Gurkha 200 Pageant
Sponsorship Proposal
If there were a minute’s silence for every Gurkha casualty from the Second World War alone, we would be silent for two whole weeks.

Twenty six Victoria Crosses have been awarded to Gurkha Regiments.

‘If a man says he is not afraid of dying, he is either lying or he is a Gurkha’

Former Chief of Staff of the Indian Army, Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw

‘Kaphar hunnu bhandar marnu ramro – It is better to die than to live like a coward’

Introduction by the Chairman of Trustees

General Sir Peter Wall
GCB CBE ADC Gen

In 2015, Gurkhas will have served the British Crown for 200 years. It is a bicentennial that provides an opportunity to celebrate the extraordinary martial qualities of the Gurkha soldier, his temperament, his loyal and selfless service and his supreme courage in battle.

It is also an opportunity to mark the unique relationship between the Gurkha soldier, his British Officers and the wider British public. It is a relationship that has been forged in battle, across the globe. It is based on mutual respect and endures beyond active service in the Brigade well into retirement. It transcends generations.

Nepal is a land of variety and contrasts, with the extraordinary beauty of the Himalayas and their associated wildlife, flora and fauna. There is another Nepal however. Rugged, harsh, unforgiving and sparsely populated, life for many is one of subsistence where extremes of climate can destroy lives and livelihoods and where medical and other support can be several days’ walk away. It is from this harsh landscape that the Gurkha soldier is recruited and it is to this land that, until recently, he returned at the end of his service to live in retirement.

There are currently over 7,000 ex-Gurkhas and their widows in Nepal but their circumstances could not be more different to those in the UK. Nepal has no welfare state or NHS to provide them essential care. Many are too old to make the trek from their villages through the hills to the Trust’s Area Welfare Centres to collect their pensions or receive medical and other support. Unless the Trust acts, they will become increasingly isolated, vulnerable and distressed. Without our vital support those who have given so much to our Army and to the British Crown would be unable to live out their lives with dignity. For that is our Charter and our raison d’être as a Charity.

With this in mind it is imperative that the Trust takes full advantage of the opportunities available in 2015, not only to increase the profile of the Charity, but to improve its ability to respond to the changing circumstances of those former Gurkha soldiers and their dependants most in need in Nepal. I therefore invite you to join us at the Pageant as we celebrate this unique time in our history acknowledging these brave men who have served our country so faithfully.
Gurkhas are known for their grace and courage. As gentle and shy in daily life as they are fearless and tenacious in battle, they are a dignified people. To this day they remain renowned for their loyalty, professionalism and bravery. Becoming a Gurkha is a matter of great pride. Tens of thousands of young Nepalese men apply, but few attain the exceptionally high standards required to join the Brigade.

In 2015, two hundred years of Gurkha service to the British Crown will be marked with a series of events and activities designed to celebrate and enhance the Brigade of Gurkhas’ reputation nationally and internationally, the overall aim of which will be to contribute to the maintenance of the Brigade of Gurkhas in the British Army’s order of battle and to enhance, as well as engage, support for The Gurkha Welfare Trust as the lead charity for Gurkha welfare.

The Gurkha Welfare Trust would like to invite you to join them in a partnership at this very special time in its history, offering a unique opportunity that will never happen again. Many charities hold prestigious events, mostly on an annual basis, but none can claim the kudos and British pride that will be enjoyed during this exceptional time.

Further information detailing Gurkha history, the work of the Trust, the Gurkha 200 Appeal and sponsorship opportunities are contained within this proposal.

Gurkhas are recruited from the hill people of Nepal who trace their roots right back to an 8th century Hindu warrior, Guru Goraknath. They first encountered the British in the Gurkha War of 1814-1816, which ended not just in stalemate, but with an abiding sense of mutual respect and admiration between the two sides.

The Peace Treaty that ended the war enabled Gurkhas to serve under contract in the East India Company Army and then later the British Army. Thus began Britain’s relationship with Nepal, our ‘oldest ally’ in Asia.

Between 1857 and 1947, the Gurkha regiments saw service in Burma, Afghanistan, the North-East and North-West Frontiers of India, Malta (The Russo-Turkish War 1877-78), Cyprus, Malaya, China (the Boxer rebellion of 1900), Tibet and in various theatres of the First and Second World Wars.

They have continued to serve in every major conflict since and still do so today. Indeed, on return from his tour in Afghanistan where he served alongside the 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, HRH Prince Harry said that there was “no safer place than by the side of a Gurkha.”
In 1969 there was increasing evidence that a significant number of ex-Gurkhas were living in their homeland of Nepal in circumstances of abject poverty and distress. These were the soldiers who had been discharged at the end of the Second World War without any form of pension. Their ranks were swelled by soldiers proceeding on early retirement, again without any form of pension, as a result of the drawdown of Empire. It was essential that something was done to provide relief, to repay the debt of honour.

As an immediate response, The Gurkha Welfare Trust was established and an Appeal was made to the British public for assistance. Incredibly, in 1969, over £1 million was raised within 6 months, truly indicative of the affection with which the Gurkha soldier was held by the British public. This provided immediate support.

In the succeeding 45 years the work of the Trust has developed to meet changing needs: the provision of a welfare pension, a medical scheme to provide both primary and secondary medical support, construction of two Residential Homes to provide accommodation and care to over fifty of the Trust’s most vulnerable Welfare Pensioners, emergency grants in the event of disaster, water and school projects in support of Gurkha communities in the middle hills, the traditional recruiting areas of the Brigade. Working in partnership with the British public, the serving Brigade, the Government and many friends, the Trust has sought to enable ex-Gurkhas and their dependants to live out their lives with dignity.

The work is undertaken through a network of 19 Area Welfare Centres, each run by an Area Welfare Officer who is a retired Nepalese Gurkha Officer. Every day, Gurkhas come to these centres with their health and welfare needs and every quarter a steady stream of Gurkhas walk anything up to three days to claim their pensions.

Over 45 years ago the British public took the Gurkha soldier to their hearts, raising over £1 million to establish The Gurkha Welfare Trust to ensure that no Gurkha veteran or his widow would live in poverty or destitution. For 45 years, the Trust has been providing this care, repaying the debt of honour the country owes to these exceptional people.

The Trust must respond. Our Medical Scheme is without parallel in Nepal. But it is static and depends on the ability of the patient to travel from his or her village. It is essential the Trust has the ability to deliver medical support in the home. We must increase the support available to families caring for their elderly Gurkha relatives.

In 2015, we are once again calling on the British people to help the Gurkhas. Their needs have changed. Our once brave strong Gurkhas are now old men in their 80s and 90s. Their fighting days long over, they now spend their days in their peaceful and isolated villages in Nepal. They suffer from all the chronic conditions linked to advancing age – cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, dementia, hypertension, rheumatism. Many are house-bound, blind or deaf and need support with independent living. No longer can they negotiate the steep and often perilous pathways of their village homes or trek to the Trust’s Area Welfare Centres to collect their pensions or receive medical and other support.

Our ability to diagnose and treat conditions promptly must be enhanced and we must care for our pensioners in their final days and hours.

These additional measures are not without cost. The Trust already spends over £12 million each year in Nepal. We estimate a further £1 million each year is required for the next 6 years.

We therefore need to raise £6 million if we are to provide the support required to enable our gallant old soldiers and their widows to live out their lives with dignity.

The Gurkha Welfare Trust is launching its Appeal to enable it to:

- Recruit 12 Mobile Doctors who will trek from village to village providing medical care where needed
- Develop a network of District Nurses, specifically recruited for and trained in support of the elderly, who will be at the forefront of support for families charged with caring for the elderly ex-Gurkhas
- Build and equip four Pathology and Treatment Centres at our key Area Welfare Centres to provide in-house testing to speed up diagnosis and treatment
- Provide palliative care comfort and support at home when needed

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The Gurkha Welfare Trust is currently supporting over 7,000 retired Gurkha soldiers and widows in Nepal who have no other form of income. Most are in their 80s and 90s and are totally reliant on the Trust for a secure and dignified old age. The Trust also provides Community Aid projects in Gurkha villages. The case studies below are just a few examples of how it helps its different beneficiaries.

The impact of its work

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The monthly pension Amini Muhara Chhetri receives from the Trust is her only source of income. Since her Gurkha husband died 18 years ago, she has lived alone in the village of Pani Pokhara in north west Nepal.

Amini uses her pension to buy the basic staples of the Nepali diet – rice, dahl, vegetables, salt, sugar, some spices and oil. It also enables her to clothe herself and buy basic toiletries.

While she may not be able to afford many luxuries, she is extremely grateful to the Trust for supporting her financially because, without her monthly pension, she would be destitute.

The Gurkha Welfare Trust currently provides a monthly pension to over 7,000 Gurkha pensioners in Nepal at an annual cost of over £4 million.

98 year old Rifleman Man Bahadur Gurung is the oldest resident at the Trust's second Residential Home in Dharan, east Nepal. He served with 1/9 Gurkha Rifles in WWII and saw action in Italy and Greece before participating in the race to Berlin.

After the war he returned to Nepal, married and started a family. He provided for his family by growing crops on his small strip of land. When he could no longer farm, the Trust stepped in and provided him with a monthly Welfare Pension. When he could no longer live with his son's family, he became one of the first residents in the Trust's Residential Home in Pokhara, west Nepal. Wanting to be closer to his children, he transferred to Dharan when the Residential Home opened in October 2013.

The Trust now provides 24 hour residential care for 52 of its most vulnerable pensioners in its two homes in Pokhara and Dharan.

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Balkalyan Higher Secondary School, located in Libang, the capital of the isolated mountainous western district of Rolpa, is testament to the success of the Trust’s School Programme.

Originally built by the Nepalese government in 1969, the school has called on our expertise and support on a number of occasions. In 1987 we built a male dormitory. In 2002 the Trust constructed eight classrooms, an administrative block, computer and science laboratories, separate male and female toilets and a waste incinerator. Four years ago, we funded equipment for the science laboratory and undertook basic maintenance on the school building.

Thanks to our ongoing support, pupil numbers at Balkalyan School have more than doubled. The school is able to offer a wide curriculum and the majority of its pupils now go on to higher education.

The Gurkha Welfare Trust has built 125 new schools in Nepal and currently supports 75 schools each year.

Cataracts in both eyes had robbed 83 year old Girimaya Bishwakarma of her sight and she could no longer live independently.

In December Girimaya attended the Trust’s Mobile Medical Camp at Syangja to have both cataracts removed, free of charge. The procedures took place over two days as first one eye, and then the other, was operated on.

Girimaya’s first thought at having her sight restored was delight that she would be able to see her family, grandchildren, chickens and dog again – and that she could go back to living independently.

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Bishnu Chhetri, a villager, sums up the project’s impact: “It has made a huge difference to village life. Before, we went to the water, but now the water comes to us. Everyone here is really very happy.”

Containing 250 homes, Ab Kholi is in the flat terai plains of southern Nepal where summer temperatures reach 100°F. Villagers had to endure a two hour walk each day under the hot sun to fetch drinking water from the river Rapti. A previous water supply had dried up.

In 2008 the village came to the Trust for help. Over the next two years we drilled into hidden underground water reserves, constructed a 16,000 litre water tank, installed over 200 tap stands and latrines and provided clean water supply and sanitation at the village school and medical centre.

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The 200th Anniversary of Gurkha service to the British Crown will be a commemoration of national and international significance. To celebrate the unique relationship that has existed between Britain and the brave fighting men of Nepal since 1815, a number of high profile events are being planned. Chief among these is an Evening of Celebration at the Royal Hospital Chelsea on 11 June 2015.

The Evening will incorporate three distinct elements: a spectacular Pageant chronicling 200 years of Gurkha military service, from the early years in India to the recent conflict in Afghanistan, to a specially invited audience of 1,500 UK and overseas dignitaries, media and Gurkha supporters and involving over 300 serving Gurkhas; a Champagne Reception and Celebration Dinner in the Great Hall for a select 200 of the guests; and a Gurkha-inspired Reception for the remaining 1,300 guests.

This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be associated with the renowned Brigade of Gurkhas and to share in this historic Anniversary. The Evening will celebrate all that is unique in Gurkha service over 200 years and highlight the need to fund medical care for elderly and infirm Gurkhas in Nepal.

Your support will, in turn, enable The Gurkha Welfare Trust to continue its work in supporting over 7,000 Welfare Pensioners in Nepal, who would otherwise live their last days in poverty, ill health and destitution. The Gurkha Welfare Trust would be honoured to be associated with your company at this very special time in history.

Gurkha 200 Pageant and Dinner

Gurkha 200 corporate sponsorship opportunities

Main Sponsor - £300,000
- 2 prime tables x 8 for the Celebration Dinner and Pageant
- 30 prime seats for the Pageant and Gurkha Reception
- Trip to Nepal for 2 senior staff (plus partners) to see the field work of the GWT
- Private dinner party with the GWT Chairman, General Sir Peter Wall, for up to 8 guests
- Invitation to Royal Drinks Reception to launch Gurkha 200 celebrations for up to 4 guests
- One page advertisement in event programme - inside front, inside back or back cover
- One page of editorial content
- Advert/branding on outside big screen pre- and post Pageant
- Branding on 10,000 invitations and 1,800 tickets
- Access to Brigade of Gurkhas' resources for corporate events (subject to operational and ceremonial duties)

Included in all sponsorship packages:
- Use of GWT logo and imagery for internal communications
- Inclusion in Gurkha 200 and GWT websites with opportunities for reciprocal links
- Thank you in GWT Annual Review 2015/16
- References to your support through social media

Second Level Sponsorship - £25,000
- 2 seats for the Celebration Dinner and Pageant
- 10 seats for the Pageant and Gurkha Reception
- Half page advertisement in event programme
- Static advertisement on outside big screen pre- and post Pageant

Third Level Sponsorship - £15,000
- 10 seats for the Pageant and Gurkha Reception
- Acknowledgement within event programme

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