensely pleased to be made an honorary member of the Sirmoor Club, the Regimental Association of 2nd Gurkhas. Jim had a sharp eye for a finely turned ankle, and much enjoyed the company of women. In 1970, he married Icelandic beauty, Fjola Bender. Then in 1978 he met Belinda Fuchs at Tiger Tops, a zoologist from Switzerland and they were married in 1983. In later years, he lived happily with his devoted companion Tia Rongsen from Nagaland. Jim had four children who were a source of great pride and comfort to him: two by his marriage with Fjola; Kristjan and Anna Tara and two sons by his marriage to Belinda; Timothy, and Jack.

Jim was passionate about the jungle and enjoying wild places with friends. He fished regularly on several rivers in Iceland, where he suffered the first of two strokes in 2004 while fishing with his sons. His courage and tenacity in regaining mobility won him wide respect. Sadly, in January 2009 he suffered a second major stroke whilst mahseer fishing in Karnataka. A paradoxical man, Jim challenged and inspired all those with whom he came in contact. Life was never dull when Jim was around. We mourn his passing but in Virgil's words – *meminisse juvabimus* – we shall delight in remembering.

## Anecdote

Gen Sir David Richards (C-in-C Land and present Col Comdt Bde of Gurkhas), during the unveiling of the Gurkha Statue and formal opening of the Gurkha Memorial Museum in Pokhara on 24 Feb 09, described his first encounter with the Gurkhas as follows:

*"I was in the artillery. I first met Gurkhas in 1971 during an overseas exercise in Singapore and we were deployed in an enemy role. I was captured by the Gurkhas. During the interrogation, like any loyal soldiers, I refused to reveal the location of my unit HQ. They then took off all my clothes, excuse me ladies, but they did strip me and tied me against a tree naked. One Gurkha then opened a tube of condensed sweet milk from his compo ration pack and squeezed it all over my feet. He cunningly looked at my eyes and warned me that if I did not answer soon the red ants would attack my feet first and work their way upwards! This is how I was introduced to the Gurkhas and I am still trying to find this particular individual who squeezed the milk over my feet."*



# FAMILY NEWS

## Captain Mark and Sally Baker 00-02

Following a highly rewarding tour instructing at Sandhurst, I was appointed to HQ 8 Force Engr Bde in Sep 08 as SO3 G3 Engr Ops Cts, and Sally and I moved to quarters in Wilton, Salisbury. The switch from training officer cadets to being at the heart of the Corps's operational commitments has been a perfect tonic.

Part of my continuing professional education has included the discovery that HQ 8 Force Engr Bde is a deployable Bde HQ. It is in this capacity that I will deploy with the HQ in Jun 09 to Afghanistan as SO3 O&D in HQ Joint Force Support (Afghanistan) 8. On my return in Nov 09, having been selected for my majority, I will attend the Intermediate Command and Staff Course at Shrivenham in Jan 10.

Postings and deployments aside, what promises to be to be the most significant event of 2009 will be the arrival of our first child in Sep 09. I am of course hoping that the RAF can get me back in time during my R&R!

This year it has been good to re-acquaint with my old OC, Lt Col Shaun Harris, who I had not seen since leaving 69 Sqn, and also to link-up with some of the QGE contingent of 24 Cdo Engr Regt after their successful Afghanistan Tour.

## Richard and Elizabeth Beazley

Richard, Elizabeth and James(5) have been in Thailand for 4 years now and thoroughly enjoy the lifestyle, climate, culture and low cost of living.

Richard is a Project Control Manager with Foster Wheeler, a global petrochem company which designs and builds refineries and chemical plants mainly in Thailand. Based in Pattaya there is none of the stress or pollution one suffers in Bangkok. The industry doesn't seem as badly hit by global recession as other sectors, so if we all hold on tight we should survive. Pattaya gets better all the time (except for the traffic!) and now can boast a world class shopping mall, 24 hour restaurants, bars and supermarkets, 30 golf courses, and a myriad of sports and hobbies. Not to mention the infamous nightlife!

If you can ignore politics and stay out of trouble, particularly on the roads, then there is no better place to live and/or retire. All QGE are welcome at any time, and if any local advice is needed, do email me at:

richard\_beazley@fwuk.fwc.com

## Tom Butler (86-87)

We have been living in Johannesburg since 2007. Perhaps all those QGE border patrols in Hong Kong were good training for living behind large amounts of barbed wire, as we do. Although one is hesitant to admit it in polite circles these days, I am still a banker. Henrietta has been doing some voluntary work, in addition to doing daily battle with the Johannesburg taxi drivers as she shuttles our

girls (now aged 10 and 13) around "Jozi" to their various social and sporting engagements. The girls attend a very traditional school called Roedean (SA). They pray every morning in chapel for the other Roedean, call their teachers Madam, and are expected to curtsy whenever it is seemly - traditions which I suspect were all abandoned long ago by the Roedean in the "mother country". We will be moving back to Washington DC, in September - any QGE visitors would be welcome in either city.

## Peter and Julia Harvey

Peter & Julia Harvey continue to enjoy living in Clapham & visit the Gurkha Diner down the road in Balham every so often in need of a good Bhat. Dermot & Mary Stack came one year and Dermot was able to find out how rusty his Gurkhali kura was. We went to their daughter, Fiona's, wedding in Salisbury last August which was great party.

Local life in our piano factory conversion continues to occupy us quite a bit. The builders have now put a front on the building and it looks good - different from the old car park and skips which you used to see. Builders are all friendly, as ever, and we will miss them when they finally go. Visited Charles & Roma Spottiswoode in Shropshire last September on our way up to the Lake District and stayed for a very comfortable night in their converted barns. Nicely rural and still very comfortable, although the floods had caught part of their development.

Grandchildren are in frequent demand to install new printers etc and children to provide a new mobile. They are fun as well as useful, we find.

## Mike and Vicky Law (79-81, 86-88)

Mike and Vicky Law returned from a wonderful tour in New Jersey and are now back in JHQ Rheindahlen, Mike being responsible for information systems and information management for HQ ARRC. Mike is now well established in the technical IT field and will remain so whilst serving and most likely after retirement.



Vicky worked for many years with Service Children's Education in Europe and now does occasional supply work here in JHQ. The two boys, Dylan and Owen have morphed back from American kids to European children. Not so for Mike's older children, Jenny and Matt who live in Norfolk, Virginia, Jane having married a naval officer. Mike sees them with occasional trips to the NATO base and when they come to Europe for holidays, although Jen is currently planning to return to university in England.

Our farm in Italy is nearing completion after a hard slog reminiscent of Grand Designs and hopefully the pool goes





in this year, dependant upon the customary Italian sense of urgency. We picked and cold-pressed our first crop of olives last October producing over 80 litres of oil, most of which was consumed by the Danish families here in the ARRC.

### **Major Milchandra Gurung MBE (64-96)**

Margaret and I left Nepal in June 2007 to visit Mahima and Amol who are living and working in London. However, shortage of fuel and gas, traffic jams, strikes, pollution, rubbish rotting on the streets, sixteen hours of load shedding etc in Kathmandu was making retirement life rather unpleasant, so we decided to stretch our stay. As much as I enjoy watching Premier League, PGA, "Strictly Come Dancing" and "The Bill" on TV, after two months I was getting restless. I saw an ad for a building manager's job in Oxford Street, applied and to my surprise got the job on the spot. And I thought at sixty I was too old to get a job-must have been my Regimental blazer and tie! I probably learned more in eighteen months about building services and maintenance than I did as a Quartermaster in fifteen years.

But, at the middle of November 2008, leaving Margaret behind, I flew back to Nepal to mainly attend The Regimental 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in Pokhara. I missed the 50<sup>th</sup> and I was not going to miss this one. The anniversary celebrations and gatherings in Kathmandu and Pokhara, I thought were organised superbly by the teams involved in both locations, under the leadership of mainly, Majors Bhimbahadur, Hukumraj, Surjbahadur, Judhbahdur and Captains Purnabahdur and Bhaktabhadur. Some 500 ex QGE with their families and many burho sahebs from the UK were there and the largest contingent were the Prices-well done Graham! Attendance of General David Bill and memsahib added colour to the occasion. Apart from the eating and the drinking, it was really good to catch up with the old and the bold and to dwell on the past.



As usual, I got caught up with one thing or other, mostly domestic, so I am still in Nepal and AWOL from Margaret! Having to keep an eye on my father who has just turned eighty six and living in East Nepal. I am also involved in constructing a reading room (financed by a friend in Hong Kong) in a school attended by disadvantaged

children. I am hoping to get some children's books supplied through the INGO project called Room To Read. My next project is to fill a very big hole on the open ground behind the school, so that it can be utilised for sports, fetes, assemblies etc.. The cost is likely to be around eight hundred quid, if anyone is interested in helping. While in Kathmandu, I was able to join my Rotary Club members in organizing a Free Eye Clinic Camp near Syangja, West Nepal.

Margaret in the meantime is enjoying her time in England. While I was still there, we visited Inverness and on the way stayed with John and Tricia Getley who really spoilt us. They are both in good form. Mahima is still with the NHS, Amol working as Director International Students for Limkokwing

University in London. Serena is still bashing on as Marketing Manager with Australasia Academies in Sydney.

As I sign off, which I must because it's load shedding in five minutes. I am sweltering in the Terai heat and at the same time being bitten to bits by mosquitoes but I have plenty of Royal Stag whiskey and soda to accompany me! Jai QGE!

### **Colonel Andrew Mills (82-85, 94)**

Andy has enjoyed another exciting year. He spent the first three months with the British Army Antarctic Expedition as skipper of the Expedition Yacht, Challenge 67, Discoverer. As well as enjoying some spectacular sailing, the yacht provided the base camp to the 9 man shore party whilst they tried to traverse unexplored parts of the Recluse Peninsular.



He then deployed to Afghanistan for nine months as DCOS Reconstruction and Development in Regional Command (South). It proved to be a challenging task as he tried to stitch together the disparate activities of the partner nations, the UN mission and the NGOs to carry out meaningful tasks in an highly unforgiving environment. His main achievement was to initiate the delivery of the third turbine to the Kijaki Hydroelectric Power Station. This is a key project which, in time, will provide reliable power to Helmand and Kandahar. For the final 3 months of his tour he was lucky enough to be given command of the joint Romanian/American Task Force in Zabul Province.

He's now undergoing ten months of attaché training, which includes eight months of one-on-one language tuition, prior to becoming DA Kathmandu in the autumn. He's looking forward to meeting as many QGEA Members as possible over the length of his tour. Go visit!

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

The Prices are still in Hong Kong, along with Martin Lodge I think we are about all that is left of the '97 stay behind party. This year China celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, only a year after The Regiment. Will China ever catch us up? I doubt it!

Living in Hong Kong remains as busy and vibrant as ever. It is 12 years since the British left, and 12 years since we have been living in China. You might think our Chinese would be fluent by now, but sadly not. However the large number of Nepalese youngsters working in the bars and sandwich shops provided continuation training for my beleaguered Nepali Kura. It would now be wrong to assume that all Nepali's you meet are descendents of British Gurkhas. Likewise those smartly dressed Gurkha Security guards with the Army Air Corps blue colour berets are more likely to have been recruited from the Indian Army than BG.

Rebecca has changed roles and is now doing less front line classroom teaching, but is focussing on "learning support". Our son David, accompanied me to Nepal in November and



has now graduated and is embarking on his second career. Whilst he makes preparation for that he has spent time travelling and working his passage by teaching dinghy sailing.

Perowne Barracks continues to house the charity "Crossroads", who have been given a stay from eviction by the Government. The tunnels at the Shing Mun redoubt (part of the "Gin Drinkers line" have not exactly been restored, but David tells me there are now some maps taped to the walls with an RE cipher on them. Who put them there I do not know.

Those of you who remember how we planned to block the bridge at Lo Wu with a modified train in the event of mass invasion from the North will wonder now, as there are several motorway width crossing points and we are about to embark on building a road bridge from Hong Kong to Macau.

We were very pleased to see General Tony Pigott and Felicity who made a point of tracking me down while they were in Hong Kong in May. Please do make contact, even if you are only in transit on your flight to Australia. It is worth the stopover!

#### **Mike and Alison Stephens (62-67, 78-80, 85-87(GFF/48Bde)**

After a long break since my last contribution, a brief general update is perhaps required! I have just completed a 5+ year stint as Chairman of Governors of Warwick School, during which expenditure of £10m produced a magnificent new science centre and an impressive 20-classroom teaching bloc. I am still chairman of the South Midlands Branch of GWT and Oxfordshire SSAFA and will be happy to hear from any volunteer to take over either or both! Having handed over as church treasurer last January I find myself doing all the bookwork again in 2009, although someone else does the titular bit. Alison wonders when I am going to complete the list of retirement chores she gave me when I first retired from Oriel in 2001.

Alison spends two mornings a week helping the slow starters to read at Eynsham Primary School and is secretary of the Oxfordshire branch of the National Council of Women. Gardening fills much of the time that is left. We are both members of the local golf club but wonder sometimes if we are getting full value from our subs!

Robert left the Sappers after 15 years and found interesting civil engineering work with the Home Office covering bomb-blast protection of buildings. He recently transferred his allegiance to the Crown Service adding a little mystique to the same subject.

His daughter Charlotte plays the trumpet and approaches her teens apace. Wendy still works with Parliamentary Liaison Services supporting MPs who cannot afford an agent. Last year she ran a tour for her London choir to East Germany; Alison went along to sing and I to boost the audience. Catriona is a part-time GP with a practice in Banbury and a pretty full-time mum. Beth (7) and Eddie (6)

have now been joined by a large and fast lurcher (1), all of whom kept us busy on a recent family holiday in Devon.

The event of 2008 was of course the reunion in Nepal. Dom Verschoye's excellent organisation in UK was matched by a superb bandobast laid on by Hukumraj and his strong team in Nepal, about which the Price brothers tell more elsewhere in the newsletter.

It was a fabulous ten days meeting so many old chums both British and Gurkha. We opted for Chitwan rather than a trek this time and much enjoyed hunting rhino on elephant back, taking leisurely nature walks through the jungle, looking for elusive fish-eating crocodiles while boating along the river running by the camp and relaxing watching members of the party "wash elephants"; I took many photographs of some of the more vigorous members of the party clambering on the backs of two of the beasts enjoying their bath in the river. Age was no barrier and Mike Bruges was seen striking out from the bank with a strong crawl to clamber on board the livelier of the two elephants and managed for several minutes to defy the bucking, lunging and diving animal before sensibly deciding not to submit his two replacement hips to further ferocious treatment. I was pleased to record the moment when a relatively young ex-commandant emulated the efforts of his son and stayed on his charger as it eventually clambered ashore and let him dismount dry shod.

Other memorable interludes included visiting Motiram Saheb's Magnolia School in Pokhara and an early morning flight to Everest. The latter was followed by the probably unique experience of walking the



scenic route into the Durbar Square in Kathmandu across a footbridge that Peter Whitestone had failed to find.

Despite trials during transit through Delhi on our return journey, when I was thankful that I had one of my ex-adjutants on hand to deal with airport inefficiency, we look forward to the next reunion!

Early in the New Year our near neighbour George Ritchie died. We both echo the sentiments so eloquently expressed in John Croft's obituary in this newsletter. Alison and I first met in George and Joan's quarter in Kluang in early 1964 and we have seen them often since we moved to Eynsham in 1990. It was a tribute to George that so many of the Regiment attended his funeral at Swindon crematorium; he was one of those characters whom once met, never forgotten!

#### **Brian and Alison Taylor (71-76)**

The Nepal Reunion brought back many happy memories for Brian (details elsewhere) and served as a long overdue





introduction to Gurkhas and the Regiment for Alison. It was a sort of honeymoon for us as although we had been together for 14 years we only got around to getting married in Feb 2008. Brian after leaving the Army in 1986 spent 13 years with consulting engineers Ove Arup based in their London Head Office working in HR. For the last 10 years he has been self employed working from home on a variety of different ventures but is now effectively retired looking after the house and 2 mad springer spaniels whilst Alison continues working as a Director of HR with an asset management firm in the City.

Brian's daughters, both of whom were born in HK whilst he was serving with the Regiment, are both pursuing very successful careers. Joanna works for Standard Chartered Bank on the risk side. She and her partner Ross will be producing Brian's first grandchild in August. They live in the Medway area. Amanda and her husband Graham live in Newcastle where Amanda is a Senior Sister on a specialist intensive care unit. The girl's mum Sue is remarried and living in Bristol

### Brigadier Ty and Gilli Urch (92–94)



Another couple of excellent QGE journals have whizzed by and I'm told it must be time for another Urch up-date; I can't actually remember where we got to last time so we'll have to settle on

a quick 'snap-shot'. In summary - life is ticking along very nicely for all the Urchins.

Ty was selected for promotion to Brigadier in June 2008 (on his birthday!) and is now the Commander of 1st Mechanized Brigade – all very grown-up, but he is enjoying it immensely. Gilli is working locally as an Activities Organiser with dementia patients which she loves; the paid counselling job still eludes her at present! Lauren achieved 3 x 'A's at A Level to secure her place at Southampton Uni to study Physiotherapy in 2009; she is just about to go 'walkabouts' in Australia for a few months where she will be working as a volunteer on a wildlife sanctuary as well as doing some travelling. Tim also got great results in his GCSEs and is now thoroughly enjoying being in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form at Queen's College where he is still getting seriously stuck into rugby (including tour of NZ last summer) drama, D of E, lots of socialising and some work too!

### Captain Charles Wasilewski (99–01, 04–05)

Until now, I have never really thought it particularly relevant to contribute to the 'family news' section of the QGE Magazine. However, having now spent the best part of three and a half years as a civilian, I have decided to rejoin the Army so I felt that this would be a very opportune moment to make up for failing to keep everyone up to date with my circumstances. Having initiated the process in

December I will now be formally reinstated back into the Corps in late April this year and will then take over from Mark Baker Saheb in 8 Force Engineer Brigade; a posting that I am extremely fortunate to get and very much looking forward to.

I originally decided to retire from the Army after the best part of eight, highly enjoyable, years during which I had the good fortune to serve twice with 69 Squadron; initially as a Troop Commander in I Troop between 1999 – 2001 and again as Squadron Second in Command between 2004 – 2005. Both involved operational tours (Kosovo and Iraq respectively) and were without doubt the highlights of my military career. Since retiring I have varied my time between completing a fascinating MSc in International Relations and then working as a Management Consultant in both London and Bristol.

Clearly, rejoining the Army after such a gap is not the most common move and as such has been quite a decision to make. However, it was the QGE Birthday in Maidstone last year that I believe was the true catalyst to my decision making. Clichés aside, it was the great work that had been achieved by both Squadrons as well as the camaraderie shown here that really made my mind up; no matter how challenging and enjoyable my civilian work was, it never replicated that experienced in the Army. Whilst I may not have done my long term career prospects much favours, one only lives once and I felt I had more to give the Army before no doubt ultimately finding myself back in civi street. Additionally, it was the daily trauma of having to wear a suit that also proved a great driver in making my decision!

I very much look forward to returning to the Corps and once again working with those still serving. Equally, should anyone wish to discuss life on the 'outside' please feel free to get in touch. Jai QGE!

### Bill and Janet Wiggett (65–71)

Time moves on and I have now reached that watershed of 65 years although memories of my time as Troop Commander with 68 and 69 Squadron in Hong Kong and as 2IC 70 Squadron in Kluang and Singapore are as fresh as ever. If I sit still long enough I can still taste the San Miguel beer served up in the Ooh La La bar in Granville Road, Kowloon where Druitt, Humphrey and Calvert still owe me rounds!! Great days indeed. Equally fresh are memories of my friends in the Regiment and, in particular, the members of my troop. WO2 Bhimbahdur Gurung (ex G Major and now Hon Lt and stalwart of the Nepal branch of the Association) was commissioned whilst serving with me. So good to hear of him when I read the news letter. (Hi Bhim saheb!!) I still keep busy with my Companies and fly off to the Middle East on a regular basis. At CQC Ltd we are still very busy with MOD contracts for the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, body armour, webbing etc etc. All the family are well with Tom on a gap year in South America before going to Oxford Brookes and Alice half way through her time at UCL where she has threatened to stay on to complete her MA. Janet is now in uniform as a member of the WRVS serving teas at the local hospital where her 'boss' is 85 years old! They will let Janet on the till when she gets older!



# MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION HELD AT ON SUNDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2008

Present:

Lieutenant General D R Bill CB  
Brigadier AD Harking OBE  
Colonel W J Chesshyre  
Major I Moore  
24 Members of the Association  
Lieutenant Colonel J F Wheeley MBE

President  
Chairman  
Nepal Member  
Social Member  
  
Secretary

Apologies have been received from 26 Members of the Association.

## ITEM 1 – OPENING REMARKS BY THE COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT

1. The President opened the meeting by welcoming members. He congratulated the Regiment on outstanding performances in both Afghanistan and Kosovo; indeed, across the board, all members of the Regiment had “punched well above their weight”. The aspirations outlined at last year’s AGM to expand the Regiment and the Association continue to go from strength to strength.

## ITEM 2 – PREVIOUS MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

2. The Minutes of the AGM for 2007 were passed as a true record.

Proposed: Lieutenant Colonel Larry Inge

Seconded: Col Bill Chesshyre

## ITEM 3 – ACCOUNTS

3. The Chairman drew the Meeting’s attention to a financial statement that had been prepared by the Treasurer covering the period up to 21 August 2008 - a copy of which is attached to these minutes. In a separate e-mail to the Secretary, the Treasurer had commented that, whilst the current economic climate had caused investment trends to be discouraging, his advice was to continue for the moment with the present strategy. The Trustees will take the end of year’s Account formally at the Regimental Council meeting in January 2009.

## ITEM 4 – THE MAGAZINE

4. The Chairman briefed the meeting that Major Ian Adamson had, regretfully, tendered his resignation due to pressure of work and his remoteness from the Regiment and Association’s centre of gravity. In the notes to the he presented to the Meeting via the Chairman and Secretary he made the following points:

- a. Those who submitted articles that were not printed should accept his apologies for not including them. Encouragingly, there was a lot to choose from and with the Regiment achieving great things in Afghanistan, it was felt appropriate to capture some of those tales.
- b. It would appear that power cuts and fuel shortages delayed the printing in Kathmandu this year. The Magazine arrived with the printers in June and was not received back in the Regiment until late August. It then took some two weeks of work by the Gurkha Major and Captain Prembahadur Ale to update addresses and post them.
- c. This year 870 copies were ordered at a cost of £1445.46, compared to £1404.40 for 800 copies in 2007. Postage from Nepal to UK came in at £122.40 and £372.79 for posting the magazines out, which is similar to last year. Even with the delays, it is considered that printing the Magazine in Nepal is cheaper than it would be in UK.
- d. A decision on how to split the postage costs equitably between Association and Regiment needs to be taken, as presently the Association picks up all postage costs.

5. The President recorded a formal vote of thanks to Major Adamson for all his hard work in producing the last two editions of the Magazine.

6. Major Milanchandra Gurung raised a point regarding the Minutes of the 2007 AGM in which it was stated that he would be the subject of an article in 2008. He pointed out that he had already been the subject of an article and it was agreed that another personality would be selected to feature in the next edition of the Magazine.





## ITEM 5 - UPDATE ON NEPAL AND PAHAR TRUST

7. Colonel Bill Chesshyre gave an update on the situation in Nepal:
- Elections in April. Maoists won a sweeping victory (220/601 seats of Nepali Congress 110). Allied with UML (Unified Marxist-Leninist). Maoist leader, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, known as Prachanda, Prime Minister.
  - 29 May – monarchy abolished.
  - July – Ram Baran Yadav, Nepali Congress leader from Terai, elected President, defeating CPN(M) (Communist Party Nepal (Marxist)), by 308 to 282 votes out of 590.
  - Problems:
    - Madeshis unrest. MPRF (Madeshis Peoples' Rights Forum) won 52 seats in Constituent Assembly. Periodic bombings in Terai and Kathmandu.
    - Economy in dire state, though living conditions and daily life improving and sensible Finance Minister appointed.
    - Integration of Maoist guerrillas into army.
    - Maoists want to end foreign military service by Nepalis – but unlikely to succeed.
    - Kosi Dam failure. Poor maintenance by Indians. Collapse led to serious flooding and displacement of tens of thousands. India increasing supply of electricity.
8. Major John Parfect provided the Meeting with an update on the Pahar Trust:
- In 2002, 19 schools had been completed. In 2008, this figure had risen to 41. The target is 40 schools by 2011 (20 years after the first one was constructed).
  - The number of children in schools in 2002 was 7500; in 2008 this figure was 11500.
  - Tom Langridge is presently very unwell and Howard Green MBE, Chairman for the past 3 years is currently spending 2 days a week running the Trust's affairs
  - The Gurkha Major has been a valuable link between the Regiment and the Trust in respect of fund raising and public relations.
9. In response to questions it was confirmed that the focus of the Trust would remain the provision of schools in the hills and not be diverted to other worthy causes.
10. It was stated that it may be possible for the Trust to receive any surplus monies arising out of the public donations that have been made towards the cost of the Maidstone Gurkha Statue.
11. The Colonel of the Regiment recorded a formal note of thanks to Major Parfect and those working on behalf of the Trust.

## ITEMS 6 – 60<sup>th</sup> REUNION PLANS

12. The Secretary briefly ran through Colonel Dom Verschoyle's notes to the Meeting – these are attached to the Minutes.

## ITEM 7 – FUTURE TRUST STRUCTURAL CHANGES

13. The Chairman informed the Meeting that the proposal to merge the Perowne and Regimental Trusts discussed at the last Meeting was the subject of further work that had yet to be completed.

## ITEM 8 – OPPORTUNITIES FOR WIDER EMPLOYMENT OF GURKHA ENGINEERS

14. Commandant QGE briefed the Meeting on the effects that the newly introduced Gurkha Terms and Conditions of Service (GTACOS) were having on the Regiment:



a. The main challenge is to manage the over-manning and promotion pyramid due to the extension in service out to 22 years that GTACOS has introduced. One solution was the formation of a Gurkha troop within 33 Fd Sqn RE in order to meet the operational imperative. Another was to allow voluntary transfer to the wider Army with most soldiers who opted for this course choosing to join a Corps other than RE as they offered the potential for better second careers.

b. Gurkha SSC (LE) officers were, as part of revised career planning, gaining employment across the Corps and, on a case-by-case basis, being given additional training to fit them for their new appointments.

15. The President commented that the long term aim was to achieve 2 centres in which QGE sub-units would be based – 36 Engr Regt and 24 (Cdo) Engr Regt.

#### ITEM 9 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

16. The Chairman briefed the Meeting on his concept for Association events in 2009.

a. The lunch at Minley in June 2008 had attracted 72. Minley does have a limited life span but continues to be a favoured location and its attraction could be improved by providing transport to and from Farnborough (or Fleet) railway stations. The Chairman therefore proposed to hold another “family friendly” lunch at Minley in late June 2009.

b. It was also proposed to hold a major event at Chatham every 5 years.

c. The next QGEA AGM would be held during next year’s Regimental Birthday celebrations.

d. A diary of QGEA and GBA events for the coming year is attached to these minutes.

17. The President closed the Meeting by recording a formal vote of thanks to Lieutenant Colonel Phil Cook and Colonel Jim Stuart in recognition of their hard work and service to the Association during their tenures as Chairman and Secretary respectively.

J F Wheeley MBE  
Lieutenant Colonel  
Secretary

October 2008

Enclosures:

1. Financial Statement.





**The end of the Charities' financial year is 28 FEBRUARY 2009**

1. QGE TRUST			Charity no 1011421		2. QGEA		IR Ref CR/200/23/2025		3. PEROWNE		Charity no 289005			
Unrestricted funds			Current PERIOD 28/2/09		Previous year ending 28 Feb 2008		Current PERIOD 28/2/09		Previous year ending 28 Feb 2008		Current PERIOD £39,872.00		Previous year ending 28 Feb 2008	
Receipts														
Subscriptions, gifts, donations and other voluntary receipts			£1,985.75 £20.00		£2,128.25		£10.00		£ 1,000.00 £ 35.00					
Gift aid on donations and subscriptions minus element of previous year			£335.85 -£36.31		£ 534.82									
Receipts earned from assets			£1,372.08		£ 1,309.03		£1,246.10		£ 1,110.38		£2,056.12		£ 1,899.32	
deposit interest			£78.52		£ 80.76		£204.14		£ 151.23		£63.84		£ 41.66	
Other receipts			£0.00 £0.00		£ 382.39		£56.00 £1,102.50 £4,000.00		£ 45.70					
QGEA for 60thReunion			£7,500.00											
Total receipts			£11,255.89		£ 4,435.25		£6,618.74		£ 2,342.31		£2,119.96		£ 1,940.98	
Payments														
Payments directly for charitable purposes			Welfare History		-£800.00		-£800.00		-£ 50.00				-£ 4,407.40	
Education via Perowne Trust			-£1,000.00				-£1,000.00				-£2,666.67			
Magazine			-£1,343.95		-£ 1,077.21									
GBA Subscription							-£15.00		-£ 15.00					
Nepal Branch 60th Birthday			-£10,039.50				-£7,500.00							
Regt Sec							-£238.86		-£ 548.88					
Presentation (Acorn)					-£ 60.00									





Payments for management and administration	Audit/ISA (incl VAT)	-£517.50	-£ 493.50	-£149.50	-£ 129.25	-£195.50 -£25.00	-£ 176.25
	Bank charges						
	Stationery						
	Postage			-£6.00			
	Wreath		-£ 20.00	-£20.00			
	Museum expert to Pokhara		-£ 220.00				
	Re-union			-£1,085.44			
	Portrait		-£ 400.00				
	QGEA Southern lunch			-£350.00			
	GM re GBA Dinner			-£96.00			
	repayment of overpaid subscription						
Sub-total		-£140.00 -£657.50	-£ 1,133.50	-£1,706.94	-£ 2,539.80 -£ 2,669.05	-£220.50	-£ 176.25
<b>Total payments</b>		<b>-£657.50</b>	<b>-£ 1,133.50</b>	<b>-£1,706.94</b>	<b>-£ 2,669.05</b>	<b>-£220.50</b>	<b>-£ 176.25</b>
<b>Other recognised gains and losses</b>	Net of receipts/(Payments)	<b>-£657.50</b>	<b>-£ 1,133.50</b>	<b>-£1,706.94</b>	<b>-£ 2,669.05</b>	<b>-£220.50</b>	<b>-£ 176.25</b>
Unrealised	Gains(losses) on investments	-£9,182.10	-£ 4,650.14	-£11,449.42	-£ 123.38	-£18,891.78	-£ 3,480.43
	Capital drawdown					£0.00	£ 3,500.00
	Net movement in funds	-£9,839.60	-£ 5,783.64	-£13,156.36	-£ 2,792.43	-£19,112.28	-£ 156.68
	Cash funds last year	£28,337.72	£ 31,623.32	£43,840.55	£ 41,892.05	£61,114.56	£ 63,737.66
	Cash funds this year	<b>£18,498.12</b>	<b>£ 25,839.68</b>	<b>£30,684.19</b>	<b>£ 39,099.62</b>	<b>£42,002.28</b>	<b>£ 63,580.98</b>
<b>Statement of Assets and Liabilities at year end</b>							
<b>Cash Funds</b>							
	CAF	£74.90	£ 62.17	£986.56	£ 4,828.62	£168.44	£ 1,224.09
	RBS current account	£500.00	£ 500.00				
	deposit account	£721.70	£ 3,343.18				
	Add debtor Tax on Gift Aid		£ 36.31				
	Less creditor(s)		-£ 60.00				
<b>Other monetary assets</b>							
						£508.94 AFCIF -£195.50 ISVCS -£25.00 CAF	
<b>Investment assets</b>		<b>£15,273.96</b>	<b>£ 24,456.06</b>	<b>£27,562.51</b>	<b>£ 39,011.93</b>	<b>£45,478.69</b>	<b>£ 64,370.47</b>
<b>Assets retained for the Charity's own use</b>							
<b>Liabilities</b>							
	Creditors falling due within one year					-£4,480.00	-£ 4,480.00
<b>Total net worth</b>		<b>£16,570.56</b>	<b>£ 28,337.72</b>	<b>£28,549.07</b>	<b>£ 43,840.55</b>	<b>£41,455.57</b>	<b>£ 61,114.56</b>





