The Gurkha Museum has teamed up with Royal Mail to produce a special commemorative Gurkha 200 Stamp Collection.

This Commemorative Sheet traces the history of this famed fighting force who have served the British Crown for 200 years. Gurkhas have played a vital part in British military operations since the raising of the first Gurkha regiments in 1815.

Originally part of the British Indian Army, they fought Pathans on the frontiers, dacoits in Burma and mutineers in India. With six battalions on the Western Front, four in Gallipoli and others in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Palestine, Persia and Salonika, Gurkhas were prominent in the First World War, and similarly so in the Second World War, where they served in North Africa, Italy, Malaya and Burma.

After 1947, Gurkha regiments were divided between the armies of independent India and Britain, with British Gurkhas in the forefront of operations in Malaya and Borneo, and subsequently taking part in the Falklands campaign, and more recently in Bosnia, Kosovo, East Timor, Sierra Leone, Iraq and Afghanistan. Ten stamps illustrate the history of Gurkhas from 1815 in the foothills of the Himalayas to recent operations in Afghanistan and the work of the Gurkha Welfare Trust. It is in limited edition of 7500 and can be purchased online via: www.royalmail.com
On behalf of the HQBG team, I would like to wish a very Merry Christmas to all our readers.

Another year has passed and it has been a fantastic year for the Brigade of Gurkhas. The bicentenary of the Gurkha service to the Crown this year has marked an important milestone in our history and has been celebrated worldwide.

The Brigade has continued to excel in what it does and our professional excellence adds to the Gurkha reputation. We have seen large scale exercises (such as Ex SABER STRIKE where 2 RGR, as part of 16 Air Assault Brigade, played its vital role), massive Gurkha 200 events involving the Royals and a huge charity effort across the Brigade for the Nepal Earthquake. But as per usual there is no time to rest on our laurels as we get ready for 2016.

In this edition, we take a look at the Gurkha 200 celebrations in Brunei involving His Majesty The Sultan of Brunei (page 4) and a Gurkha 200 Dinner held in Hong Kong (page 5).

The 2015 Intake Recruits passed out from Gurkha Coy Catterick and depart to their respective units (page 9).

We also take a look at the Dashain and Tihar celebrations across the Brigade as a reminder that we derive our strength from our distinct cultural identity (page 18).

The Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas and the Pipes and Drums continue to charm the audience with their music. This time they gave an epic performance at the Festival of Remembrance in the Royal Albert Hall (page 23).

Finally, Parbate sports brings you updates from around the BG units including the Gurkha 200 Squash team tour to Nepal (page 36).

You can find out more about the Gurkhas and see some of the things they do on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn:

Search for
The Gurkha Brigade Association
Follow us @ Gurkha Bde
Search for
Gurkha Brigade Association

Alternatively, visit our website:
www.gurkhabde.com

Comd and Gurkha Major QG Signals formally congratulating Colonel of the Regiment, Maj Gen Pope CBE for his promotion to Lieutenant General who will be taking over Deputy Chief of General Staff (DCGS) appointment from Jan 16.
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Colonel Commandant Brigade of Gurkhas, General Sir Peter Wall represented Her Majesty The Queen. The parade consisted of two contingents: one from the Brigade of Gurkhas and one from the Royal Brunei Land Forces, totalling around 820 military personnel.

After the Royal Salute His Majesty The Sultan inspected the parade accompanied by General Sir Peter Wall for the Brigade of Gurkhas contingent. Then, accompanied by RBAF Commander Pehin Datu Pekerma Jaya Major General Dato Paduka Seri Mohd Tawih Abdullah for the Royal Brunei Land Forces contingent.

This year marks 200 years service of the Brigade of Gurkhas to the British Crown. 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 that exists between the Gurkha soldiers, his British and Gurkha Officers and Brunei.

Colonel Commandant Brigade of Gurkhas, General Sir Peter Wall said: “I am indebted to His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu’izzaddin Waddaulah for his generosity in allowing this parade of the
His Majesty The Sultan of Brunei grants audience to Brigade of Gurkhas delegation

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei granted an audience to General Sir Peter Wall, Colonel Commandant of the Brigade of Gurkhas, at the Royal Palace of Istana Nurul Iman on 12 October.

The audience followed a Commemoration Parade marking 200 years of Gurkha service to the British Crown held at Bandar Seri Begawan’s main ceremonial parade ground at which the Sultan took the salute and met soldiers and families from British Forces Brunei. General Sir Peter was accompanied by His Excellency Mr David Campbell, British High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam; Colonel Mike Page, Defence Advisor to the British High Commission; and Colonel James Robinson, Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas.

During the audience, The Sultan recalled with pleasure the Gurkha Pageant and Dinner at the Royal Hospital Chelsea which he attended with The Queen and The Prince of Wales in June. General Wall welcomed the close collaboration that exists between the Garrison and Royal Brunei Armed Forces and presented His Majesty with a picture of Her Majesty The Queen with The Sultan at the Gurkha Pageant.

Deputy Defence Minister Dato Paduka Hj Mustappa Hj Sirat and RBAF Commander Pehin Datu Pekerma Jaya Major General Dato Paduka Seri Mohd Tawih Abdullah were also present during the audience.

3rd Battalion Royal Brunei Land Forces and elements of the Brigade of Gurkhas based in Brunei to take place.”

The unique and enduring relationship between Brunei and the United Kingdom, based on mutual respect, trust and close cooperation in education and defence, has never been stronger.

General Sir Peter Wall added: “Today’s Parade is a demonstration of the special relationship between the Royal Brunei Armed Forces and the British Army. It has been 17 years since a similar parade was last held in 1998, when His Majesty The Sultan and Her Majesty The Queen inspected a parade of The Royal Brunei Armed Forces and The Brigade of Gurkhas and it is remarkable that some of those men are here on parade today.”
It has probably been the busiest year in the history of the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas, involving a hundred thousand miles of travelling around the world and more than 140 appearances so far.

On 5th of Oct we flew to Brunei for the big event in the country’s capital. We arrived at Training Team Brunei accommodation on 7 Oct. On the same day morning (after unpacking our instruments), we had a productive three hours of musical rehearsal with 1RGR Pipes and Drums. We headed to 3rd Battalion Royal Brunei Land Forces, at Lumut to rehearse the G200 Commemoration parade with 1RGR, 1RGR Pipes and Drums, Royal Brunei Land Forces and their Band plus Pipes and Drums. A long tiresome journey and an unfavourable 35-degree temperature with dense humidity couldn’t undermine our morale. As a result the fruitful rehearsal was praised by 1RGR Gurkha Major Chandra Pun and RSM WO1 Giri Gurung.

While heading back to accommodation, the unacclimatised, sweaty, tired and sleepless musicians were extremely exhausted. There was pin drop silence in the coach, all that could be heard was the running engine. Meanwhile, we could see floating clouds with silver linings on the horizon and a fading red sunset through the window. It was an absolutely mesmerising moment.

On 8 October, we assembled at the main ceremonial parade ground for a full dress photo session and full rehearsal for the main parade. Next morning after another G200 rehearsal, we entertained the Garrison Officers’ Mess with Black Book Concert at 1945 hrs. On the following day, we did the Black Book Concert plus Sounding of Retreat at the splendid dwelling of His Excellency Mr David Campbell, British High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam. Everyone was astonished to discover the unique Gurkha Band and our energetic performance. Luckily, we managed to visit the capital to refresh ourselves and to experience the lifestyle there.

On 12 Oct, the G200 commemoration parade was led by the Commanding Officer, Lt Col Jody Davies of the Resident Gurkha Infantry Battalion; The First Battalion Royal Gurkha Rifles. As we marched on, enthusiastically applauding and cheering spectators re-energized us. It was a proud moment to showcase the recognition of glorious achievements at Delhi known as the Queen’s Truncheon (Nishani Mai) that was presented in 1863 on behalf of HM Queen Victoria by Lord Strathnairn.

His Majesty, the Sultan of Brunei took the salute. Her Majesty, The Queen’s representative, Col Commandant of the Brigade of Gurkhas, General Sir Peter Wall was accompanied by His Excellency Mr D Campbell, Colonel Mike Page, Defence Advisor to the British High Commission, and Col James Robinson, Col BG.

After a ceremony HM Sultan kindly met soldiers and families from British Forces Brunei.

A one hour long parade was worthwhile to remark two centuries of Gurkha service to the British Crown as well as the special relationship between the Royal Brunei Armed Forces and the British Army.

In the evening, we performed a Black Book concert at the WOs’ and Sgts’ Mess and the same event took place in the evening of 13 Oct at Cpls’ Mess as well. On the morning of 13 Oct, we were invited for a music workshop and also performed a marching display at Hornbill School for the children. We shall be remembered for our unique style. We were so engaged throughout our duty that we didn’t even realise that we were already at the end of our tour. We were tired and exhausted but the excitement of going back to family blew everything away.

On 14 October we flew back to the UK. Despite of the hectic moments, noticeably abroad Defence engagements, Public Duties in London and handful of family times, we kept our chin up, remained positive and performed with 100% effort to prove “Hami Jasto Kohi Chhaina”.

Gurkha 200 Commemoration Parade in Brunei

By LCpl Ramesh Rai and Khushiman Gurung (Gurkha Band)
With the UK, Nepal and other countries having already celebrated 200 years of loyal Gurkha service to the Crown, it was the turn of British Forces Brunei to celebrate the occasion at the Taman Sir Muda Omar ‘Ali Saifuddien Parade Square in the centre of Bandar Seri Begawan. Not only was this a celebration of Gurkha service to the UK crown, but also 50 years of partnership and involvement within Brunei itself.

The UK representative, alongside His Majesty The Sultan of Brunei, was the Colonel Commandant of the Brigade of Gurkhas, General Sir Peter Wall GCB CBE DL. The parade consisted of two contingents; one from British Forces Brunei - made up of all the elements of the Brigade of Gurkhas, whilst the second was from the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Brunei Land Forces. In total 820 personnel were on parade.

A marble plaque was made to mark the 200 years (1815-2015) which was later unveiled by the Colonel Commandant of the Brigade of Gurkhas General Sir Peter Wall, and this has now been placed at the main guard room of Tuker Lines.

During the unveiling ceremony, the Gurkha Major (Major Chandrabahadur Pun) also presented a cheque for BND $106,135.52 which is approx £51,000.00 to the Colonel Commandant who is also the Chairman GWT, which was collected through various charity events organised within Brunei. The money will go to the Gurkha Welfare Trust’s Earthquake Response Fund, which is primarily focused on helping our current and ex serving soldiers and their communities who have been badly affected by the earthquake in Nepal.

All in all it was an excellent event, which saw the UK Armed Forces, and more specifically the Brigade of Gurkhas, celebrated across Brunei with a series of well co-ordinated events, culminating in the parade. The feedback from across the diplomatic community, as well as wider public acknowledgement here, shows that the UK retains a special place in Bruneian affairs, and this series of events was a perfect celebration of 50 years of UK-Brunei partnership.

On Wednesday 11 November, a Gurkha 200 dinner was held in Hong Kong. The evening was coordinated by Christopher Lavender, late 2GR, with help from David Bulbeck, late 6GR. Sir Michael Kadoorie very kindly allowed the dinner to take place in the Repulse Bay Hotel and guests included ex-members of the Brigade of Gurkhas as well as a number of high profile organisations in Hong Kong.

Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas, Col James Robinson, gave a short talk on the history of the Brigade and recounted a couple to tales of recent Gurkha heroism in Afghanistan. Then after the meal, the main speaker, General Sir Peter Wall, spoke about his time serving in Hong Kong and the current challenge faced by the Gurkha Welfare Trust in Nepal.

1 RGR Piper, Rfn Nimeshkumar Gurung, played before and after the meal. In addition to donations for the dinner, a raffle was held and a sizeable sum over £70K was raised for the GWT.
The occasion, made even more special by its advent during the 200 year celebrations of Gurkha service to the Crown, was marked by a parade in front of their friends and families and presided over by Commander Personnel Support Command, Lieutenant General J Bashall CBE, who inspected the ranks.

He spoke to many of the troops individually and was joined on the inspection by Major General Craig Lawrence CBE and Colonel BG, Col James Robinson. After awarding prizes to a number of recruits he then gave a speech in which he congratulated all on a marvellous parade and offered five themes. First, have honour and pride in your achievements. Second, never forget the unique BG identity and ethos and its relationship with the UK. Third, because of your excellent reputation there can be no room for complacency. Fourth, maintain a total mastery of the basics skills required for the modern British Infantry, and lastly, put your heads down and soldier to the best of your ability.

The parade was then followed by a lunch gathering in the barrack courtyard where the OC of the Gurkha Company at the Infantry Training Centre, Major Dammabahadur Shahi presented Major General Lawrence with a cheque of just over £9,000 for the Earthquake Response Fund in his capacity as a trustee of the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

226 new Gurkhas have now joined the ranks of the Brigade of Gurkhas after successfully completing their training at Catterick

The list of Champion Cadets and special award winners from the 2015 Recruit intake is as follows:

1 RGR - T/Rfn Mesh Bahadur Saru Magar
2 RGR - T/Rfn Binod Gurung
QGE - T/Rfn Suman Pachabhaiya
QG Signals - T/Rfn Ganesh Bahadur Chand
QOGLR - T/Rfn Kaman Rai
GSPS - T/Rfn Pravesh Rai
Overall Champion Recruit
T/Rfn Binod Gurung 2 RGR
Fittest Recruit
T/Rfn Binod Gurung 2 RGR
(PFA - 7 Mins 39 Secs)
Most Improved English - T/Rfn Deuman Rai
Champion Shot - T/Rfn Bibek Chhetri
Commandant's Trophy - Cpl Robin Koyee Rai
Role Model Trophy - Sgt Jayandra Garbuja
Champion Sect
2 Platoon Section led by Cpl Dipesh Rai
Champion Platoon
2 Platoon commanded by Capt Bhupalsing Rai
For most of us there come one or two special days which serve as Landmarks in our lives. For the 226 soldiers on parade today, this is one of those special days. And the remainder of us here - whether they be serving officers and soldiers, family and friends or retired members of the Army join together to congratulate you on successfully completing 39 months of training with the Gurkha Company.

I would firstly like to thank on your behalf: your staff the guruji who have delivered you to this stage of your training. They have been your new fathers, and they are owed much credit for making you all into soldiers. And also the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas for the excellent music. More of which later. And most particularly I would like to thank the many family and friends who have made the journey here today to be with you on this special occasion. I know many have travelled from far away to be here.

This year has seen the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the start of Gurkha service in the British Army. I know some of the Training Riflemen were involved in the G200 Pageant at the Royal Hospital. And, all of you should be proud to say you are part of the G200 intake. For those of us in the wider British Army who are not a direct part of the Gurkha family, I am confident I speak on behalf of everyone to say how proud we are to continue to have such wonderful, loyal and brave soldiers in our ranks. And we celebrate with you 200 years of soldiering, which amongst many distinctions has seen Gurkha soldiers awarded 26 Victoria Crosses.

As well as a year of celebration, 2015 has also been a year which will be remembered for the terrible earthquake in Nepal; and the consequent human tragedy which resulted. I was in Brunei on 25th of April, and I saw for myself the considerable pain it caused to soldiers of 1 RGR. Sarah-lucie - my wife - and I were both very moved to read of the impact the earthquake caused to Training Rifleman Manoj Tamang; and I understand 8 of the 230 on parade today lost their homes during the earthquake. It is hard living in the UK to fully comprehend the pain it caused to soldiers of 1 RGR. Sarah-lucie - my wife - and I were both very moved to read of the impact the earthquake caused to Training Rifleman Manoj Tamang; and I understand 8 of the 230 on parade today lost their homes during the earthquake. It is hard living in the UK to fully comprehend the magnitude of the devastation, and to truly empathise with those who have suffered. For the Gurkha Company here in Catterick, it was the greatest challenge of the training year. And I want to acknowledge in public the manner in which all ranks dealt with the crisis. I especially wish to applaud the incredible number of charity events which you have supported, and the huge sums of money you have raised to help alleviate hardship in Nepal. The plight of your families and friends at home in Nepal is not forgotten.

To those on parade today, I would like to offer you 5 thoughts.

First, have honour and pride in your personal achievements; while this day may feel like the end of a journey - it is in reality the start of a demanding yet rewarding career. As you march off the Square in a minutes time you will be trained riflemen and a member of a very special family - which will stay with you in some shape or form for the rest of your lives. Your number are your new brothers. Be proud, but also humble, and remember the many thousands of your countrymen who didn’t make the selection to come to the UK; and who would have loved to be where you are today.

Secondly, never forget the unique BG identity and ethos and its relationship with the UK; 200 years of sacrifice and service. Understand and respect the BG’s reputation for professional excellence, fortitude and unwavering loyalty - glued together by a unique khaida and sense of belonging. You now have an opportunity to be a part of that special history.

Thirdly, because of your excellent reputation, you are constantly obliged to prove it. There can be no room for complacency. As the enemy we face evolves, so too must our Army, so too must our Gurkha soldiers. Together we must embrace this change; adapt our skills and be ready at short notice to deploy anywhere, at any-time. I am very pleased to see 2 RGR has returned to 16 Bde, as an Air Assault TaskForce; and I also note the wider quick notice role some of the Brigade now hold for homeland security here in the UK. Many of you - the 2 RGR recruits - will deploy to Afghanistan in 2016 - which I understand will be 2 RGR’s 6th tour for that Bn. The Battalion’s operational record in that theatre is second to none. You will be expected to play your part in full in Kabul next year.

Fourth, underpinning both these commitments and your professional excellence, is a total mastery of the basics skills required for the modern British Infantry. This brilliance in the basics is the foundation upon which you will build the more complex skills and procedures required of a modern Infantry soldier. Your skills must reach and stay at that level for the rest of your careers. So take with you the lessons from Gurkha Company, bring energy to your Bn and never grow tired of learning.

Finally, put your heads down and soldier to the best of your ability. Master the basics, bring honour to your family and regiment and never forget where you come from. We, the British Army and the wider British public, owe you and your country a debt of gratitude. Many congratulations. I am honoured to be here today to mark the start of your journey as trained Gurkha soldiers.

Jai Gurkha Company, Jai Brigade of Gurkhas
**Gurkha Statue unveiled in Folkestone Garden of Remembrance**

Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles (2 RGR) were on parade to see Joanna Lumley unveil a new Gurkha statue sculpted by Rebecca Hawkins in Folkestone’s Garden of Remembrance on Sun 4 October.

On a gloriously warm and sunny autumn afternoon a large crowd gathered into the Garden of Remembrance for the unveiling of the new bronze statue of a Gurkha soldier dressed in combat uniform carrying an SA80 rifle, wearing a Kukri knife, facing east towards Nepal. The statue stands almost two metres high and weighs over seven tonnes.

Amongst the guests were the former Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal, The Honourable Sujata Koirala, Damian Collins MP for Folkestone and Hythe, Ms Joanna Lumley, Colonel James Robinson, Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas and Mayor of Folkestone, Emily Arnold.

Joanna Lumley said, “It can’t be overestimated how important this is for this fine statue to be here in the heart of the home of the Gurkhas in Britain, which is Folkestone.”

The project was co-ordinated by a former Gurkha soldier, Dhan Gurung, of The Gurkha Memorial Fund, who commenced the fundraising over five years ago. In total over £60,000 was raised to fund the memorial.

He said, “This statue is not only a statue itself, it’s about education of both communities and for forthcoming generations.”

Mr Gurung, Ms Lumley and Peter Carroll, who has campaigned tirelessly to see the statue delivered, were presented with special medals from the Nepalese Government in recognition of their efforts.

The statue is to commemorate over 46,000 Gurkha soldiers who have sacrificed their lives in the service of the country, which has seen the award of 26 Victoria Crosses and many other awards for bravery.

After the unveiling and formal ceremonies there was a cultural show with the Nepalese Dhole Dance, Limbu tribe Rai cultural dance, Chandi Dance performing a selection of cultural dances with a Khukuri Dance from soldiers of 2 RGR rounding off the show.
Op NEWCOMBE 6A
by Lt James P Christy 1RGR

A team of 26 from 1RGR and 1 from Queen’s Gurkha Signals deployed to Mali for a five and a half month European Union Training Mission (EUTM) to train the Malian Armed Forces (MaAF) at Koulikoro Training Camp (KTC). As part of the Army’s military capacity building strategy, Op NEWCOMBE aims to build the capability of the Malian Armed Forces in order to allow them to defend their own country from Terrorist Armed Groups (TAGs) and Insurgency.

We arrived in KTC to a warm welcome from the Malians and European Training Teams alike. 2 RGR made a lasting impression here, and the Gurkhas have not been forgotten about. The bearing, professionalism and conduct of Gurkha soldiers have greatly impressed the other 23 European countries participating in our training mission.

As our interaction with the Malian Army continues, it is very positive to see a strong bond developing between our Gurkhas and the Malian soldiers. Both sides have many similarities. The Malian tribe and caste system is not dissimilar to Nepal’s, which has aided our understanding of Mali’s human terrain. Malian religion is fundamentally animistic, which is commonly found in Hinduism as well. Malians also enjoy bhat by haat, and kindly provide us with goats when we require them for messing! Malians and Gurkhas have a shared love of traditional music and dance, which stems from village lifestyle. All of these similarities have fostered a mutual understanding and social cohesion between our two forces.

The MaAF are currently being deployed on stabilisation operations in the North of Mali where TAGs operate. The Malians know about our Herrick experience and want us to share it with them. In tribal society, age and experience count for more than rank. Gurkha units are unique in the British Army because our soldiers will always undergo a full career. Gurkha units retain precious operational experience for a long time at NCO and instructor level. It is this experience that indigenous forces need. Our operational experience is respected by the Malians, but also by the Europeans in Mali. People come to us because of the reputation of the Gurkhas.

The fact that the Op NEWCOMBE 6A team deployed successfully at short notice from Brunei to Mali highlights the flexibility of the Brunei Resident Infantry Battalion (BRIB). Coming from Brunei to Mali meant we arrived in theatre acclimatised and with a good knowledge of how to operate in a tropical, monsoonal environment (Mali is classified as a tropical country)

Since being in theatre, we have been approached by the EUTM HQ for advice on how to train MaAF to operate in the Close Country Tropical Environment (CCTE) and riverine ops. This reflects the benefit of deploying the BRIB to countries with CCTE. We are also the only training team in KTC that is qualified to teach tracking. This is an essential skill in this environment; “Of all the specialist activities related to the prosecution of a counter-insurgency campaign, none is more important than the provision of trackers” (Former Commander in Chief Land General Sir Frank Kitson GBE, KCB, MC & Bar, DL). The bespoke capabilities of the BRIB are a force multiplier for the EUTM.

Op NEWCOMBE 6A has so far proven the BRIB is agile, adaptable, and can deliver a bespoke set of capabilities to short term training teams. The BRIB’s specialist CCTE skills are extremely important in military capacity building; of the 18 areas of the world defined as threat to UK national interests by the Studies Assumption Group, 7 lie in areas of CCTE. These specialist skills are directly relevant for helping indigenous forces to prevent future conflict.

Our Gurkha soldiers have so far proven themselves as meticulous and conscientious trainers, with the relevant operational experience to relate to indigenous forces in a similar predicament. The importance of cultural sensitivity cannot be underestimated in this type of training environment, which is certainly a Gurkha strength. Humility and listening in order to empathise with our hosts is best practice to be able to inculcate relevant skills and knowledge. 1RGR and QGS look forward to the rest of our time in Mali.
OP MARMAT 2 - Initial Deployment

“Army Support to Post-Disaster Reconstruction in Nepal”

by Capt Govinda Rana QGE

Gurkha Fd Sqn from 36 Engr Regt & The Queen’s Gurkha Engineers deployed on Op MARMAT 2 in Oct 15 as the Engineer Squadron Group (ESG). The ESG is 94 personnel strong and the majority are from 70 Gurkha Fd Sqn, supported by the attachment from other Squadrons within the Regt and medical staffs from the Medical Corps.

On completion of the Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration (RSOI) in theatre ‘J’ Troop deployed to Jiri, Dolakha district and have commenced the construction of a 6 room accommodation block for Area Welfare Centre (AWC) JIRI and the construction of a school. Similarly ‘L’ Troop deployed to NETRAKALI, Sindhuli district and has undertaken the construction of a school and a community centre. These tasks are being managed by Sqn HQ and Echelon based in BGN Kathmandu and Forward HQ based in Nepalthok, Sindhuli district.

Delhi Day celebrated in Mali - Op NEWCOMBE 6A

RGR personnel deployed on Op NEWCOMBE 6A celebrated Delhi Day on 14 Sep.

The Day started off with a Parade in Koulikuro Camp attended by all EU and RGR Officers and soldiers. Training Team Force Commander, Col Dr Haffner (German Air Force) and OC Op NEWCOMBE 6A Maj Roylance laid wreaths at the memorial.

The celebration began later with a special act from LCpl Naresh and Rfn Yogendra who performed an act of the defence of Hindu Rao’s house which is a significant part of the Delhi Day. The evening was followed on by entertainment programme from C Sgt Deepak Gurung and a cocktail dance to conclude the day.
Lieutenant Colonel Patch Reehal commissioned into the Royal Logistic Corps in August 1996. He spent his first five years as a subaltern at Regimental Duty, initially with the Commando Logistic Regiment RM, before moving to a Combat Arms attachment as the Battle Group Intelligence Officer with The Queen’s Royal Lancers on Op PALATINE (Bosnia).

A period with the Army Training Regiment, Pirbright, followed ahead of a move to 13 Air Assault Support Regiment RLC that included a deployment on Op BESSEMER (Macedonia).

In 2003, he returned to the Commando Logistic Regiment RM as the Logistic Support Squadron Second-in-Command prior to, and during, Op TELIC (Iraq) before, in 2004, being appointed as Operations Officer, 10 Transport Regiment RLC. He promoted to Major in 2005 and preceding attendance on the Intermediate Command and Staff Course (Land), he deployed on Op TELIC 7/8 as the SO2 J3 Operations Support in the Headquarter’s Multi-National Division (South East).

His initial SO2 appointment was in the Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ), Northwood, as the SO2 Contractor Support to Operations in the J1/4 Division. Eager to serve again with the newly titled 10 The Queen’s Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment, he returned to the Regiment in 2009 as Officer Commanding 28 Transport Squadron and his command tenure included a six-month tour as a Combat Logistic Patrol (CLP) commander on Op HERRICK 11 (Afghanistan). His subsequent SO2 appointment was as the SO2 Capability Development in the Capability Directorate Combat Service Support (CD CSS) for A2020 (RLC).

He was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in 2013 and after completing Advanced Command and Staff Course (ACSC) 17, he returned to PJHQ in 2014 as the SO1 J4 Op HERRICK (Redeployment and Transition). On completion of that task in December 2014, he subsequently established a new Africa-facing team as SO1 J4 Africa (Op/ Plans). He assumed command of 10 The Queen’s Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment in October 2015.

Lieutenant Colonel Reehal is married to Jen who is a nurse and they have two sons Patch (13) and Charlie (12). He is a passionate, but if we are honest fairly average, fly fisherman and enjoys nothing more than exploring a historical battlefield or any time spent in the countryside with his family.

Brigadier Anderson OBE, Chairman GBA farewell

On the 5th November 2015, during the Gurkha Brigade Association Dinner, we bade farewell to Brigadier John Anderson OBE and welcomed Colonel David Hayes CBE as the new Chairman Gurkha Brigade Association.

Brigadier John Anderson OBE completed 12 very successful years as Chairman. In his farewell speech he said, ‘I took over from Brig Sir Miles H-D in November 2003 and I had two complementary but unspoken aims: Firstly, to try and get us all thinking and acting like members of the Brigade of Gurkhas again, not just a grouping of diverse and separate units. The move from HK, and the geographical separation of all our units in UK, had damaged our integrity. Secondly, to make the GBA more relevant to the Brigade by opening our Association to all ranks’. His success in achieving his aims were deservedly recognised in the Queen’s Birthday Honours List where he was appointed incoming Deputy Chief of Staff HQ Brigade of Gurkhas/ OC Gurkha Staff and Personnel Support Maj Suryakumar Rai GSPS

Maj Surya Rai enlisted into the Brigade of Gurkhas as a Regimental Clerk in April 1989 and joined 7th Gurkha Rifles in November 1989 on completion of his Infantry recruit training in Hong Kong.

He served in different theatres thereafter including the United Kingdom and Belize before his regiment was amalgamated with other Gurkha Infantry units in 1994 to form the Royal Gurkha Rifles (RGR). He has held a number of appointments at both Regimental Duty and staff including Warrant Officer Class 1 Superintendent Clerk at the Headquarters Brigade of Gurkhas; Warrant Officer Infantry at the Gurkha Wing of Inf MCM Div, APC Glasgow and Course Designer (Commissioning Course) at RMA Sandhurst.

On commissioning in December 2008, he assumed the appointment of SO3 G1/MS at the Headquarters Brigade of Gurkhas in Netheravon. His subsequent first appointment at Regimental Duty was with 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles in Folkestone; he did a full two year tour with the Battalion as the Detachment Commander during which time he deployed on Operation HERRICK 12 as the Regimental Administrative Officer (Forward). He attended the RAO’s Course at Worthy Down in the autumn of 2011 and eventually assumed his first RAO appointment at 19 Light Brigade Combat Service Support Battalion in Northern Ireland later that year. He was then assigned to Germany for his second RAO tour, this time with 1 Armoured Medical Regiment based in Bergen-Hohne. He assumed his current appointment of Deputy Chief of Staff and Officer Commanding, Gurkha Staff and Personnel Support Company in August 2015.

He is married to Nanika and they have two daughters, Supran (12) and Suvan (6). He loves reading and most outdoor pursuits including trekking with his family in the Alps. He is keen in adventure sports; paragliding and skiing remain his best-loved passion.
Lt Col Jamie Murray commissioned into 2RGR in 1998 beginning his career in Brunei. Language training in Nepal, Platoon Commander in Brunei, Fiji and Australia, the Jungle Warfare Instructors Course, and a deployment with 3 Royal Irish on Op HERRICK defined the early years of his service.

As a junior Captain he deployed with 2RGR to Sierra Leone in 2000 as a Jungle Warfare Instructor. Language training in 1998 beginning his career; second to Mazar-e-Sharif (2005) as Officer Commanding B Company; and finally to Helmand (2006) as Officer Commanding D Company on Op HERRICK 4. Following ICSC(L), where he was awarded the Roberts Award for his performance on the Operations Phase, he spent two years in Whitehall as the lead Afghanistan insurgency analyst for Defence Intelligence at a time of intense interest in the campaign.

Before a posting to Singapore with the Gurkha Contingent Singapore Police Force. A return to Brunei with 2RGR as the Operation Officer was quickly followed by three short tours to Afghanistan; first to Kabul (2003) with the Afghanistan National Army Training Team; second to Mazar-e-Sharif (2005) as Officer Commanding B Company; and finally to Helmand (2006) as Officer Commanding D Company on Op HERRICK 4. Following ICSC(L), where he was awarded the Roberts Award for his performance on the Operations Phase, he spent two years in Whitehall as the lead Afghanistan insurgency analyst for Defence Intelligence at a time of intense interest in the campaign.

Returning to 2RGR in 2009 for his fourth tour with the Battalion, Lt Col Murray assumed command of 2RGR 1994 - 1996 in Brunei, and as Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas in 1998 -2000; second to Mazzer-e-Sharif (2003) with the Afghanistan National Army Training Team; second to Mazar-e-Sharif (2005) as Officer Commanding B Company; and finally to Helmand (2006) as Officer Commanding D Company on Op HERRICK 4. Following ICSC(L), where he was awarded the Roberts Award for his performance on the Operations Phase, he spent two years in Whitehall as the lead Afghanistan insurgency analyst for Defence Intelligence at a time of intense interest in the campaign.

OBE. Brigadier John Anderson has been a most proactive chairman. ‘In 2004 I went to two Committee meetings -in 2014 I went to over 60, ranging from GWT Audit Sub-Committees to Brigade Steering Groups.’

In addition, not content with staff work simply, he has taken part in 19 consecutive Trailwalker events since 1996, raising considerable sums for the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

In his place we welcome Colonel David Hayes CBE, himself no stranger to the Brigade. Commissioned in 1973 into 7GR, he commanded 2 RGR 1994 - 1996 in Brunei, and as Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas in 1998 -2000 and 2004 -2010 respectively.

He successfully introduced the new Gurkha Terms and Conditions of Service, that transformed the Brigade into an effective fighting force, fit for purpose in the modern British Army.

Colonel David Hayes is also a great supporter of the Trailwalker event.

The arrival of the new Commanding Officer -Lt Col J C Murray

Lt J C Murray officially arrived to take command of 2 RGR on 7 Sep 15.

A welcome party, led by the Gurkha Major, was first to meet the new Commanding Officer. The Commanding Officer was presented with a traditional garland by the GM and RSM. In addition to the Gurkha Major and RSM, the welcome party consisted of the Bn2IC, Adjt, Coy OCS, Coy 2ICs and CSMs. On arrival an honour guard was present.

This was immediately followed by a meet and greet with all of the other key personalities in the Battalion. This meeting took place in the Battalion Conference Room and was accompanied by tea, coffee and biscuits. Once the Commanding Officer had time to chat with the various personalities, he was led to the Mandir for a private puja ceremony, after which he paid his respects to the fallen heroes at the RGR memorial.

This provided a period of quiet reflection before he took up his new position as the head of the Battalion. He then addressed the Battalion saying how privileged he was to become the Commanding Officer of 2 RGR, a dream started 17 years ago. Finally he was escorted into Battalion HQ, where he formally took up his position in the Commanding Officer’s chair. Jai 2 RGR!

Highlights included regular visits to Washington DC, Tampa, Islamabad and Kabul.

In 2014 I went to over 60, ranging from GWT Audit Sub-Committees to Brigade Steering Groups.’

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Dashain and Tihar celebrations across the Brigade of Gurkhas
1. Noreen Derzil, a portrait artist, painted Sgt Dipprasad Pun CGC and kindly donated the painting to GWT which was then gifted to RGR.

2. G200 BG Squash Team presenting a memento to Pokhara Racket Association after the friendly match.

3. CD 1 RGR giving formal orders to OS and Platoon Commanders during Ex TYPHOON KUKRI 2

4. PIM medal being presented to Maj (Retd) Bhimbahadur Gurung MVO MBE by the Charge D’Affairs of Malaysia to Nepal, Mr Fadlia Adilah.

5. WO2 Bhupasing Rai handing over CSM Gurkha Coy to new CSM WO3 Vijayprakash Limbu.

6. Chairman Councillor John Robinson presenting a certificate to Capt Autar Shrestha during Gurkha Coy visit to Richmondshire District Council.

7. BFBS ladies at the Teej Party celebration 2015.

8. QGOOs meet Frank Lampard, former England Football team Captain at an Investiture in October.


10. Col RGR, Maj Gen Lawrence with 2 RGR Battalion HQ personnel at the G200 reception in Westminster.

11. QG SIGNALS Officers with Maj Gen Iain Hooper at R SIGNALS LE Officers’ Dinner Night on 9th Oct 15.
Officers and Soldiers from around the Brigade of Gurkhas marked Armistice Day with a number of ceremonies and two-minute silences around the world.

Being furthest East, 1 RGR in Brunei were the first to mark the occasion, with Nepal following a few hours later. Then the UK based troops observed the silence with 2RGR in Shorncliffe Barracks joined by Officers and Soldiers from Risborough Barracks to mark the event.

It began at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, the time in 1918 when the guns finally fell silent along the Western Front in Europe. Armistice Day pays tribute to all those who died in World Wars One and Two and in every conflict since.

Wreaths were laid at the memorial in Shorncliffe Barracks by 2RGR’s Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Jamie Murray and the Gurkha Major, Major Prem Gurung. The Last Post was played by a Gurkha Bugler and a two-minute silence was observed at 11am.

Gurkhas were also present at the ceremonies in London, capping off a week of Remembrance based activities that started with the opening of the Field of Remembrance in Westminster and taking part in the Cenotaph ceremonies on Remembrance Sunday.
Field of Remembrance opening 2015
Festival of Remembrance 2015

Her Majesty The Queen, The Duke of Edinburgh and other members of the Royal Family attended the annual Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall on Sat 7 Nov.

The service began with a citation read by veteran Paul Jacobs, who lost his sight after helping to save colleagues from a bomb blast in Afghanistan.

Three generations of Gurkhas spoke of their war time experiences, including Brigadier Bruce Jackman, who successfully led a jungle raid in Borneo for which he was awarded a Military Cross.

The Pipes and Drums and the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas performed the Regimental March of the Brigade of Gurkhas - Yo Nepali Sir Uchali followed by a Kukri Pattern display.

The festival was broadcast on BBC One and can still be viewed via BBC iPlayer.

Thursday 5th November 2015 saw the annual opening of the Field of Remembrance outside Westminster Abbey, with representatives from the Brigade of Gurkhas and the Gurkha Brigade Association taking part in the poignant event.

Prince Phillip and Prince Harry were the Royal guests of honour this year and after a short service they placed a pair of crosses before meeting the representatives from each of the units present.

It also happened to be Brigadier John Anderson OBE’s last Field of Remembrance event as Chairman of the Gurkha Brigade Association as he handed over to Colonel David Hayes CBE after the Remembrance weekend. He was joined at the Gurkha Brigade plot by the Queen’s Gurkha Orderly Officers and Field Marshal Sir John Chapple GCB, CBE.

The Field of Remembrance opening was followed by a wreath laying ceremony at the nearby statue of Field Marshal Slim, attended by his son, Colonel John Douglas Slim OBE, 2nd Viscount Slim. The Gurkha Brigade Association representatives then moved on to the Gurkha Statue in Whitehall to each lay a wreath.
Eight members of 10 QOGLR, led by Lt Nick Travers, entered Ex CAMBRIAN PATROL, a 48 hour Reconnaissance patrol competition designed to test participants to the limit of their soldiering ability.

In the build up to the competition, a squad of 12 potential participants deployed to Sennybridge on Exercise BLACKADDER for eight days, in order to conduct intensive patrolling and military skills training. This was organised by 9 Regt RLC on behalf of 101 Log Brigade Units. Members of 10 QOGLR’s team were put through their paces, conducting daily patrol tasks, with military skills serials throughout. Every night, there were long night navigation exercises with more complex training serials designed to test the team’s ability to operate in the dark. It was also a chance for the Patrol Commander and 2iC to hone their command skills in stressful environments, and to practice their orders delivery. The exercise culminated with a ‘mini patrol competition’, lasting for 24 hours, with many training serials and individual check points. 10 QOGLR performed extremely well, receiving much praise from the Exercise DS. Capt Butcher, the Exercise OIC, told us that we were the best all round team on the Exercise!

After the exercise, members of the team completed regular training around a busy Regimental schedule, with the Nepalese Army team joining us for the two weeks prior to the actual competition. They underwent a week of training in order to familiarise them with British Army weapons systems and equipment, as well as ensuring they completed mandatory tests. After that, they joined in with our team’s preparations, revising key tactics for the potential tasks throughout the competition. They threw themselves into it wholeheartedly, and LCpl Bikash took them under his wing, sharing his recent knowledge from the pre SCBC course he had recently attended in Brecon. It quickly became apparent that the Nepalese Army had prepared extremely well, and very soon our colleagues were all but indistinguishable from British Army soldiers. After their training was completed it was just a case of issuing them the correct kit and we were ready to deploy.

We arrived in Wales on the Sunday night, and Sgt Yogendra, the team manager, had organised a fantastic messing for us. It was a huge morale boost ahead of what we knew was going to be a gruelling 48 hours, and it allowed us to go to sleep that night feeling mentally and physically prepared. The next day was an early start, with our RV time being 0530, we arrived on time, feeling a bit groggy and wondering what was in store, from there it was a kit check, a quick set of orders, and then the patrol was off.

The first half of the patrol focussed on the reconnaissance, with the team covering many miles over harsh terrain in the black mountains, patrolling for around 24 hours in total, before we moved on to the next stage. The second stage took us from the Black Mountains into Sennybridge training area. The ground went from being too steep to very boggy, and the going was very difficult underfoot, but the patrol pushed on and completed the tasks well, working as a tight knit team in difficult circumstances.
A total of 119 patrols representing Regular and Reserve units in the British Army, as well international teams from across the world, took part. This included a team from the Nepalese Army who conducted their pre training with QOGLR in Aldershot. They also paid their visit to Headquarters Brigade of Gurkhas based in Sandhurst.

More than a third of the teams did not complete the arduous route across the Welsh Black Mountains, where the soldiers’ full range of military skills was assessed in order to gain the necessary points.

Exercise director, Brigadier Martyn Gamble, Commander 160th Infantry Brigade and Headquarters Wales, said: “Those patrols who have done well should be rightly proud of their efforts and achievements in this, from certificate finish upwards.

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“Every year we strive to make this exercise as realistic as possible and all the personnel involved in making this happen deserve credit for ensuring the high standards and reputation of Cambrian Patrol is maintained and enhanced. The consistency of the awards this year is testament to that.”

Members of 2 RGR were awarded Silver medals while 10 QOGLR and the Nepalese Army Team earned the Certificate of Merit for their performances.

In the early hours of Wednesday morning, we arrived at our final point, having walked well over 75 KM and feeling ready for bed. The patrol all finished, unlike many of the other teams who were not able to face up to the challenge. For their efforts, both 10 QOGLR and the Nepalese Army earned the Certificate of Merit. Praise must go to Ptes Bijay, Santosh, Ntan, Nunuhang and Sujan for their hard work and dedication throughout. Particular mention must be made for Cpl Sudip, who organised all the administration for the team, and LCpl Bikash, who took responsibility for training the Nepalese Army. We look forward to returning next year and going for gold!
Gurkha 200 reception at Westminster Palace

By kind invitation of The Speaker of the House of Commons, the Right Honourable John Bercow MP, representatives of the Brigade of Gurkhas were welcomed at the Palace of Westminster on 20 Oct 2015, for a reception in honour of Gurkha 200.

James Gray MP, Founder and Chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group for the Armed Forces hosted the event, which was attended by some 50 Members of Parliament from across the political spectrum. In addition to the Viscount Lord Slim, a number of senior military personnel, including Gen Sir Peter Wall, Gen Sir David Bill, Maj Gen Nick Pope and Maj Gen Craig Lawrence also attended.

In his capacity as Col Comdt Brigade of Gurkhas, Gen Wall presented Mr Gray MP with a ceremonial kukri as a token of the Brigade’s appreciation for the Parliamentary support it has received during the G200 year and more broadly during the course of the Brigade’s service to the Crown.

BG personnel in attendance included Colonel BG, Colonel James Robinson and a number of BG unit Commanding Officers as well as NCOs and JNCOs from across the Brigade.

After an initial reception in the State Rooms of the Speaker’s House, the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas performed an immaculate Sounding Retreat in the Speaker’s Yard.

His Majesty the Sultan of Brunei’s 69th Birthday Dinner

by LCpl Pranesh Hembya QG Signals

Serving personnel and families from British Forces Brunei (BFB) were invited to attend a special dinner night in order to celebrate His Majesty the Sultan of Brunei’s 69th birthday.

About 130 personnel from BFB attended the special occasion in Istana Nurul Iman Royal Palace on 17 Aug 15.

Having arrived in the palace, we were sat in the main hall with hundreds of other local guests. After a long wait, His Majesty the Sultan of Brunei finally emerged for the dinner. An array of dishes was served after a brief prayer.

The final and the most exciting part of the evening was the chance to meet the Sultan up close. Every single individual had the chance to shake hands with His Majesty the Sultan of Brunei. This has certainly been one of the highlights of the stay in Brunei and also a rare opportunity.

Army Training Centre Pirbright organise a Doko Charity Run

by Cpl Manoj Thapa GSPS

The recent devastating earthquakes which struck Nepal have cost the lives of more than 8,800 people and destroyed nearly 600,000 homes. Aftershocks still continue to jolt the Himalayan nation. To raise money for the beleaguered people of Nepal through The Gurkha Welfare Trust (GWT) as well as to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Gurkha service to the Crown, a team of ATC Pirbright Permanent Staff organised a charity Doko run.

The Doko is a traditional wicker basket and when strapped across the forehead is used as a means of transporting goods in rural areas of Nepal. It is also part of the gruesome Gurkha selection process where potential recruits must complete a 5km uphill race on an ascent of more than 400m carrying 25kg of rocks with the weight borne mostly by the neck.
The Gurkha Museum gives an insight about the heroic action of Capt Retd Rambahadur Limbu VC

50 years ago on 21 November 1965, a young Lance Corporal’s actions “reached a zenith of determined, premeditated valour which must count amongst the most notable on record and is deserving of the greatest admiration and the highest praise”.

So ends the citation for which Hon Captain Rambahadur Limbu VC MVO, then a Lance Corporal, was awarded The Victoria Cross. It was during a secret cross border “Claret” operation, in Borneo in 1965 that L/Cpl Rambahadur was to earn this ultimate award. He was leading a small group which attacked an enemy trench containing a sentry firing a machine gun. He rushed forward and captured the trench although two of his group fell wounded. With complete disregard for the hail of fire he then collected his group together and led them to a better fire position. Seeing the two wounded Gurkhas he set about rescuing them under continuous aimed fire of automatic weapons. Having brought both back to safety he continued the attack and accounted for four more of the enemy. What is remarkable is that L/Cpl Rambahadur remained uninjured throughout the encounter.

Rambahadur Limbu was born in 1939 in Chyangthapu in East Nepal. His father had served in WW2 and had been wounded in action in Burma. He was one of three brothers and at the age of 15 he started to make plans to join the Brigade of Gurkhas. At the age of 18 he was recruited at Jalapahar Recruiting Depot and soon went to Pakilhawa and then on to Barrackpore Transit Camp. On 20th December 1957 he left India to start military life at Sugei Patani Training Depot in Malaya and joined the 2nd Battalion of 10th PMO Gurkha Rifles in October 1958.

After experiencing several jungle operations he went on leave and married Tikamaya in 1961. Their son Bhakte was born the following year and another child was born in 1965.

Rambahadur, now back on operations in Borneo during “Confrontation” and promoted Lance Corporal, had a premonition in a dream the night before his VC action which foretold of a possible act of bravery. The next day a patrol and fire fight proved that he had stood the test and not been found wanting. He “never hoped to live to see another day” but he was still alive and unharmed.

He could now rest but on returning to Singapore his wife died tragically and unexpectedly in the British Military Hospital on 6th February 1966. On 22nd April 1966 the award of his Victoria Cross was announced in the London Gazette. During a five week visit to the UK, HM The Queen presented L/Cpl Rambahadur with the VC on 12th July 1967. He and his son Bhakte afterwards had a private audience with the Queen. Later the same year he married Purnimaya.

Further misfortune struck as later, when he was traveling on a train whilst returning from leave, his VC and his suitcases were stolen and never recovered. However, later, he was issued with a replacement VC and campaign medals.

He was to go on to become a Queen’s Gurkha Officer, appointed a Queen’s Gurkha Orderly Officer and finally retired in 1985 with the honorary rank of Captain. He still returns to the UK to visit family and attend the VC and GC Association re-unions. His last visit was to take part in the G200 Pageant at the Royal Hospital Chelsea on 9th June 2015 where he once again met the Queen who had presented him with the Victoria Cross all those years ago.

A team consisting of Cpl Manoj Thapa along with Capt C Morris, Sgt Kishor Pun, Sgt D Crossman, Cpls’ Ashok Bangshi, Rohit Gurung, Pradip Rai and Suren Thapa conducted a Street Collection in Guildford on Saturday 8 August concluding with the Pirbright Doko ‘Basket’ 6 Mile run on Wednesday 12 August.

The team took on the Doko challenge and ran 7 miles carrying the full 25kgs Doko. The team took 1 hour 10 minutes and required physical robustness, teamwork and self reliance. During the run, we faced minor setbacks at the start as two of the Doko straps snapped but managed to carry on, with a few improvisations. Morale was boosted in the closing stage when the Commanding Officer coincidentally happened to cross path with the team. To show his support, he took a Doko on his back and ran the final 400m stretch to the finish point with gusto.

Although the team’s target was to raise £800, we collected £1065.56 including gift aids with the kind generosity of our supporters. The funds will now be used by GWT for shelter construction, latrine construction, rubble clearance, temporary classroom, provide medical care, rebuilding homes, repairing school and water projects, community aid, repairing GWT infrastructure and financial grants for affected veterans. This tremendous level of support has been invaluable as Nepal still reacts to the catastrophic events and will need continual support in the coming years as the country begins to rebuild.

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Queen’s Gurkha Signals celebrates 66th Regimental Birthday

by WO2 (RQMS) Sim Chochangi QG Signals

“This is a proud day. And one long to be remembered... You are young in history; but old in tradition and rich in inheritance... By your badge men shall know you. By your loyalty, by your behaviour, and by your technical skill, they will judge you as men, and measure your efficiency as soldiers.” Maj Gen L E C M Perowne CBE 23 Sep 1954.

Indeed we feel extremely proud to have maintained our old tradition and inheritance for 66 years for the Regiment and 200 years for the Brigade of Gurkhas!

The formation of Gurkha Signals dates back to 1948-49 though it was not until 23 Sep 1954 the Regiment, which was titled Gurkha Royal Signals, were presented with their own cap badge by Maj Gen L E C M Perowne CBE at Lamjung Camp in Kuala Lumpur. Since then the QG SIGNALS marks 23 Sep as the Regimental birthday to celebrate around the globe by both serving and retired members.

This year, QG SIGNALS celebrated its 66th birthday on Saturday the 19 Sep 2015 at Gamecock Barracks, the spiritual home of the Regiment. In contrary to previous years, the Regiment formed up at the gymnasium under SSMs and marched as a squad to the Parade Square, led by QG SIGNALS Pipes & Drums, whilst families and retired members had already gathered to witness this historical event. RSM QG SIGNALS, WO1 Sureshkumar Limbu, took the parade before handing it over to G/Adjt, Capt Hebindra Pun at 1055 hrs.

At 1100 hrs, bagpipes and a standing ovation from spectators marked the arrival of Colonel of the Regiment, Maj Gen N A W Pope CBE followed by G/Adjt reporting for permission to proceed with the celebration.

The birthday speeches were read by the Comd QG SIGNALS, Lt Col N M Stokoe OBE, in English and the Gurkha Major, Maj Tolbahadur Khamcha, in Nepali. This was followed by cake cutting ceremony and Regimental Annual Awards which were presented to the following soldiers for their exemplary and outstanding performances throughout the year:

**Verdon & Carter Trophy**
SSgt Lalitbahadur Thapa

**Ridlington Trophy**
Cpl Ganesh Khamcha

**Best Sportsman**
LCpl Yuwaraj Pun

**Best Piper**
Cpl Sunil Gurung

**Best Trainee**
Sig Nima Sange Sherpa

**Best Shot**
Sgt Khagendra Tamang

The highlight of the celebration was yet to come; as anticipated, an outstanding display by QG SIGNALS Pipes & Drums team. Many spectators would have envisaged that Sig Ranjit was struggling to cope with temperate weather when he took off his Kilmarnock hat and bagpipes, and placed them on the floor middle of the display. To all of our surprise, he marched a few paces ahead and there he went, a surprise package, a spectacular Highland Dance. Two thumbs up and Syabash from Colonel of the Regiment and endless accolade from spectators precisely proved that the Highland Dance, first performance ever in history during Regimental birthday celebration, completely stole the show.

The parade concluded with speech from Colonel of the Regiment highlighting major achievements throughout the year. Of note, in particular, was mentioning the formation of 247 Gurkha Signal Squadron at MOD Stafford in 2016 under 1 Signal Regiment.

The second phase of the celebration was combined lunch at gymnasium and inter-Squadron Tug-of-War competition. The Comd QG SIGNALS and Gurkha Major took this opportunity to formally congratulate Colonel of the Regiment for his promotion to Lieutenant General who will be taking over Deputy Chief of General Staff (DCGS) appointment with effect from Jan 16.

Finally, the entire celebration concluded with inter-Squadron Tug-of-War competition where 248 Gurkha Signal Squadron became the ultimate winner for 2015 beating favourite 250 Gurkha Signal Squadron. It is worth mentioning though that Seremban Troop became the underdogs -a Troop of 16 personnel putting up a team to compete against Squadron strength yet deservedly gaining the 2nd Runner-up place ahead of 246 Gurkha Signal Squadron and Blandford. Their outstanding effort was clearly acknowledged by the Colonel of the Regiment during prize giving ceremony. Jai QG SIGNALS!
Queen’s Gurkha Engineers celebrates 67th Regimental Birthday

by Spr Milan Gurung QGE

On Saturday 26 September 2015 The Queen’s Gurkha Engineers celebrated their 67th birthday. The event took place in Invicta Park Barracks, and was a very special day for all the serving members, ex-service personnel and well wishers of the regiment.

As the regiment’s role changed from Search to Force Protection since 2013, the regiment has been busy undergoing various projects overseas, training and a recent deployment to Nepal in order to help in the rescue and restoration efforts after the catastrophic earthquake disaster (Op LAYLAND / Op MARMAT 1). Out of the very busy schedule and many commitments, we still managed to celebrate The Queen’s Gurkha Engineers 67th birthday and made it a huge success.

The programme started with a static and marching display from the Band of the Corps of Royal Engineers for the audience. After the display, the birthday special routine order was delivered by the Adjutant QGE, followed by the announcement of the Bowring Trophy winner and the runner up for the year. The Bowring Trophy is awarded every year to the best junior NCO for his excellent performance and leadership shown. This year the Bowring Trophy was awarded to LCpl Santosh Gurung and the runner up was LCpl Raju Tulachan.

After the announcement of the winners, The Band of the Corps of Royal Engineers played the National Anthems of Britain and Nepal, where all the audiences stood up to show their respect for the Anthems. Plant Operator Mechanics Class 1 course experience by LCpl Manoj Gurung QGE

I have recently attended the Plant Operator Mechanics Class 1 (POM Cl 1). This course made me think not only as an operator but also as a supervisor. It consisted of working in a live quarry to building roads.

In the first part of the course, we were taught how to operate the Medium Motorized Grader (MMG) and Vehicle Mounted Volumetric Mixer (VMTM). The second part of the course was working in a live quarry and fundamental lessons on building a road.

The third part was the Plant Supervisory Phase, whereby a student would be given a project and the supervisor’s position. He had to manage and supervise the task until the task was completed. The instructors acknowledged my work as one of the best compared to previous courses. The two most enjoyable phases during my course was working in a live quarry as the final product was being delivered to the relevant customers. The other one was the Plant Supervisory Phase. This phase prepares you to look forward to planning and managing a project as a supervisor or as a SNCO.

I have also gained a Construction Plant Competency Scheme (CPCS) civilian qualification in an excavator. At the end of the course I was awarded the TOP STUDENT with MERIT Pass grade. I am feeling happy and proud with my achievement, the tradition and standards that QGE soldiers have maintained for long.
Cpl Amrit Limbu QOGLR explains his journey to become the Craft Guild of Chefs Armed Forces Chef of the Year 2015

The Craft Guild of Chefs awards took place at a glittering ceremony at the London Hilton Hotel on Mon 15 June 2015, hosted by Vice President of the Craft Guild of Chefs Steve Munkley and David Mulcahy.

The Hilton Gala was packed with 800 Food Industry experts on the night. In total, there were 17 highly contended awards which recognised the most outstanding Chefs in a variety of categories from the nation.

A short video of competitor concepts was screened before everyone were present at the dinner. All food connoisseurs voted electronically for their choice. It was an immense feeling when my name was announced as the Armed Forces Chef of the Year 2015. Representing the Army and winning this award was a dream and a real honour.

A lot of energy and hard work went into being recognised for this award. The journey started in 2003, where I had an opportunity to take part in a combined Services Culinary Challenge as part of the British Army Culinary Arts Team. I made my mark in the Culinary World, winning awards and medals at the combined services, salon culinaire, Sodexo Royal Ascot, Joint Caterer and other cooking competitions. I had opportunities to teach the families how to make simple, delicious meals and serve happiness on the table through nutritious food. Those humbling experiences have kept my passion for food and cooking alive which made me realise this is why ‘I love what I do’. There hasn’t been a day that’s gone by where I haven’t learnt something new or created something that I haven’t been proud of.

Earlier this year, I was part of the Gurkha 200 Catering team. This commitment was demanding. During my career I’ve had the opportunity to work with some of the finest Chefs in the Army. This has given me the opportunity to learn classic techniques, sharpen my skills and gain crucial experience. I have always loved coaching and mentoring younger Chefs who have worked with me.

I feel great pride as I eagerly watch them progressing through their careers. My advice for any young generation Chef is always be professional, take pride in what you do, always have a passion for the service you provide and work hard, ‘one day it will reward you.’
The annual Commander's Cup 2015 was held in RMA Sandhurst on 22 August 2015. The main purpose of this event was to congregate all the serving chefs within the Brigade of Gurkhas’ vicinity and to enjoy the day with their families in a friendly social environment.

What a lovely sunny day it was to start the Commander’s Cup 2015. The day started with a group photograph with Commander and GM QOGLR sahebs being our main guests. As soon as the photographs were taken, all members including the wives and children made their way to the football pitch adjacent to HQBG. As per last year team draw, there were four teams this year, 10 QOGLR, 2RGR, QGS and QGE (including FSW and RMAS).

The thrilling matches were played in knock out phases; in which 10 QOGLR was beaten by QGE in first match. 2RGR won the second match against QGS and secured their place as a finalist. The final match was between 2RGR and QGE in which QGE was declared as the winner. The prize were distributed by our distinguished guest, Commander QOGLR saheb. Several fun games were also organised behind the scenes which were thoroughly enjoyed by all participants (specially ladies and children). Last but not least, free ice-cream provided by BFBS was the icing on the cake of the whole sunny afternoon.

The final phase of the event was an informal dinner night which was followed by a farewell event to the Lt Col Beaumont - Commander QOGLR, Maj Diwan, transferees and T4 personnel. The food was simply outstanding, not forgetting the tremendous performance from our bhais and bahinis. The cocktail dance at the end seemed more popular and fascinating for all.

The event was well managed as it ran smoothly; no stone was left unturned. It was a massive success, a big pat on the back goes to the organisers (RMAS) for their unselfishness effort.
All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy!

This quotation suits RAO Detachment (Det) 36 Engineer Regiment (Engr Regt) very well. With G1 Staff Inspection just round the corner, our schedule had become hectic, and things were heating up. All we needed was to loosen up a bit and have ourselves refreshed with a break from our routine work. Despite busy schedules, RAO Det 36 Engr Regt managed to take a week off work, against a backdrop of Op MARMAT, for adventurous training in Newquay led by Sgt Surendra.

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It began with a long drive of nearly six hours to RAF St Mawgan, Newquay, on Mon 11 May 15. Upon arrival, we had a short mountain biking familiarisation, conducted safety checks and practised some technical skills in riding.

The next day, we drove to Cardinham Woods in Bodmin for trail biking - the first activity of the week. It was an amazing experience: riding on 7.5 miles of nasty series of humps, sharp turns and bends, with nice and warm sun above our head.

After an hour and a half, we finished it with a snack at Woods Café by the forest. After the break, we headed to Bodmin Park for the second phase of the day, which was an easy-cycle down Camel Trail of 14 miles finishing at Padstow harbour.

The second activity was trekking which was nice and easy. It was a coastal walk on the south-west coast of Cornwall from Watergate Bay to Trevose Head, a distance of 14 miles. It was a pleasant day with sunshine and gorgeous sceneries along the coast. We had a surprise orienteering competition during the trek, conducted by Cpl Gautam who was also the instructor for trekking. The competition resulted in a tie between LCpl Rijan and myself.

Last but not the least, our final activity was surfing at Mawgan Porth beach - for me it was the most exciting activity of the week! We were met by two civilian instructors who talked us through techniques in surfing, i.e. how to lie on the surfboard, catch waves and flow with it, etc. As expected, it was a sunny day again. I must say, Sgt Surendra had booked a very nice and warm weather for the Det. Although it was cold in the beginning, afterwards it did not feel as cold as I had dreaded once I was in the water; perhaps, it was good quality wetsuits we had worn that kept us warm. We were not very good at the skill of balancing on the surfboard, nevertheless, enjoyed the waves. Exhausted and fulfilled, we headed back to the base.

Mountain biking, trekking and surfing - three activities and a week just seemed to have flown by when it was time to head back to camp. Although it was short, it had been a fantastic week with the Det as we could spend more time together, carefree and enjoying ourselves to the fullest. I hope we get to do this more often, and so do look forward to doing more adventurous trainings with the Det in the future.
Exercise LDW Team Building - Yorkshire Dales

by Cpl Ajit Gurung GSPS

On 7 Aug 15, permanent staff of the Learning Development Wing (LDW), formerly known as the Gurkha Language Wing (GLW), from ITC Catterick set off on a day’s adventure to Malham village in Yorkshire Dales.

Unlike the usual rainy and gloomy weather forecast in the North, our journey was welcomed with a clear sky and bright sunshine which was pleasant and a sign of a promising start. After an hour and 45 min of safe ride in a minibus driven by WO2 Shyam Lama (WSM LDW), our group arrived at Malham village around 0945 hrs.

We were a group of 10 including Cpl Rabin Koyee Rai QGS from Gurkha Company 2nd Infantry Training Battalion (2ITB) attached to our group to assist us in our hike for he was MLT qualified. Our group consisted of Maj J Crompton AGC (ETS) (OC LDW), Capt Baldeep Tamang QOGLR (Nepali CI), Capt M Baker AGC (ETS) (OIC ELW), Capt D Atkinson AGC (ETS) (LDO LDW), WO2 Shyam Lama Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas (WSM LDW), CSgt A Lindsay Royal Irish Regt (ALC CSgt), Sgt Ramesh Rai QGS (CQMS/Gurkha Instr LDW), Sgt Bharat Ghale QGS (Gurkha Instr LDW) and, last but not least, myself Cpl Ajit Gurung AGC (GSPS) (Chief Cik LDW).

With the day getting better, our personal admin sorted and everyone looking keen for an adventure, we started off our walk without wasting any time. With perfect summer weather on our side, my heart was filled with joy and to add more to it, I was appointed as lead scout as I knew the route well. Two weeks earlier, Sgt Ramesh and I did a reconnaissance of the hiking route and then the weather was a mixture of drizzle, gloom and sunny patches. But this day, it looked as if we had brought better weather with us.

Making our way along the stone slab laid route and green scenery we arrived at Janet’s Foss, nature’s pool and our first attraction site. It was a very refreshing place as the pool was supplied with a constant flow of fresh water from two small waterfalls. We spared some time to enjoy the view and took a group selfie. Then we moved on and after walking over a small steep hill, we arrived at a lake named ‘Malham Tram’ where we stopped by to devour our pack lunch. We were lucky to have a beautiful view in front of us. Leaving just our foot prints there, we then made our return and on our way back arrived at Malham Cove, a spectacular rocky landscape. That place made me and many of us ponder how such a remarkable place was made by nature itself in the first place and came up with several hypothesis. From the top of that place, we could see the full view of the valley and our car park site. Taking some pictures there we made our way down to the village. We briefly stopped over some places on our way and took some group photographs.

After walking approximately 7.33 miles for three and half hours we arrived at our car park. Everybody seemed to have had a great time and all had a sense of achievement after some steep climbs. It was definitely a very good team bonding exercise as most of our LDW members were present. It is often a challenge to get all LDW members together as for more than 6 months a year, the instructors are away in Nepal running the Nepali SLP 1100 course for the young British officers. The trip also served another purpose as Sgt Bharat’s farewell who is assigned to Defence School of CIS at Blandford assuming the post from first week of Sep 15. It was an opportunity for us all to wish Sgt Bharat all the best for his new post. We are all very thankful to Sgt Ramesh for organising such a fantastic day.
As part of the Gurkha 200 celebration to commemorate 200 years of service to the British Crown, a 9-man Squash team from the Brigade of Gurkhas made a tour of Nepal during 28 Sep – 09 Oct 15.

The event programme was finalised in liaison with Mr Suresh Gurung, General Secretary of Nepal Squash Racket Association (NSRA), SSgt Chandler-Johnson, SA G1 British Gurkhas Nepal and Capt Dhir Pun, the tour organiser. All matches were played in Kathmandu and Pokhara with the following team members:

- Capt Dhirbahadur Pun
- Capt Nirmal Bhattachan
- Capt Tarabahadur Pun
- CSgt Krishna Yonghang
- Cpl Yogendra Dewan
- Cpl Hari Ghimire
- Cpl Sandesh Rai
- LCpl Kesher Malla
- Spr Sujan Jwarchan

30 Sig Regt/OIC
FTC/QG Signals
253 Pro Coy/QGE
2RGR
Gurkha Coy
ITC Catterick
36 Engr Regt
ITC Catterick
36 Engr Regt

We played four matches in total, three in Kathmandu and one in Pokhara with an overall result of two Wins and two Losses. The matches that we didn’t achieve victory were against the Nepal National team A and B with the results of 7-2 and 6-3.

Our winning matches were against teams from Pokhara Squash Racket Association and Singapore Police Force which consisted of mixed serving and retired individual currently in Nepal. These matches no doubt have provided an excellent opportunity to gauge the standard of the BG Squash Team and, more importantly for the younger members of the team, it was good opportunity to experience some quality Squash. Squash coaching sessions were also conducted by Mr Hira Thapa, the Nepal National Team Coach which the BG G200 Squash team all undoubtedly benefitted from.

During the tour General Officer Commanding Force Troops Command and Col QGE, Maj Gen T R Urch CBE, in his capacity as the President Army Squash Racket Association visited, the team and also played a couple of friendly matches. Col BG, Col J G Robinson also visited the team while he was in the country to attending the annual GWS conference. These high ranking visits definitely played a vital role in raising the team’s morale.

To wrap up the tour we had two great dinners hosted by the NRSA and BG Squash Team respectively. The guests included Maj Gen T R Urch CBE, President ASRA, Col Ian Logan Comd BGN, AIG Dorja Kumar Rai (Designate Chief of Armed Police Force), Lt Col Bhuvan Nepalese Army and Mr Kishore Maharjan, President of NSRA and all the Squash players. President ASRA, NSRA and AIG Dorje have strongly recommended that this event should be organised on a yearly basis which will foster bilateral sporting links between the two countries.

The tour definitely enhanced bilateral sporting links between the two countries by bringing the squash teams closer together. Without support from Army Sports Lottery (ASL), endorsement from Army Squash Racket Association (ASRA) and the Headquarters Brigade of Gurkhas (HQBG), unprecedented logistical and admin support from the British Gurkhas Nepal (BGN), this tour would have been impossible. Therefore, the BG G200 Squash Team are very grateful and would like to thank all involved for making this tour an extremely successful.
Army Kendo Tour to Japan  20 Jul - 4 Aug 2015

by Sgt Bishnu Gurung QG Signals

With high spirits after our victory against the Navy and RAF at the Inter-Services Martial Arts Championships at RAF Cranwell, we began our 10,000 km journey with our sights firmly set on Japan. After a few years of planning, what started as a bit of a pipe dream, turned out to be a rather special and historical trip. Not only was this the first time that the Army Kendo Team had gone on an overseas tour, but it was also the first time that the Japanese Self Defence Force had ever engaged in a sport with another foreign force.

At daybreak on 21 July, the team arrived at the Osaka airport. The day of the competition got off to a bad start with the air temperature at 36 degrees. However the urban heat island effect adds between 15 and 20 degrees to this, so hydration was going to be the major battle for the day.

The British Army Kendo team had two team matches that day against what appeared to be both of their Combined Services ‘A’ teams. The President of the Japanese Defence Forces Kendo, Lieutenant General Hayashi Naoto graciously took on the mantle of the Senior Referee. Each member of the British team fought between three and five Dan-grades up and to say this was akin to Sunday league vs. Premiership would not have been too far from the truth. Whilst victory was never on the cards, our hosts were impressed by our tenacity and resilience; a couple of draws, a point scored, and two blood injuries, one of which required a team with mops, weren’t enough to break our spirit. At the ‘Friendship Meal’ later that night, we learned that there were more high Dan grades in that room than in the whole of the UK.

In summary, the trip was a huge success, with more training value than we could have possibly hoped for. The guys on the trip, experienced a country and culture that many have and will never experience again, and more importantly some strong ties have been made with our Japanese counterparts, opening up a whole host of opportunities for the future. To say that this trip was a once in a lifetime experience is true to some extent, although the next one is already being planned.

Trailwalker UK winners (1 RGR) take on the US Marine Corps Marathon challenge

Four runners from 1 RGR (Rfn Bhimbahadur Thapa, Rfn Neshum Tamang, Rfn Pritam Gurung and Rfn Ritesh Rai) ran the US Marine Corps Marathon on 25 Oct in Washington, USA.

All four runners finished the full marathon easily under four hours with Rfn Bhimbahadur Thapa clocking 3 hrs 17 mins, setting his personal best.

News and pictures about the Hong Kong Trailwalker will be published in the next edition.
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Captain RamBahadur Malla Testimonial

Hi, my name is Capt RamBahadur Malla from ITC Catterick; I have just completed my five weeks resettlement course (Tiling,Joinery/Kitchen/Bathroom and Plastering) at the UK Trades Training Centre in Newcastle. It’s an excellent package to have when you’re leaving the Army, going forward into ‘civvy street’. Five weeks seemed to be a long time for a course, but it went very swiftly and smoothly due to the excellent training I received from all the staff and instructors. I am aware that many of you will soon be retiring and will be joining me in civvy street; I strongly encourage you to do some of the wonderful courses that the UK Trades Training Centre can provide, giving you the strength to stand on your own two feet with ease. Gurkha’s can use their ELC entitlements to pay for the course - the staff at the training centre can help you to sort out the details.

I am evidence that any Gurkha soldier, or our counterparts, who are seeking trade skills as part of their resettlement to approach the UK Trades Training Centre, they will help you to achieve success in your chosen trade.

For more information please call us on: 0191 4547733
Or visit us at: www.uktradestraining.co.uk