

The Kukri

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The Journal of The Brigade of Gurkhas 2012



Front Cover
Equerry to HM The Queen with the Queen's Gurkha Orderly Officers

Maj Chinbahadur Thapa MVO (RGR), Lt Col D M Rex MVO (RGR) and Maj Devkumar Gurung MVO (QGE)

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Editorial

When, as a newly commissioned 'sano saheb', I as with many other newly joined officers commissioned into the Brigade of Gurkhas, was strongly encouraged to immerse oneself into the Brigade culture and to support those institutions that inform and support the Brigade. At the time this included making a regular annual subscription to the Kukri Journal and to join the Britain Nepal Society, the oldest society in the UK that promotes friendship between the peoples of Nepal and Great Britain, and retains wider political and commercial links with Nepal. A few years later, this encouragement was extended to the newly created Gurkha Charity, the Gurkha Welfare Trust, and also to the Gurkha Museum by becoming a Friend of the Gurkha Museum. It was good advice then, and I believe it remains good advice for today for us to continue to support these three great institutions, the Gurkha Welfare Trust, The Gurkha Museum, and the Britain Nepal Society through which we support our ex-servicemen, protect and enhance our own Gurkha heritage and demonstrate a wider interest in our relationship with Nepal. It is also remains important that we within the Brigade continue to keep ourselves fully informed on the Brigade of Gurkhas by contributing to and subscribing to our own Brigade Journal, The Kukri.

The Kukri Journal is part of a triage of publications available to the Brigade of Gurkhas, namely; Regimental Association Newsletters, Parbate Magazine and the Kukri Journal itself. These publications will be joined by the newly constructed Gurkha Brigade Association website www.gurkhabde.com that opens in April 2013 to an even wider audience. The website will of course be able to carry a great deal of material that can be easily updated, and in time will hold a library of past Kukri Journals with links to other Regimental Association websites that will greatly enhance our access to raw material. Whilst each of publications comes with its own distribution and objectives, the Kukri Journal remains the premier publication for the Brigade.

My own collection of Kukri Journals when combined with those of my father, reaches back to the very first journal, The

Kukri Journal Edition I, dated May 1949. Covering a span of 64 years, this growing collection provides the reader with an instant library on the achievements, activities and personalities found within the Brigade of Gurkhas of the time. This fulfils the key objective of the Kukri Journal, 'To provide a historical record to the units of the Brigade of Gurkhas and to the Gurkha Museum, for future reference'. In today's society where the internet, social media and mobile phone technology can and does provide an instantaneous means of communication, the Kukri may appear to be anachronistic and passé! I would argue strongly that the reverse is true. In this age of sound and information 'bites', it has become increasingly important to retain a solid base and overview of the Brigade, of its achievements and activities, within an ever changing sea of mass sound and information. We need to retain our own definitive voice of who we are, where we have come from, what we have achieved, and where we are going.

The Kukri Journal now covers the annual year, January to December with a slight overlap at the beginning and end of year to allow articles to cover a complete period of activity. Regrettably, and this edition is no exception, it is now more common to see the Kukri Journal published some six to seven months after the closure of the year. This merely re-enforces the perception that the Kukri is out-of-date and passé. It is not unreasonable for our Brigade units and individual subscribers to see their Kukri Journal in their hands by the end of following April of the reported year, but to achieve this we need the full co-operation of all unit Kukri editors and authors to meet the end of year deadline for their edited articles. This will allow the print design team and publishers to produce a finished product in good time.

In this year's Kukri, we publish accounts of three Operation HERRICK tours, which have seen every unit in the Brigade deployed in Afghanistan. Regrettably these operations continue to come with a high cost in the loss of life and serious injuries. Our condolences go to out all the families of those killed and wounded whilst in the service of the Crown.

Excerpt from 'The Helmandi Lancer'

The operational newsletter of The Queen's Royal Lancers March 2013. (Designed for an internal audience to keep our soldiers, their families, the Old Comrades and the Rear Party up-to-speed with Regimental news whilst deployed.)

Throughout the tour the soldiers from the Task Force have done many incredible deeds. Here is one example: a young Gurkha from I RGR was on guard in a tower in a patrol base when the front gate was attacked by insurgents with small

arms fire and grenades. The Gurkha was struck on the helmet by a round that knocked him to the ground and a grenade was thrown into the sangar. Quickly composing himself he threw the grenade back. The insurgents then scaled his tower and tried to drag him out but he repelled the attackers with his kukri and in the struggle he and an insurgent fell out of the tower. At this point the insurgents gave up and withdrew. The Gurkha then returned to his tower and apologised to his Guard Commander for leaving his post!



General Sir Peter Wall KCB CBE ADC, Colonel Commandant the Brigade of Gurkhas

Annual Report to The Right Honourable Doctor Ram Baran Yadav, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal

By General Sir Peter Wall KCB CBE ADC, Colonel Commandant the Brigade of Gurkhas



Honorable President,

It is my privilege to present to you my first annual Report on the Brigade of Gurkhas having taken over as the Colonel Commandant earlier this year. Over the past 12 months the Brigade has been continuously engaged in or preparing for operations in a wide variety of roles and environments.¹ I am very pleased to be able to state that all have represented the Brigade with great distinction and continue to maintain and enhance the good name and reputation of the Gurkha soldier and Nepal. These examples of distinguished service could not have come at a more opportune moment as the British Government concludes its review of its forces structures and operational capabilities. I am also pleased to be able to report that, on current plans there is a clear requirement for the Brigade of Gurkhas to continue to be an integral part of the British Army well into the future.

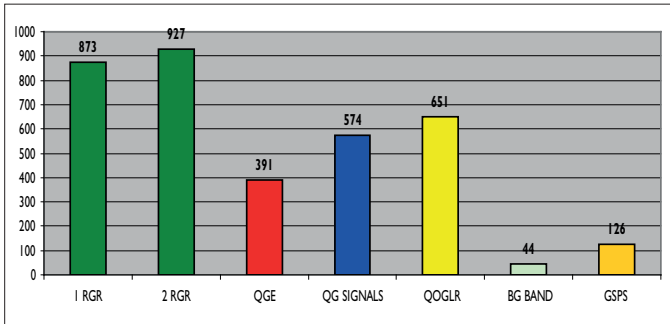
BG Update

The Brigade is in the process of optimising its operating procedures in order to remain a sustainable force. Integral to this process is the adoption of a Brigade-wide vision; this will be ratified shortly but essentially revolves around presenting the Brigade, “as an agile, flexible and adaptable part of the British Army offering a special capability”.

This special capability is supported by several lines of operation. The key one being sustaining and enhancing our operational effectiveness which ensures that we are always fit for purpose. Managing our manpower to best effect ensures that we have a force that is fit for purpose. We must also carefully arrange our welfare provision to ensure that morale remains high whilst balancing cost effectiveness of activities undertaken for the benefit of our soldiers. To ensure that we are best able to manage the perception of the Brigade in the wider public eye we must also have an active information campaign that best portrays our unique brand and heritage. These are all reliant on our centre of gravity, which is the ability to recruit Nepali citizens to serve as Gurkhas in formed Gurkha units.

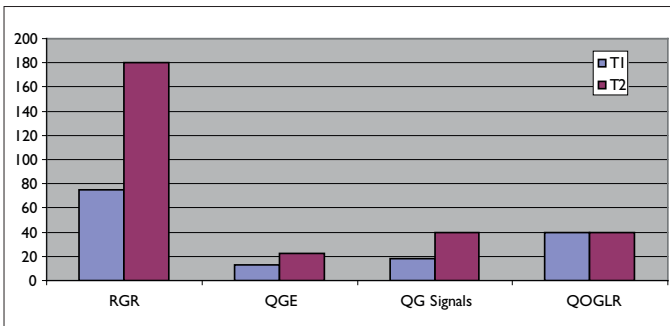
Our ability to recruit top quality soldiers has always been one of our key strengths; 3,757 applicants from across Nepal applied for 176 places last year. Therefore we continue to benefit from a balanced selection of Nepali society. The Brigade continues to be well manned, however as the British Army is going through a restructuring process we will have to reduce our numbers in line with other units. Our current strength stands at 3586, a surplus of approximately 20% which must be managed very carefully.

¹ | RGR - Afghanistan, QG Engineers - Afghanistan, QG Signals - Afghanistan, Somalia and USA, QOGLR - Afghanistan, Cyprus, 2 RGR - New Zealand.



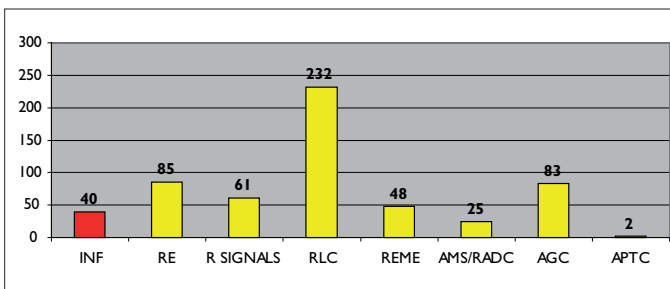
Diag showing BG Total strength by unit as at 1 Oct 12 - 3586

This is being conducted across the Ministry of Defence by several tranches of redundancy. The first one was completed at the end of August with 145 personnel leaving the service, and the second tranche will conclude in June 13 with 282 personnel leaving. Work is in place to identify the exact numbers required for further tranches up to and including 2015.



Diag showing breakdown of Redundancy figures

There have also been significant numbers that have transferred to the wider Army. To date some 576 personnel have transferred to specific trades.



Diag showing numbers transferred to BA as at 1 Oct 12

Units' Activities

I RGR

I RGR have been primarily involved in preparations for deployment to Afghanistan, and they deployed in September this year. They have not deployed as a formed unit because their original area of responsibility in Helmand Province has been handed over to the Afghan authorities. However, each of the four rifle companies are attached to a different British Battlegroup which will greatly enhance the cultural understanding of the receiving battlegroups. Our soldiers have been deployed in both the ground holding and mentoring roles. Gurkha soldiers are ideally suited to both of these responsibilities and a large number of our soldiers have deployed on multiple tours. The training has been intense, and I can report that morale is high and they have been fully prepared for their specific roles.



Prince Charles on visit to IRGR

2 RGR

2 RGR Deployed to Afghanistan from March to September 2011. They deployed in 3 main elements for their deployment. The biggest of these was the Police Mentoring and Advisory Group which had a presence in every part of the UK's area of operations. The others were A Company, attached to 1 RIFLES, and B Company attached to 45 Commando Royal Marines. On return the unit also took part in Ex PACIFIC KUKRI in New Zealand and Ex HIKMAT BARSATU IV which was a joint all arms exercise with the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF).



2 RGR medal parade

QGE

The unit has undergone a change of role, they have assumed the duties of High Risk Search - a vital and high profile task, crucial to the Army's Counter IED capability in Afghanistan. The unit had a Troop deployed with 33 Armoured Engineer Squadron in February 2012 and a further twenty personnel from 70 Squadron deployed in October 12, as well as the whole of 69 Sqn QGE.



QGE personnel in new role

trained infantrymen. I Field Squadron re-rolled as infantry in order to undertake the Police Mentoring and Advisory Group role with I Welsh Guards, highlighting the flexibility of units of the Brigade of Gurkhas. They have also had elements deployed on United Nations duties in Cyprus.



QOGLR personnel in theatre role

QGS

Numerous elements have deployed providing both tactical and strategic communications - whether from remote patrol bases in Helmand Province, or with Joint Force Headquarters. They have also been involved in the operation to evacuate UK nationals from Libya. Elements of the unit have also taken part in Ex GLOBAL PEAT which is a Land Warfare Centre sponsored Training Exercise held in the Falkland Islands. 246 Gurkha Signals Squadron has just deployed to Afghanistan.



QGS personnel in role

Support agencies

Immigration and Gurkha Settlement Project

The influx of retired Gurkhas coming to the UK under the new immigration rule continues². A great effort has been made by our government departments, local authorities, Service Charities, other agencies and the Gurkha communities themselves to address any issues that have arisen. To assist with this support, Rushmoor Borough Local Authority has been allocated an additional £1.5M of public funds. Settlement in the United Kingdom is now beginning to move away from the more familiar areas as the ex-Gurkha footprint extends across the country.

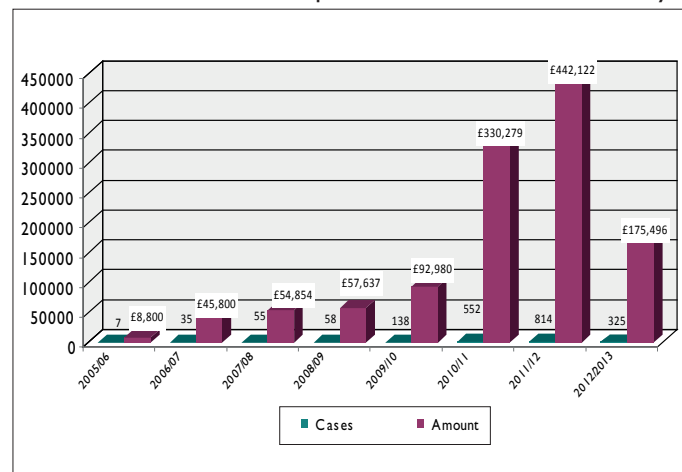


Chart Showing the Contributions from the Army Benevolent Fund to Ex Servicemen

QOGLR

The QOGLR have been deployed as the Theatre Logistics Regiment. They have been very successful, mainly due to the fact that the soldiers are not only first-class logisticians but also

² 389 Ex servicemen came to UK with GSO assistance this year.

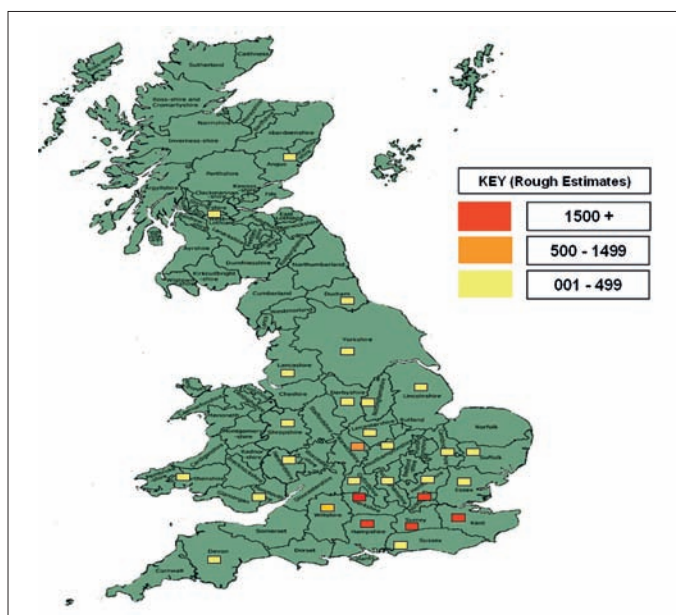


Diagram showing the breakdown of settlement in the UK

In Nepal, the Gurkha Settlement Office (GSO)³, in HQ BGN, has handled over 8,000 visitors in the past year, and 33,000 since opening in Oct 2009.

In UK, the joint Gurkha Welfare Trust (GWT)/HQBG Gurkha Welfare Advice Centre (GWAC) in Aldershot continues to work closely with government departments and Service Charities, all of whom are very supportive. Across Government and amongst the leading Service Charities the GWT's position is recognised as the lead Service Charity for ex-Gurkhas in the UK.

The Gurkha Welfare Trust (GWT). The GWT, through its field arm the Gurkha Welfare Scheme (GWS), leads in delivering welfare support to deserving ex-Gurkhas and their dependants in Nepal. The majority of GWT funding is raised by public donation. The Trust has continued to focus on the implementation of the Strategy Review published in 2011. The Review aimed at charting a course for the Trust towards 2015. This is critical as the numbers of WW2 welfare and service pensioners are likely to decline rapidly after 2015. Key work strands are as follows:

Welfare Pensions. Welfare Pensions are the Trust's core activity. In July this year, the Welfare Pension was increased from 4,500 to 5,000 Nepalese Rupees per month. Given the current inflation in Nepal the rise in pension has been gratefully received.

Medical Scheme. It is anticipated that as the Welfare Pensioners enter into their senior years the need for quality medical care will increase. The Trust aims to allocate £420,000 towards improving the Medical Scheme to mitigate this.

Hardship Grants. The Trust is always ready to assist in cases of extreme destitution and hardship. It also provides "portage grants" to those struggling to walk and Winter Fuel Allowance for Welfare Pensioners.

Water & Sanitation. DfID annual funding of £1.25M until 2015 continues to allow the GWS to setup 64 Rural Water Sanitation Projects each year. This presents significant improvements to some 60,000 people so far.

Residential Homes (RH). The Trust has set up a RH in Kaski (Pokhara) which provides care for 26 of the Trust's most vulnerable Welfare Pensioners. The new home in Dharan is scheduled for completion in Summer 2013. It will provide care for a further 26 elderly Welfare Pensioners. Additionally, the intent is to provide support to those who do not qualify for residential care but are in conditions of very real distress.

Notable Achievements

LCpl Netra Rana RGR, represented GB in the London Paralympics.

QGS - November 2012, Ex DRAGON TONGBA TIGER - Level 3 Adventure training expedition to Mt Everest Base camp.

In conclusion, I am able to reassure you that the Brigade of Gurkhas remains in extremely good heart. The Gurkha soldier continues to enjoy the unprecedented support of the British public, who holds them in very high regard. In a climate of immense and persistent change the Brigade remains an essential component of the current and future British Army and its soldiers continue to acquit themselves with great distinction. They remain very worthy ambassadors of Nepal.

General Sir Peter Wall KCB CBE ADC, November 2012
Colonel Commandant the Brigade of Gurkhas

³ The GSO was established in Oct 2009 to give guidance on the application process and aspects of life in the UK. It works closely with UKBA and DWP to ensure those applying understand the financial and social implications of coming to the UK. It is assessed this number is likely to be nearer 11,000.

Honours and Awards 2012

New Year's Honours List 2012

KCB Lieutenant General Mark Francis Noel **MANS**, CBE, (late RE and QGE)

Queen's Birthday Honours List 2012

CBE Col Jeremy John Hobart **TUCK**, Late Royal Army Medical Corps

MBE Maj David Edward James **KEMMIS-BETTY**, The Royal Regiment of Scotland¹

Operational Honours and Awards 2012

MBE Lieutenant Colonel Ash Giles **ALEXANDER-COOPER**,
The Royal Gurkha Rifles
Major Wesley John **HUGHES**, The Royal Gurkha Rifles

MID Corporal Dhanbahadur **GURUNG**, The Royal Gurkha Rifles
Colour Sergeant Lakhbahadur **GURUNG**, The Royal Gurkha Rifles
Major Spiro Christopher **MARCANDONATOS**, The Royal Gurkha Rifles
Rifleman Suman **RANA MAGAR**, The Royal Gurkha Rifles
Corporal Baljit **LIMBU**, The Royal Gurkha Rifles

New Year's Honours List 2013

CB Major General Ian Martin **COPELAND** (late RLC and QOGLR)

OBE Diana, Mrs **DONOVAN** (GWT(UK) Trustee)²

CBE Brigadier John Craig **LAWRENCE** MBE (late RGR)

MBE Nicholas **COCHRANE-DYET** (2GR)³
Major Hemchandra **RAI** BEM (AGC (GSPS))

¹ Son of Lt Col P Kemmis-Betty MC (2GR).

² For services to the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

³ Civil List. Deputy Chair, British Business Group, Abu Dhabi, UAE. For services to British business and to charitable work in the UAE.

Roll of Honour

Operational Casualties in the Brigade of Gurkhas

The Royal Gurkha Rifles

30048322	Rfn Sachin Limbu	1 RGRWIA 24 Jun 10 Died of wounds	02 January 2012
21171410	LCpl Gajbahadur Gurung	2 RGR (GRC 1 YORKS) KIA Afghanistan	27 January 2012
25194218	Lt EA Drummond-Baxter	1 RGRKIA Afghanistan	30 October 2012
21171435	LCpl Siddhanta Kunwar	1 RGRKIA Afghanistan	30 October 2012

Rifleman Sachin Limbu

It is with great sadness that we record the death of Rifleman Sachin Limbu, from 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham on Monday 2 January 2012. He died from grievous wounds sustained while serving in Afghanistan in June 2010.

Rifleman Sachin Limbu deployed on Operation HERRICK 12 with B (Sari Bari) Company, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles as a machine gunner. He was involved in a number of operations to stabilize the area of Walizi Village, many of which involved intense, protracted and close-quarter combat in an area known to present a high risk from improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

On 24 June 2010 his multiple deployed on a patrol to Walizi as part of an operation to enable local people to have freedom of movement and to deter insurgent activity in the area. As his multiple reached its objective, an area characterised by frequent insurgent attacks, Rifleman Sachin moved into a fire position to provide protection to his comrades and was caught in an explosion from a hidden IED. He was evacuated to Selly Oak via Camp Bastion.

Rifleman Sachin Limbu, aged 23, was born on 3 October 1988 and came from Rajghat, Morang in Nepal. His father was a Gurkha Senior Non-Commissioned Officer and Rifleman Sachin was brought up in the life and community of 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles and later the 2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles in Hong Kong and Brunei.

He passed the rigorous selection for the Brigade of Gurkhas in 2007 and after the Combat Infantryman's Course in Catterick, joined 1 RGR in Brunei where he conducted extensive jungle warfare training before moving with the Battalion to the UK and undertaking training for deployment to Afghanistan.

Mr Dillisher Limbu, Rifleman Sachin's father said:



"My wife and I are immensely proud of our only beloved son who has sacrificed his life for the good of others. Sachin was our only son and we both extend our sincere thanks to all the staff at the New Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Brigade of Gurkhas who have supported us all so closely."

Lieutenant Colonel D J Robinson, Commanding Officer of 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles said:

“Rifleman Sachin Limbu died in hospital with his parents at his bedside. 17 months earlier he had been terribly injured whilst on patrol in Helmand province.

Since that time he had shown remarkable tenacity to overcome these injuries and had been an absolute credit to his regiment and his country; he made us all extremely proud to call him a brother in arms.

Rifleman Sachin’s sacrifice has prevented him from fulfilling a rewarding career but his inspiring determination not to succumb to his injuries for so long was in the true spirit of those Gurkhas who have gone before him. He was highly cherished and loved by his fellow Gurkhas and left his mark on all those that had the honour to meet him. As the only son of a retired Gurkha this will have been devastating for his family; our thoughts and prayers are with them at this difficult time.”

Lieutenant Colonel G M Strickland DSO MBE, Commanding Officer I RGR during Operation HERRICK 12, said: “Rifleman Sachin Limbu has touched many of our lives. On operations in Afghanistan he represented everything that is good about our Gurkha soldiers. He was diligent, supportive to his friends and committed to what he was doing. He had a firm place in his Company and was counted as one of a select few. Since his injury a year and a half ago, he was nothing short of inspirational.

I watched this young man deal with unimaginable pain and suffering, but all the time he maintained his strength and dignity. One of the proudest moments of my life was when he was presented his Afghan campaign service medal on his ward in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital last year, surrounded by his family, friends, and the wonderful staff there who cared for him so well.

Sachin had put on uniform for the first time since his injury. He was proud, and his smiling face touched us all. In hospital, he fought against incredible odds for a very long time with more courage than I have ever seen in another human being, helped at every step by his wonderful, loving parents. He was truly a special man.”

Major Dhyanasprasad Rai MVO, Gurkha Major I RGR, said: “Rifleman Sachin Limbu was courageous and highly capable soldier who was dedicated to his profession. He was always sincere and devoted towards his responsibilities as a soldier, in the best tradition of the Gurkha.

He was active in all that he did, thoughtful for those around him and incredibly loyal. His service within the 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles will never be forgotten. He will be sadly missed. My thoughts and deepest sympathies are with his family and friends.”

Major Khusiman Gurung MVO, Gurkha Major I RGR during Operation HERRICK 12, said: “Riflemen Sachin Limbu was a true Gurkha soldier. He was loyal, determined, and enthusiastic and was always up for a challenge

with a grin on his face. His cheerful attitude and determination made him an inspiring member amongst his fellow soldiers, who both admired and respected him.

He will be sorely missed by all who knew him but his sacrifice will not be forgotten. Rest in Peace, Sachin. Our thoughts and prayers are with his parents and close friends at this difficult time.”

Major C N A Crowe, Officer Commanding B Company I RGR during Operation HERRICK 12, said: “Rifleman Sachin Limbu was, in many ways, a model Gurkha Rifleman; deeply committed, proud, fit, and highly skilled at his profession, ever cheerful and always willing to muck in to help his friends. Before he was wounded in Afghanistan, he had seen frequent contact with the enemy and had proven himself a courageous fighter.

However, his true strength of character and bravery came to the fore after he suffered grievous injuries in an IED strike. Despite horrific and extensive wounds which left him bed-ridden and in constant severe pain he maintained a fierce will, not just to survive, but to break the boundaries of expectation and recover.

Over a year and a half his sheer force of character and gritty determination led to a level of recovery which defied medical reason, all the while maintaining hope and a quiet, modest sense of humour.

Rifleman Sachin’s death is a desperate tragedy, especially after such a long and drawn-out battle to survive which we all believed he was winning. He is sorely missed. He leaves behind him a legacy of exemplary bravery and courage which will remain an enduring inspiration to all of us.

In particular our thoughts and sympathies are with his parents and his cousin Chandra, who have been at his bedside for so long, giving him the love and support he needed to push on. ‘Bravest of the brave, never had a country more faithful friends than you’.”

Captain Liljung Gurung, Second-in-Command B Company, I RGR, said: “Rifleman Sachin Limbu was an outstanding young soldier. He set the example for his comrades to follow. Rifleman Sachin had a bright future ahead of him, his dedication and his ability to focus and apply his efforts in even the most difficult situation marked him out above his peers.

Rifleman Sachin died putting his own life in danger to provide protection for others. His death is an enormous loss to us all. May his soul Rest in Peace. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and the friends he leaves behind.”

Lieutenant Guy Norton, Rifleman Sachin’s Platoon Commander, said: “Rifleman Sachin was a real asset to the Platoon. He was aware of the dangers of his job and he had been under relentless contact in the days prior to the incident

and yet was stoic and reliable as always and continued in his duties regardless of the personal risk.

That Rifleman Sachin survived to be evacuated out of theatre was remarkable enough. That he fought for more than 18 months with such injuries is testament to his spirit, strength of character and immense courage. I visited him a number of times whilst he was in hospital, and was astonished at his fortitude and the characteristic dignity with which he endured his injuries.

Rifleman Sachin was a Gurkha Rifleman in the truest sense. Though he was a modest and mild-mannered young man, his qualities shone through; he was remarkable for his quiet but dignified presence. Above all, he was a gentleman: good natured, willing and brave.

Rifleman Sachin will always be remembered. Our thoughts are with his parents.”

Corporal Nishan Gurung, Rifleman Sachin’s Section Commander, said: “When I think of Sachin now, he was a very positive character; he never tried to turn down a task, he never complained. His performance in the field and barracks was consistently good. He was the kind of soldier who could be trusted with no second thought.

He was a true Gurkha soldier in his respect to his superiors and love for his fellow soldiers; he showed a true example of soldiering and the whole platoon is going to miss him. See you on the other side mate. Rest in Peace. We are thinking about your family all the time.”

Secretary of State for Defence Philip Hammond said: “I was deeply saddened to learn of the death of Rifleman Sachin Limbu. His colleagues speak of him as a committed, supportive friend, and as a tenacious, professional soldier. My thoughts are with the family of Rifleman Sachin Limbu and his friends in 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles.”

(These tributes are reproduced from the Defence Intranet.)

Lance Corporal Gajbahadur Gurung, 2 RGR

It is with great sadness that we report that Lance Corporal Gajbahadur Gurung from 2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, serving with C Company, 1st Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment, was killed in Afghanistan on Friday 27 January 2012.

Serving as part of Combined Force Nahr-e-Saraj (North), Lance Corporal Gajbahadur was a member of an ISAF foot patrol to disrupt insurgent activity in the Khar Nikah region of the Nahr-e-Saraj district of Helmand province when he received a fatal gunshot wound.

Lance Corporal Gajbahadur Gurung was born in Majthana, Nepal, on 16 October 1985, and was brought up and educated in Pokhara. Before being selected for the Brigade of Gurkhas, he was a full-time student, studying Maths and English.

He joined the Brigade of Gurkhas on 18 December 2004 at British Gurkhas Pokhara. He completed recruit training in Gurkha Company, 3rd Battalion, at the Infantry Training Centre Catterick in October 2005. He then joined 2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles and served both in Brunei and the UK.

Known as ‘Gaj’ to his friends in the Army, Lance Corporal Gajbahadur served three times in Afghanistan during his military career. He first deployed there in 2006 on Operation HERRICK 4 as part of D Company (Gurkha Reinforcement Company) with 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery. He deployed again in October 2008 on Operation HERRICK 9 with 2 RGR.



On 14 July 2009, he was posted to C Company (GRC), 1st Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment, in Münster, Germany. Over the summer of 2010 he deployed to the British Army Training Unit Suffield in Canada and spent time on exercise with both the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards and 1st Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment Battlegroups. Upon his return to Germany he became immersed in preparations for Operation HERRICK 15, during which he completed the basic Pashto language course.

On deploying to Afghanistan, C Company was renamed D (Delhi) Company. After completing his in-theatre training, Lance Corporal Gajbahadur moved to Forward Operating Base Khar Nikah where his company, under command of Combined Force Nahr-e-Saraj (North), were to be based for the duration of Operation HERRICK 15.

His company was tasked with holding the contested and critically influential area north east of Helmand's second city, Gereshk. On the afternoon of Friday 27 January 2012, Lance Corporal Gajbahadur's patrol came under small arms fire. During the short exchange of fire that ensued, he was fatally wounded.

He leaves behind his wife Manisha, father Gumbahadur, mother Lekh Maya, his brother Buddha and sister Junu.

Lieutenant Colonel Dan Bradbury, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment, said:

"Lance Corporal Gajbahadur Gurung was serving in the northern part of Nahr-e-Saraj district - one of the toughest areas in Helmand and one of the very few areas remaining where control is contested daily with the insurgents - when he was killed. He touched so many lives for the better; his peers in Delhi Company and all of us in the chain of command knew him as an intelligent, charismatic and inquisitive natural leader of men.

Never one to let an opportunity go, he was constantly striving to know more, learn more, and his ability to get on so well with the local people made him the natural choice to train the Afghan Local Police. He died as he lived, at the heart of the action, taking the fight to the enemy and resolute in the face of danger. He was a true Gurkha in body and spirit in everything he did.

We will miss him immensely and our thoughts are with his wife Manisha in Münster and his parents Gumbahadur and Lekh and brother and sister Buddha and Junu in Nepal. We pray he will rest in peace."

Major Spiro Marcandonatos, Officer Commanding D (Delhi) Company, 1st Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment, said: "I have known Lance Corporal Gajbahadur for nearly three years. An extraordinary individual, he made an impression from the very first time I met him. Bright and well-educated, he was most definitely a 'people person' who

abided by all the right values; a true Gurkha at heart, with a Western twist.

Much respected across all ranks, he offered much in every way and was a born leader of men. He consistently maintained that he wanted to be at the forefront of a Rifle Platoon and 9 Platoon were the beneficiaries of this wish. His dedication has been second-to-none and his immediate aspiration after this tour was to attend the Section Commander's Battle Course in Brecon to lead a section of soldiers.

Such is the mark of the individual to me that, as his Officer Commanding, I consider that I have lost a brother and a friend. As a rising star in the Brigade of Gurkhas we will be the worse for his passing and he will be sorely missed by one and all. Our thoughts are with his wife Manisha, his family and friends."

Captain Hemkumar Tamang, Second-in-Command, D (Delhi) Company, said: "Lance Corporal Gajbahadur was a very well-known and talented man in the Company. Very good at all sports, he especially loved playing football and basketball. He was always cheerful, charming and approachable to his mates and commanders. He was an outstanding character.

He was one of my best soldiers and proved this since his arrival in Germany. His diligent and hard work was second-to-none; he was always eager to help his mates and support his commanders. His smile and humble character remain in my heart. He was an excellent friend and a brother to all those around him. Now we miss him.

My thoughts are with his family, especially his wife Manisha, at this difficult time."

Captain Euan Waters, Platoon Commander, 9 Platoon, D (Delhi) Company, said: "I met Lance Corporal Gajbahadur in 2009 when I joined the Company as his Platoon Commander. I immediately singled him out as someone who was going places. Although a Rifleman at the time, he stepped up on numerous occasions as a section commander and, as with everything, he did it with ease and an assured confidence.

Lance Corporal Gurung was one of the most gifted soldiers I have ever seen. He took a huge pride in his job. I was so proud of him when he was promoted to Lance Corporal and we joked that I would bump into him in years to come in the Officers' Mess, once he had commissioned. In my heart I knew he would get there.

I am so proud to have been able to serve with Lance Corporal Gajbahadur, privileged to have known him and to count him as a friend. His thirst for life and energy was contagious. He touched all those that met him. I am a better soldier and person for having known him.

A true Gurkha and one of the bravest men I have ever met. My thoughts and love go out to his family at this sad time."

Warrant Officer Class 2 Sanjipkumar Rai, Company Sergeant Major, D (Delhi) Company, said:

"I have known Lance Corporal Gajbahadur, known as Gaj, for the last four years. I first met him while we were training for Operation HERRICK 9. He was a young Rifleman and I was a Colour Sergeant. Even in those early stages of his Army career he proved himself to be the best amongst his peers.

I know you are not with us; instead you are embedded in our hearts and minds. We may not be able to see you again and feel your warmth, but the priceless work and sacrifices that you have made will always be remembered. For me you are the true hero of HERRICK 15...

At this difficult time my deepest and sincerest condolences go to his wife Manisha and his extended family."

Secretary of State for Defence, Philip Hammond, said: "I was very saddened to learn of the death of Lance Corporal Gajbahadur Gurung, a young soldier who achieved so much during his few years as a member of the British Army.

He served three tours of Afghanistan, fighting to safeguard Britain's national security and to give Afghanistan a peaceful future. My thoughts and deepest sympathies are with his family, friends and colleagues."

(These tributes are drawn from the Defence Intranet.)

Incident at Checkpoint PRRANG (30 October 2012)

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that Lieutenant Edward Drummond-Baxter and Lance Corporal Siddhanta Kunwar, both from 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles (1 RGR), were killed in Afghanistan on Tuesday 30 October 2012.

Lieutenant Drummond-Baxter and Lance Corporal Kunwar were based in Checkpoint Prrang in the southern area of the

Nahr-e-Saraj district of Helmand province. Both men were attached to 40 Commando Royal Marines. On 30 October they were participating in a shura (meeting) with members of the Afghan Uniform Police inside the checkpoint. On completion of the shura, they were shot and killed by a man wearing an Afghan police uniform who had been attending the meeting.

Lieutenant Edward Drummond-Baxter

Lieutenant Edward Drummond-Baxter deployed to Afghanistan on 30 September 2012 as Platoon Command of 1 Platoon, A (Delhi) Company, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, attached to 40 Commando Royal Marines as part of Transition Support Unit Nahr-e-Saraj. He was based in Checkpoint Prrang in the southern part of Nahr-e-Saraj District, Helmand province. He was on his first operational tour of Afghanistan.

Lieutenant Drummond-Baxter was born in Peterborough on 15 September 1983 and lived in County Durham with his parents. He studied at University College London and gained a BSc degree in Psychology. While at university he was an active member of his local Army Reserves regiment, The Honourable Artillery Company.

He subsequently spent two years working for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office including a posting to Japan before joining the British Army. He attended the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in 2010 and commissioned into 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles in December 2010.



After Sandhurst, he completed the demanding training to qualify as an Infantry Platoon Commander and further cemented his ability as an outstanding field soldier by passing the arduous Jungle Warfare Course in Brunei to qualify as Jungle Operations Instructor.

Throughout 2011 and 2012 he expertly prepared and led his platoon through the detailed mission-specific training for Operation HERRICK 17 in Afghanistan and attended the three-month Nepali language course in Pokhara, Nepal. In August 2012, he volunteered to spend a further month in Nepal assisting with the Brigade of Gurkhas' selection course.

Lieutenant Drummond-Baxter was an excellent Platoon Commander whose calm demeanour and ready sense of humour were widely respected by his soldiers and fellow officers. He quickly made his mark as a talented officer who possessed great potential and always put his soldiers first.

He leaves behind his mother, Helen, father, David and sister, Emily.

The family of Lieutenant Edward Drummond-Baxter said: "Edward was fiercely loyal and totally sincere to his parents, sister and many friends who are mourning him today both in the UK and around the world. He loved the Gurkhas and died among friends doing the job that he wanted to do. Helen and David would appreciate being left to grieve in private."

Lieutenant Colonel David Robinson, Commanding Officer 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: "Our battalion has lost a character, a true gentleman and an inspirational leader in Lieutenant Edward Drummond-Baxter. Edward or 'DB', as he was often known, was one of life's true personalities; his Gurkha soldiers noticeably responded to his dedication to them but also to his great wit and humour. They would follow him anywhere.

His natural empathy and rapport for his soldiers was evident to everyone; it was never a surprise to find him spending additional time with them, whether seeking to further their professional development or just enjoying their company. The tragedy of his loss is beyond words.

He was also utterly courageous and had already proved himself such a calm and steady leader under fire that his men knew they were in the best of hands. Since joining the regiment in 2010, he had quickly shown that he thoroughly enjoyed the challenges of command and, I know, was incredibly proud to be leading his platoon of Gurkhas. Despite the inherent dangers of the operation, he focused his time and considerable efforts to their welfare and in delivering professional excellence in pursuit of the mission.

He will be sorely missed by all who knew him. His brother officers will always remember him for his style, kindness and

sense of fun and he truly endeared himself to all ranks as it was impossible not to be won over by his charm and positive personality. He combined his natural leadership with a mature, dedicated outlook and this was never more apparent than when he prepared his platoon for the challenges of the tour. I could not have been more proud of him.

Edward Drummond-Baxter was a Gurkha officer in the finest tradition and his loss will be deeply felt by all those who had the privilege and honour of knowing him. We know that the deep loss we feel is nothing compared to that of his family and our thoughts and prayers are with them at this extremely difficult time."

Lieutenant Colonel Matt Jackson Royal Marines, Commanding Officer 40 Commando Royal Marines, said: "Edward was a remarkably talented officer. He readily accepted the challenges placed before him and was so demonstrably proud to be serving in Delhi Company, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles. I saw at first hand the way in which he capably led his men through the training prior to deployment and the way that his Gurkhas responded to his leadership style; they had clearly made an exceptional bond.

He had already proved to be highly effective in the time he was deployed in Afghanistan and will be remembered for his passion and bravery and his commitment to those he so ably led; his reputation as a leader, commander and warrior were known. He loved the men he served alongside and in turn they loved him; leaders like Edward are born to achieve greatness and it is with deep sadness that we find that his life has been cut so tragically short.

It is difficult in these few words to truly reflect how exceptionally talented Edward was, but I will say this: I am proud. I am proud to say that I knew him. I am proud to have served alongside him. I am proud to have had such a highly talented Gurkha officer serve as part of 40 Commando Group Royal Marines. His loss has had a profound effect on all of us and our thoughts and prayers are with his parents and sister at this difficult time. Rest in peace."

Major Dave Pack, Officer Commanding A (Delhi) Company, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: "Edward was an outstanding officer; trustworthy, honest and exceptionally competent. He saw it as a privilege to command his Gurkhas. He was so proud to deploy with them on operations and in return every one of them felt privileged and lucky to have him as their Platoon Commander. As his Officer Commanding, it was an honour to know him and to work with him. He will be irreplaceable.

His robust and proactive nature combined with his irrepressible cheerfulness made him perfectly suited to the austere conditions in which he was working. Brilliant with the Afghan locals and fearless on patrol, he operated with a calm confidence that gave me and his men utter faith in him

as a man and as a leader. He was inspirational. Everyone who knew him should be incredibly proud of him. He was a shining example of what a Gurkha officer should be; professional, brave and selfless."

Captain Shuresh Kumar Thapa, Second in Command A (Delhi) Company, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: "I first came into contact with Edward ten months ago when I arrived as Second in Command of Delhi Company. He first struck me with his professionalism and positive approach to his job as Platoon Commander I Platoon. He was very proud to be an officer in IRGR and Delhi Company, a fact that showed in his work and life in Shorncliffe (Kent).

He was a true hero to me and for all of Delhi Company. He was a great character and great commander, a very calm and big-hearted man who always put his boys first and never tired doing the job he loved. He welcomed any tasks and always said 'Huncha Saheb' ('Yes, Sir').

He was the only commander who never had any negative comments and always highlighted the positive about his boys who he was extremely proud to lead and serve with. He always entertained us during our conference calls by saying 'Roger' and 'out' together at the end of acknowledgement.

His well-spoken tones added a touch of class to the conference call and on the Company net. From now on there is no one here to say to me 'Huncha Saheb' and make me laugh during the Delhi Company conference call. I would like to extend my thoughts and prayers to his family."

Captain Ryan Davies, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: "Edward Drummond-Baxter was a good friend. He was a hugely popular member of the Officers' Mess and his open, warm and personable nature ensured that those that knew him knew him well. He had a real lust for life, would always grasp opportunities for adventure and had an uncanny ability to liven up any social event. He was a guy who would always lend a caring ear and with whom you could simply sit down and have a heart to heart.

He will be immeasurably missed by all those in the Royal Gurkha Rifles, both officers and soldiers alike. Spending time with him recently in Nepal, it was clear that his love for Gurkha soldiers underpinned all that he did in his job. Known as 'DB Saheb' to his Platoon; they will feel his loss considerably, but are far better for having known him, as are the rest of us. He was a selfless and enigmatic commander, a first rate soldier and a true gentleman."

Captain Jiwan Pun, A (Delhi) Company, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: "Lieutenant Edward Drummond-Baxter was a cheerful, engaging and professional man who was universally popular and highly capable in all he did. He was known as 'DB Saheb'; one of the finest officers with whom I have ever served.

I always will remember my days with DB Saheb; particularly my last visit to CP Prrang on 29 October 2012, where we were warmly welcome saying 'Oh Jiwan saheb, what a pleasant surprise, you are also here with us'; Major Pack (Officer Commanding Delhi Coy) replied saying 'Yeah, this is A team for you Ed'.

We then had fresh fruit and water together chatting about how he was getting on. On the way back to Patrol Base 2, I kept thinking 'why I did not give him a hug?' as he saw me off by hand-shaking three times in the CP Prrang.

I truly sense that he wanted to lead his men and utilise his considerable experience and very likeable character to guide them through the next six months and leave Afghanistan a better country.

DB Saheb's cutting, self-deprecating wit, easy going manner and endearing personality will never be forgotten by all those who had the privilege and pleasure to have met and worked with him.

His calm and reassuring voice did and will always echo on our ears. Our thoughts and prayers are with all his family and friends. He fell doing the job he loved, surrounded by those who loved him. He will never be forgotten."

Captain Alex Brown, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: "Edward was the consummate gentleman. We, his brother-officers in the Mess, all loved him for his sense of humour, easy going manner, and desire to have fun. But it was his charm, kindness, and consideration that set him apart from us. He was in many respects a throwback to another era, an English gentleman abroad.

He had spent time in Japan prior to joining the Battalion and loved Asia, and so was very excited about going out to Brunei with us next summer, linen suit and all. Because he was slightly older he brought a calmness and maturity to his manner that the soldiers responded to and respected, and which gave him the gravitas to be an excellent commander. My heart goes out to his family because today we lost one of the best."

Corporal Hirabahadur Phagami, I Platoon, A (Delhi) Company, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: "Throughout my career, Lieutenant DB Saheb was one of the best platoon commanders. He was always calm and caring to all of us. Always a smile on his face no matter how difficult the task was. Best leader I have ever met and worked with. May his soul rest in peace. I will forever remember him. May God bless his family."

Lance Corporal Roshan Gurung, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: "Lieutenant DB Saheb was a very kind hearted and generous gentleman. It was a great honour to serve with a Platoon Commander like him. May his soul rest in peace in heaven, we will miss him and he will always be in our hearts."

The Secretary of State for Defence, Philip Hammond, said: "I was deeply saddened to learn of the deaths of Lieutenant Edward Drummond-Baxter and Lance Corporal Siddhanta Kunwar. They have made the ultimate

sacrifice whilst serving in Afghanistan on an operation which is vital to our national security. My thoughts are with the families, friends and colleagues of both of these brave men at this most difficult time."

Lance Corporal Siddhanta Kunwar

Lance Corporal Siddhanta Kunwar deployed to Afghanistan on 3 October 2012 as a Sniper Section Commander in the acting rank of Lance Corporal. He was serving with A (Delhi) Company, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, attached to 40 Commando Royal Marines as part of Transition Support Unit Nahr-e-Saraj. He was based in Checkpoint Prrang in the southern part of Nahr-e-Saraj District, Helmand province. He was on his third operational tour of Afghanistan.

Lance Corporal Siddhanta was born on 19 June 1984 in Pokhara, Nepal, where he lived with his mother and father. He passed the arduous selection for the Brigade of Gurkhas on 17 December 2004 and having completed his year-long infantry training joined 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles in October 2005.

Very soon after his arrival in 1 RGR he deployed with the Battalion to Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2005-2006 as part of the European Union Force in support of the Bosnian Government. Lance Corporal Siddhanta then moved with 1 RGR to Brunei where he conducted extensive jungle training and qualified as a sniper in 2007.

In late 2007 and into 2008 he deployed to Afghanistan on Operation Herrick 7 where he served in Garmsir in southern Helmand Province. In 2009 he successfully passed a Junior NCO selection course and in 2010 returned to Afghanistan with 1 RGR on Operation HERRICK 12 to the Nahr-e-Saraj area of Helmand province. It was during this tour more than ever that his calm good humour, sharp mind and huge operational experience became a touchstone for his fellow soldiers.

LCpl Siddhanta Kunwar was an outstanding soldier and a true Gurkha. He displayed the calmness of mind, cheerfulness in adversity and loyalty throughout his many operational tours - qualities that the Brigade of Gurkhas hold dear. He served with many of the Companies within the Battalion and his loss will be deeply felt throughout 1 RGR.

He leaves behind his mother, Krishna Maya Kunwar, his father, Shyam Kumar Kunwar, stepmother Chhali Devi Kunwar, his four sisters; Shova, Shyandya, Smita and Sardha Kunwar and his elder brother Bhupendra Kunwar.

The family of Lance Corporal Siddhanta Kunwar said: "We are deeply shocked, disheartened and in disbelief that Siddhanta is no longer with us. But we shall treasure all the good things he did. He enjoyed immensely his profession



and was fully committed towards it. He has made us proud. The whole family misses him dearly."

Lieutenant Colonel David Robinson, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: "Siddhanta Kunwar was a great character and a tough, professional Gurkha soldier with a proven and impressive operational record. Strong and highly experienced, he stood out from the crowd not only as a highly capable sniper but also for his smile and sense of fun, in whatever situation he found himself.

On this, his third tour of Afghanistan, he knew the dangers and understood better than most what it meant to do his job at the toughest end of soldiering. As such he was a role model for the younger soldiers around him. They, in turn, responded greatly to his guidance and experience but also to his caring nature. Away from operations, he loved his sport and was a great team player; he loved nothing more than having fun with his mates on the sports field.

Siddhanta was a proud soldier and was immensely proud to be a Gurkha. He was one of the cornerstones of the Sniper Platoon where he was part of a close-knit team who were

justifiably confident in their ability. He would have done anything to support his comrades and friends around him; I know they will miss him deeply.

The Regiment has lost a fine young man who epitomised all that makes the Gurkhas so special. Living always so far from home, Gurkha units are particularly close-knit and the loss of Lance Corporal Siddhanta is a bitter blow, felt keenly by all ranks and families of 1RGR. We will mourn his tragic passing and our thoughts and prayers are with his family in Nepal and friends at this terrible time.”

Lieutenant Colonel Matt Jackson Royal Marines, Commanding Officer, 40 Commando Royal Marines, said: “Lance Corporal Siddhanta Kunwar epitomised everything that a Gurkha should be; he was dedicated, professional and brave. This was his third deployment to Afghanistan and he was continuing to excel in everything that he did, but especially in his role as a sniper, where his field-craft skills were beyond reproach. It is clear that he thrived on the challenges that operations bring and enjoyed using the skills that he worked so hard to gain; he was never found wanting. He demonstrated the highest qualities of a Gurkha soldier and his legacy lives on in Delhi Company.

It is a huge privilege for me personally to command a Company of Gurkhas and to have known Lance Corporal Siddhanta, however briefly. We took him, and have taken Delhi Company, into the Commando family as one of our own. His loss will therefore not only be felt by the Brigade of Gurkhas and Delhi Company but also by everyone serving within 40 Commando Group Royal Marines. His sacrifice will never be forgotten and he will always be in our thoughts.

My thoughts and prayers go to his friends and family as they struggle to come to terms with his loss. I offer you small comfort in knowing that Siddhanta died in the company of those who loved him for everything he was and everything that he did. My thoughts are with them at this exceptionally difficult time.”

Major Dave Pack, Officer Commanding A (Delhi) Company, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: “Lance Corporal Siddhanta was an integral part of the Sniper Platoon within Support (Medicina) Company and of A (Delhi) Company. He was an impeccable soldier with tremendous potential, who had already shown himself to be a leader of men. He excelled in his role as a sniper and as a junior commander. As a sniper he was out of the top draw; fit, robust and with outstanding marksmanship skills. As a NCO he was a shining example to the junior riflemen in his checkpoint; always leading by example and consummately professional in all he did. He was the epitome of a Gurkha soldier.

Lance Corporal Siddhanta was not only a talented soldier, but an incredibly likeable man. Everything about him was good: his cheerfulness, his enthusiasm, his attitude. His family, friends

and colleagues should be incredibly proud of him. It was a privilege to know him and to have him fighting alongside me.

I and all members of A (Delhi) Company are devastated; the pain and emptiness is indescribable. But this is nothing compared to the grief his family will be experiencing and our thoughts and prayers are with them. Their son will never be forgotten; he was a special man who made an indelible mark on everyone who knew him.”

Major Dhyana Prasad Rai, Gurkha Major, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: “The untimely death of Lance Corporal Siddhanta Kunwar is extremely sad news for us in The Royal Gurkha Rifles and the wider Gurkha family. Having been a sniper since 2008, Siddhanta was of the best in the battalion. He was a supremely competent soldier who excelled in marksmanship and field-craft - the essence of our trade. He had proven himself time and again on operations. This was his third operational tour in Afghanistan. Siddhanta was also a fine sportsman whose natural ability at basketball and volleyball made him a fixture in the various competitions held regularly in battalion.

His example is exactly in line with the best traditions of a Gurkha soldier on 200 years of dedicated Gurkha soldiering in the service of the United Kingdom. He has made us all extremely proud to have served alongside him.

As he is a loss to us, so he is a terrible loss to his family in Nepal. Our thoughts at this time are with them who will bear this sad news the heaviest of all.”

Major Alex Biggs, Officer Commanding Support Company, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: “Lance Corporal Siddhanta was an integral part of the Sniper Platoon within Support (Medicina) Company. An impeccable soldier of much potential, he had set an excellent foundation for his future career. An experienced sniper who has excelled in the harsh environment of Afghanistan, he was always forward leaning and utterly reliable.

Very much a team player he was always keen to help and join in at both work and play. A keen sportsman he would always represent the Company whenever the opportunity arose. As a person Lance Corporal Siddhanta was a gentleman. Warm, friendly, emphatically polite and outgoing he was an integral part of both company and battalion. A man of quiet wit and good sense of humour he was very much part of the RGR family and will be sorely missed.

Warrant Officer Class 2 Bishnu Thapa, Officer Commanding Sniper Platoon, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: “Siddhanta was a very loyal, professional, fantastic, engaging and brave Gurkha soldier. He was popular and highly capable in his profession and was warm, witty, clever and kind. He was one of the finest snipers in the platoon. He was the veteran of HERRICK 7 and 12 and was clear in his motivation for returning on HERRICK 17.

I am stunned by his unexpected passing. He was an immensely proud soldier. He epitomised the very best qualities expected from a true Gurkha soldier. He will be sorely missed by all within the platoon and his memory will endure in our hearts.

Our prayer and thoughts go out to his family and relatives. May Goddess Durga give strengths to overcome at this very difficult time.”

Rifleman Tuljung Gurung, Support Company, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: “Everyone knows that we have to leave this world, leaving everything behind. Today we lost one of our close friends, Siddhanta Kunwar. It is a sad day for all of us. It’s too hard to explain in just a few sentences how special he was. He was one of the great ‘numberi’ (cohort of recruits) from my intake. He was very helpful to everyone no matter how hard the work was. He stood as a hero among us and inspired people by his performance.

He had the ability to make people take him into their hearts in a short period of time. We came to Support Company together which gave me more opportunity to see how good he was. Looking to him I’m so proud to be one of his numberi and also so sad. We’ll miss him a lot, may his soul get peace in heaven.”

Rifleman Milan Rai, Delhi Coy, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: “Lance Corporal Siddhanta was my commander. I used to call him ‘Sid Dai’, which means he was like my elder brother. He was very keen, loyal and committed to his work as well an energetic and very disciplined soldier. He never shied away from any challenge and was caring and sharing with everyone.

Wherever you are, Sid Dai, stay safe. I am going to miss you. You will always remain in our hearts and memories.”

Rifleman Rem Bahadur Gurung, I Platoon, A (Delhi) Company, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: “Lance Corporal Siddhanta Guruji was a great person. He was like a brother to me. He was an always cheerful person. He was one of the best Snipers. I will miss him so badly.”

The Secretary of State for Defence, Philip Hammond, said: “I was deeply saddened to learn of the deaths of Lieutenant Edward Drummond-Baxter and Lance Corporal Siddhanta Kunwar. They have made the ultimate sacrifice whilst serving in Afghanistan on an operation which is vital to our national security. My thoughts are with the families, friends and colleagues of both of these brave men at this most difficult time.”

OPERATIONS

OP HERRICK 15

C Company / D (Delhi) Company (GRC 3) 1st Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment

OC	Major S C Marcandonatos	RGR
2iC	Capt Hemkumar Tamang	2 RGR
Battle Capt	WO2 J Handley	1 YORKS
ROG	Capt Maniram Rai	2 RGR
CSM	WO2 Sanjipkumar Rai	2 RGR
CQMS	CSgt Shreeman Limbu	2 RGR
Snr HR Admin	Sgt Dhiraj Dewan	GSPS
7 PI Comd	Capt Badrikumar Rai	2 RGR
7 PI Sgt	Sgt Lakhbahadur Gurung	2 RGR
8 PI Comd	Capt S Bowman	1 YORKS
8 PI Sgt	Sgt Naradmani Rai	2 RGR
9 PI Comd	Capt E Waters	1 YORKS
9 PI Sgt	ASgt Bikas Rai	2 RGR

Individuals taken from across 2RGR formed C Company (GRC 3) in Munster, Germany within 1YORKS on 25 August 2009. It's original term was for 6 years, but was reduced to 3 years culminating in a deployment to Afghanistan on Op HERRICK 15, under 20 Armoured Brigade. Build-up to this deployment, saw the Company deploy to BATUS, during Hybrid Foundation Training (HFT), as the Light Role Company within the 1PWRR Armoured Battlegroup on Ex PRAIRIE THUNDER 3 (PT3) and as augmentation to The QDG BG as COEFOR on PT5. With support to 1 Medical Regt being a recurring Company task, Mission Specific Training (MST) then commenced in earnest; individual followed by collective during which the CFX, CALFEX and FTX were the key events.

C Company, renamed D (DELHI) Company for Op HERRICK 15 deployed centrally to PB KHAR NIKAH (KNK)¹, within the Upper Gereshk Valley (UGV), Nahr-e-Saraj (North) ((NES(N)) district; this district being the most kinetic in the whole of Afghanistan, at this time; initially deployed as OPCODE to DANBAT, which latterly became The Grenadier Guards BG.

Combined Force Nahr-e-Saraj (North) ((NES(N)) Laydown at the Start of OP HERRICK 15

The KNK Area of Operations straddles the area between the NES Canal and the River Helmand. It has been established by the siting of several Checkpoints (CPs) forming a bubble of fragile security of approximately four square kilometres, with a population of approximately 1,000 local nationals. This area of influence is surrounded by woodlines, ditches and tracks that are riddled with improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and firing points utilised by the Insurgents.

The D (DELHI) Company Group name came about due to the Danish Battlegroup and their re-naming according to their laydown; D Company located in KHAR NIKAH, F Company located in RAHIM, West of the River Helmand. In the naming of the Company, DELHI was endorsed, as both The Yorkshire Regiment and The Royal Gurkha Rifles have this as a Battle Honour.

The Company Group initially consisted of a total of 220 ISAF elements, plus a believed strength of upto 80 Afghan National Army (ANA) and 26 Afghan Local Police (ALP). With an enduring Afghan security solution being the endstate towards which we were working we had made the decision that the ALP and the laydown in the KNK area, were to be the focus. This we ran by C Company, 3 MERCIAN on handover and confirmed once the 30 day in-theatre review had been conducted; of note from this was the 'hawa kura' that the ANA complete were to be re-located, without replacement.

The ANA left much earlier than anticipated, on 12 December 2011. With R&R² at this stage having kicked in with a vengeance, greatly exacerbated by our location, with the difficulties of moving individuals to and from Bastion, we were regularly down by 21 individuals with at times being down by 28 out of my 110; at 25% just a little more than the prescribed 14%. This combined with the ANA departure meant we were stretched and much juggling was done. To mitigate the stretch on manpower we were given support from our Combined Force & Task Force HQ, with a Platoon (-) from 1 PWRR coming under Command for a month, followed by 16 x Danish from their C Company - this subsequently reduced to 10 x Danish.

Scheme of Manoeuvre

As it stood, at the beginning of the year nothing was clear as to where Khar Nikah was going, only that UK forces, if at all possible, were no longer to be deployed there by the end of H15. Our arcs were as follows:

- a. Left of Arc: Hand over to ALP. SOTF(W)³ mentor from distance; visiting for approx 1 week in every month. 60 x ALP.
- b. Right of Arc: Hand over to SOTF(W), who would locate in Khar Nikah and therefore mentor from KNK. Additional troops to amount to a total of 70 under SOTF(W) in KNK, plus the 60 x ALP.

¹ PB KHAR NIKAH (formerly known as FOB KEENAN), a base which 2 RGR elements filled on HERRICK 9 (H9) and GRC 2 filled during H12.

² Rest and Recuperation. The first elements from the Company Group departed on their R&R on 25 Nov 2011, with the last returning on 24 Mar 2012.

We therefore continued with our scheme - isolation of the population from the insurgent and gathering the necessary intelligence to eliminate the insurgent where appropriate. Within this scheme, we were to enable and mentor the ALP, develop the Informal Community Shura (ICS), and broaden their reach as a community. Support from TFH to enable manoeuvre came in the form of QDG, MUSTANG c/s (CVRT) and QRH, CHALLENGER c/s (WARTHOG), as well as IPWRR and the Danish. We also enabled a more fluid link with SOTF (W) to our NW, engineering a fortnightly J2 and Influence meeting, and so we began to better understand the area to our north, which enabled us to have a better effect. This also bought us some time to influence the SOTF(W) decision as to their future input into Khar Nikah.

By the end of February we were reasonably clear that SOTF (W) were to take control of our AO by the end of HERRICK 15 (mid April 2012) and the Right of Arc (above) was the intent. At the beginning of March their lead elements including their HQ arrived for, in effect, a 5 week handover of the AO; something that prior to their arrival we did not relish, but which quickly proved unfounded. Scheme did not alter hugely, but the focus did. In essence, our final five weeks were about showing our successors their community, the ALP and the ground, and in doing so the INS. This was enabled by utilising some of their skills and manpower to provide them with 'space' to develop the ALP in their way, when we extracted. All became inextricably linked in finalising the laydown and what would become the Zumberlay VSP on our departure.

Main Effort

The ME continued to be the development of the ALP and the ICS, which in turn enabled the maintenance of LN consent within the FF Area of Influence; without it, this would still have been a very unpleasant place.

Company Activity

Over the final three months, in addition to STAP Patrolling across the whole spectrum of tactical options including night LURKS, significant KLE / Influence Operations and ALP training and mentoring and the handover of the AO to SOTF(W) we conducted 24 Company level Partnered (ALP / NDS / BOST 170 / SOTF(W)) Operations. These were conducted across the KNK AO with all but one pushing the FLET. Two CPs were built, one in the south (CP ARCHER) and one CP to the north (CP GAJ, formerly CP DAHLI LAILI (DHL)), both pushing the security bubble out by about 400 metres and buying in 2 x kalays, with one incorporating the key leader within the KNK area. We had 39 x IED finds, of which 25 were destroyed, with the rest Mark and Avoid. We trained 37 new members for the ALP and had a confirmed 21 x EKIA and 6 x EWIA. No finds

as such other than the IEDs that were exploited, although the ALP 'procured' 2 x PKM!?

Human Terrain

D Coy maintained influence across the AO through a number of groups, the most predominant of which were:

(1) **Informal Community Shura (ICS).** This developed exponentially and on handover we had representation from all Kalays within the security bubble and had even encouraged 'Elders' from the Kuchi and from Kalays on the fringes of the bubble and contested areas. Regular attendance on the ICS was at approximately 25 plus individuals, with our handover Shura bringing in just short of 80 individuals. The new District Governor visited and conducted a Shura with the LNs, which seemed to be received positively. With the ANA having left, the ICS was headed up by the ALP Commander, with occasional attendance by the NDS Commander. Overall positive steps were made in representation and in attitude; on handover they recognised that principally it is first and foremost about security, after which infrastructure, projects will follow.

(2) **The Afghan Local Police (ALP).** Our focus on the ALP paid dividends. The original ALP Commander, who to be frank, we had been trying to get rid of for a few months, resigned on the day of the DG visit and all over Afas 4,000 (\$75.00); it was a welcome move and eagerly accepted by me. Two days later a new commander was nominated after a few hours of discussions and the obligatory meal; for about six weeks after this the ALP moved on in leaps and bounds, providing a gate guard for FOB KNK daily and continuing to patrol and conduct deliberate operations with ISAF, as well as with the NDS and, late on, with BOST 170 (ANA SF). With the US arrival and rumours abound, plus a more visible presence from the former ALP Comd in the ranks, the ALP then proceeded to regress and for a month it appeared that all our hard work was to be undone. However, within the last ten days prior to handover, after many a shura and one on one discussions, we managed to achieve our endstate, bar their manning of 1 x CP. In essence we had changed them from a neighbourhood watch into a 60 strong ALP, working to their ICS, who manned 1 x PB and 2 x CPs on their own and mentored from distance, 1 x CP partnered, and they conducted both mentored and partnered patrolling with ISAF. They remained the focus as they are the enduring security solution of the KNK area, which will allow ISAF to depart from Khar Nikah in due course.

(3) We ran continuation training on Tuesdays and Saturdays, for the ALP and we conducted several programmes to increase our numbers of trained ALP to the increased

³ SOTF(W), Special Operations Task Force (West). Teams formed from US Special Forces and supported by their regular Infantry Units as well as other nations. The Team to our North at the time were Navy Seals.

Tashkiel of 60. Capt Badrikumar Rai was the Coy's link to the ALP and co-ordinated this effort and their handover to the SOTF(W). Having them operate in the AO presented significant FF Recognition and FP risk, but as they developed and progressed and with their new CoC, the rewards most definitely proved greater. CP MAIWANDI, built in June 2011, was not fit for purpose and so the ICS were tasked to re-attribute it's usage; their decision which was to re-house the NDS within the CP, was one we (ISAF) would have made.

(4) **LN**s. On departure we were largely at the stage where individuals requesting projects did so through the ICS who look to prioritise, with LN consent. Dependence on ISAF was negated at every opportunity and as a result the community as a whole were coming together to make decisions and prepare for their own future security; to the extent where there are reportedly 80 LNs who are donating money to the ALP to facilitate weapons and ammunition procurement.

(5) **The National Directorate of Security (NDS)**. In the main they operated from PB WATAN and provided some useful information. They were less productive latterly but did coordinate and conduct an operation with the ALP and BOST I70 to great effect. The switch to CP MAIWANDI should have paid dividends.

In summary, our achievements, in short, were a KNK with an ALP strength of 60 trained; ALP manning three CPs, mentored from distance and one CP partnered; ALP conducting partnered patrols with ISAF; an ALP that is structured and can perform a function directed by it's Informal Community Shura (ICS); two new CPs built, pushing the Forward Line of Enemy Troops (FLET) to the north and to the south by about 400metres, whilst providing enhanced security for central KNK; a reduction in total of two CPs to minimise the burden on the ALP and our successors; a community that now understands how to link in with GIRoA; key leaders and local nationals who have been weaned off their ISAF dependency; a link-up with SOTF(W) to our north and as a result a better understanding of the insurgency. SOTF(W) were to take on the challenges of the KHAR NIKAH AO and consolidate it's linkage with their VSPs to the north. We believe that we set them up for success. Time will tell.

In achieving this we have had many selfless acts:

CP GAJ, was a multiple strength position located deep in the Green Zone. Isolated, beyond the FLET, 800 metres from the nearest supporting position and with 270 degree arcs into an area dominated by the enemy. Capt Eoin Waters and Sgt Lakhbahadur Gurung with 20 men, living in austere conditions and fighting from improvised battle positions located on the roof of a small Afghan compound, formed the SECURE and BUILD element of a Coy operation to build CP DHL; a CP built to provide the most contested element for the enduring security laydown for ALP in KNK. Both have shown immense courage, leadership and example.

Cpl Dhanbahadur Gurung took over responsibility of Observation Post (OP) Bahadur, an austere Afghan compound, with a strength of 10 men, on the 10 Feb 2012. On the 11 Feb 2012 and again on the 17 Feb 2012, OP Bahadur was subjected to a violent and determined insurgent attack in the first instance and on the second, as a result of an assassination attempt on a member of the Local Police, was subjected to a reactive attack. Cpl Dhan's resolve, presence of mind, devotion to duty and coolness prevented his base being overrun in the first of these attacks, and in the second prevented a local national death.

Riflemen Tanka Tembe, Ritesh Gurung, Ananda Thapa and Rfn Suman Rana Magar, amongst others, were employed as the lead searchers (HORN men) on patrols in the Company during Op HERRICK 15. As lead searchers they have been responsible for the clearance of a safe route for patrols through the complex, demanding and dangerous terrain of the primary green zone on an almost daily basis. This they have done regularly in the most testing conditions at night, with poor night vision, under immense mental pressure. They have consistently put themselves at the forefront, showing commendable courage, coolness and devotion to duty.

None more so than the fallen:

LCpl Eustace, 2RIFLES
Sig Sartorius-Jones, Royal Signals
LCpl Gajbahadur Gurung, 2RGR
Long will they live in our memories.
Our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

Kapha Hunnu Bhandu Marnu Ramro Hos

Honours and Awards

Mention in Dispatches (MiD) were awarded to 30120273, Rfn Suman Rana Magar; 21170366, Cpl Dhanbahadur Gurung; 21169963, Sgt Lakhbahadur Gurung; 541194, Maj S C Marcandonatos. Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS) was awarded to Fg Offr Sttevei Attala, who was attached as our MSST representative.

Jai D (DELHI) Company, Jai C Company



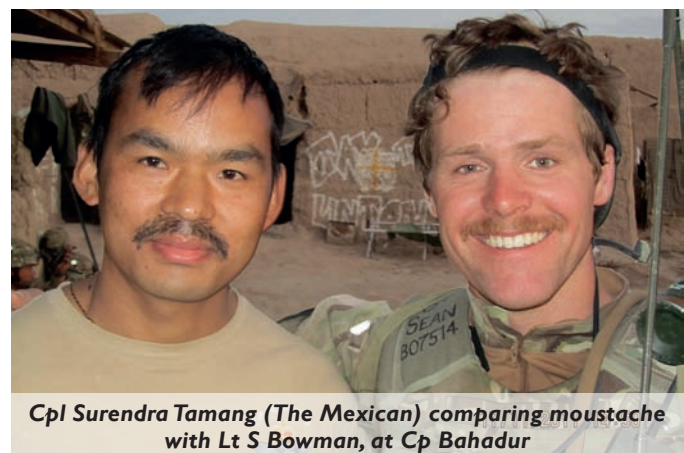
Final Pre-Patrol Checks



An Afghan Local Police Member



Capt Tosh Lancaster, SOTF(W) Commander for future Khar Nikah, namely VSP Zumberplay



Cpl Surendra Tamang (The Mexican) comparing moustache with Lt S Bowman, at Cp Bahadur

OP HERRICK 16

QOGLR Theatre Logistic Group

By Captain Hugo McCullough RLC and Lieutenant Guy Shepherd RLC

The Operation HERRICK 16 Theatre Logistic Group (TLG) is an organisation of approximately 365 people generated from 30 organisations across the Army and Royal Air Force. The headquarters is formed from 10 The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment (QOGLR) and the general support (GS) squadron, the single largest component accounting for almost 60% of the Group, is made up mainly from 94 (Gurkha Supply) Squadron QOGLR.

The QOGLR are also providing four Police Advisory Teams (PATs) to 1 Welsh Guards in the Police Mentoring and Advisory Group, a troop to 4 Logistic Support Regiment RLC in the close support logistics role and a squadron to 29 Regiment RLC on Operation TOSCA in Cyprus in the multinational mobile force reserve (MFR) role. The Rear Operations Group, back in Aldershot, also has a large contingent providing support to Operation OLYMPICS.

The TLG is a large organisation responsible for coordinating the actions of the various subunits with a mission to 'conduct theatre logistics support and enabling functions, in order to optimise the combat effectiveness of dependent Force elements while ensuring governance and holdings are optimised in support of campaign progression.' The Regimental Headquarters commands six distinct subunit groups, described below.

The Joint Movements Unit (JMU) is responsible for the movement of all personnel and freight both inter- and intra-theatre. The JMU consists of approximately 60 personnel; RAF drawn mainly from RAF Brize Norton and movement controllers drawn from 24 Regiment RLC; additionally, they have an attachment of one section of Danish personnel. The JMU is concentrated in the new Combined Passenger Handling Facility (CPHF), a UK/US shared building, from where the embarkation and disembarkation of all coalition forces moving through Camp Bastion takes place. The JMU also has a footprint in two other theatre locations in Kandahar and



The JMU and GS Sqn RVTp backloading stores on a Boeing 747

Kabul. They currently coordinate the movement of around a million kilograms of freight and 4,000 passengers per month.

The Postal and Courier Detachment is responsible for sorting and distributing all mail in theatre. Further to this they coordinate a courier service which escorts diplomatic mail and occasionally takes forensic evidence from theatre to laboratories back in the UK. So far they have handled 45,000 bags of mail equating to 360,000kgs.



Post being sorted for onward movement

The Labour Support Unit (LSU) is responsible for the recruitment and employment of all the British Forces' locally employed contractors (LECs) in theatre. With a small team of 10 people, based in Camp Bastion and Kabul, they administer around 1,000 individuals providing interpreters for battle groups and industrial grade workers for jobs within the wire. They also provide support to the military line managers who pay wages and ensure the welfare of the LECs.

The Joint Theatre Education Centre (JTEC) is responsible for all in-theatre education; whether it be teaching English to LECs, teaching patrol Dari and Pashtu to section commanders, or conducting command and leadership management (CLM) for individuals in theatre. They have also acted as cultural advisors providing briefs and information regarding holy festivals such as Ramadan. They currently support an average of around 1,000 visitors per month to the Centre.

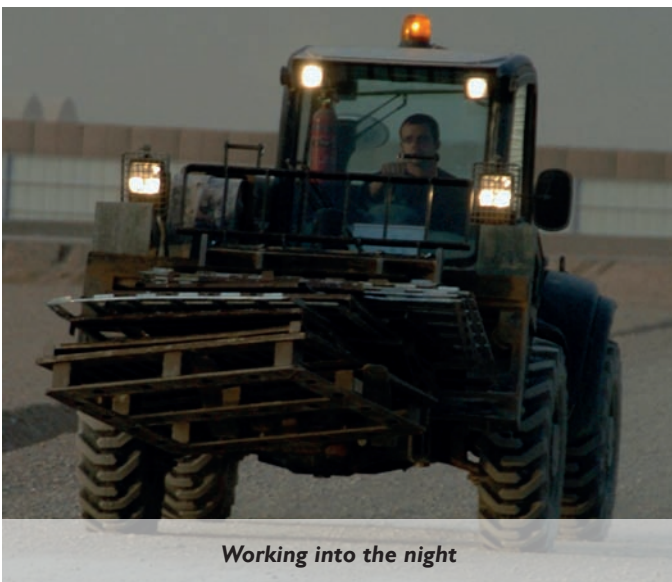
The TLG currently also has six logistic support teams (LSTs) each of either three or four people. Five of the teams are led by a captain, and one by a senior staff sergeant, each attached to one of the combined forces (CFs) providing logistic support advice and assistance to forward locations. These teams are now in a position to provide support to redeployment in the redeployment support team (RST) role.



Capt Swift, LST commander, moves to forward CP INTEGRAT

Finally, the TLG also administers the military component of the Expeditionary Forces Institute (EFI), the deployable arm of the NAAFI.

The GS Squadron (Sqn), provided by 94 Sqn QOGLR, is the largest squadron in the RLC and is made up of eight troops and also administers the Equipment Support (ES) Detachment. Due to the diversity of the ORBAT, a great level of flexibility and cooperation is required. Everyone is conscious that no individual troop or section in the Sqn can function without being dependent upon another. The force generation of the GS Sqn was in itself a challenge with seven contributing regiments forming a strong cohesive bond during the mission rehearsal exercise (MRX).



Working into the night

Having deployed to theatre, the Sqn provides capability primarily in Bastion and Kandahar (KAF) but also pushes its subject matter experts (SMEs), such as petroleum operators, out to forward operating bases (FOBs) to ensure logistic success forward. In the broadest sense, the transport and supply functions have been combining effectively to achieve our key effects: RECEIVE, ISSUE, STORE and MAINTAIN.

Once commodities arrive at the Air Point of Disembarkation (APOD), the JMU and GS Sqn Transport Troop (Tpt Tp) are the first key interfaces. Agility is expected at this point as Tpt Tp collect loads that have arrived into theatre. Medical supplies have the highest priority and are moved through the Forward Rendezvous (FRV) where they are receipted for their subsequent issue to Medical Supply Troop (Med Tp). There is no margin for error with medical supplies; temperature controlled drugs and blood are quickly identified and moved into either the FRV or Med Tp's refrigerated storage. Med Tp has an important role monitoring the ambient temperature of controlled drugs so that they are ready for issue at a moment's notice and currently administers over 2,300 item headings with a value of around £2.5 million pounds. Assurance in medical provisioning and storage is a cornerstone of the high confidence that all units have in the in-theatre medical chain.

Materiel Troop (Mat Tp) holds the largest account in theatre responsible for 9,000 item headings. These range from valuable and attractive items including weapon spares, to clothing, tyres and detailed stores. Their second-line stock holdings have a value of over £75 million pounds. They average 50-300 issues a day whilst receiving an average of 40-200 deliveries. Section commanders have a lot of responsibility for the management of issues, receipts and stocktaking supporting the current force. The Mat Tp, with the oversight of the Regimental Technical Officer and Sqn HQ, have also conducted much work to optimise the accounts by identifying how the breadth and depth of the inventory might be reduced without compromising continuing support.

Tpt Tp provides a flatrack and ISO movement capability with our Rough Terrain Container Handler (RTCH) (right) and MAN Support Vehicle Enhanced Palletised Load System (EPLS) fleet but they are also responsible for equipment care. The Tp ensures that the Sqn's mechanical handling equipment (MHE) is maintained correctly, centrally forecast and serviced regularly.

MHE is mission critical. It is particularly crucial for the Bulk Fuel Installation (BFI) and Ammunition Supply Point (ASP) tps. MHE is required for moving around the 280,000kg of ammunition pallets with a total worth of almost £90 million pounds. MHE must be kept operational to allow the Sqn's supply function to continue cross loading commodities and fulfilling the demands of our dependencies.

One of the biggest tasks of the Operation HERRICK 16 tour has been the complete move of the Vehicle Replenishment Tp. Over 650 vehicles, including 36 separate variants and their ancillaries, were moved to a new location next to the ES Battalion. In close liaison with the ES Group, a robust maintenance schedule has been required to ensure that vehicles, signals equipment, weapons, and ancillaries all remain in a fit state to be issued within a 72-hour time frame, expeditiously replacing vehicles damaged in forward locations.



Prior to our deployment, the TLG was optimised to provide 'One way Logistics'. As the campaign looks set to draw down, the Group has been looking towards setting the conditions for redeployment. Sqn HQ 28 Squadron deployed as a rear supply chain (RSC) development team to identify the lower level scheme of manoeuvre and standard operating procedures required in preparation for the arrival of the RSC Sqn from 7 Regiment RLC. Lots of planning has been conducted and space on returning aircraft on the air line of communication (ALOC) is now being fully utilised marking the start of RSC activity. With the reopening of the ground line of communication (GLOC) through Pakistan, the conditions are being set to start redeploying on an industrial scale. Camp Bastion battlefield clearance (BBC) is a new TLG-led initiative that looks to identify ISO containers and equipment within Camp Bastion to make space for the large-scale return of equipment from across Helmand Province. Already the TLG is seeing the return of equipment to the Warlike Scrap Area from the forward bases, as forward checkpoints (CPs), patrol bases (PBs) and FOBs close as part of the Base Reconciliation and Closure (BRAC) plan.

Although the 10 QOGLR TLG is setting the conditions for redeployment, the organisation continues to provide support to the deployed force as its main effort. Work in support of redeployment has been supported with surge manpower and by identifying opportunities where the supply chain can be made more efficient. Ultimately the TLG looks forward to passing on the baton to 7 Regiment RLC in October, who will arrive resourced to step up RSC activity.

Jai QOGLR!!



A Gurkha Transport Troop back on Combat Logistic Patrols

By Lieutenant Alex Norman RLC

The Combat Logistic Support Regiment (CSLR) based in Camp Bastion, supports the battle groups across Helmand Province by resupplying forward operating bases with combat supplies (CSUPS) and all types of material and vehicles, as well as removing unwanted stores and specific loads that have been earmarked for back loading to Bastion and ultimately the UK. Combat Logistic Patrols (CLPs) vary in size but average around 50 vehicles and consist of: force protection elements in RIDGEBACK and MASTIFF vehicles; Equipment Palletised Load System (EPLS) vehicles as the logistic element; recovery assets; medics and a joint tactical air controller with the headquarters elements of the CLP. CLPs resupply 26 locations every two weeks and the CSLR will conduct a CLP every three days to ensure all location requirements are met. Gurkha Transport Troop was attached to 4 Squadron of 4 Logistic Support Regiment (LSR), as part of the EPLS troop for Operation HERRICK 16; the first time a Gurkha troop from 10 QOGLR has been attached to a British regiment in it's history.



Loading an EPLS

Gurkha Transport Troop thrust themselves into Operation HERRICK 16 by conducting a handover CLP with 2 Squadron, 1 Logistic Support Regiment and taking over 15 EPLS vehicles that would need to be maintained and used throughout the tour. CLPs would be conducted every three days, with private soldiers and JNCOs from the Troop also taking part in many of the sister task squadron's CLPs if sufficient vehicles were required. A fast paced and challenging operation schedule meant that servicing and maintaining the EPLS fleet would be the key to success and most working days would involve the soldiers getting to know their EPLS vehicles and keeping them roadworthy. Training has not relented for Gurkha Transport Troop over the course of the tour; zeroing and GPMG ranges, as well as regular weapon handling tests run by Corporal Shreebana, kept the guys, skills and drills at the highest level. Regular equipment care, defensive driving, container handling and loading and lashing lessons, kept Gurkha Troop's soldiers ready for any task that CLPs could throw at them.



A CLP on Highway 1

Over the course of Operation HERRICK 16, 4 Squadron carried out over 40 CLPs covering six main areas across Helmand province. CLPs to Lashkar Gah, Oulette, Nad E Ali South, Nad E Ali North, Patrol Base (PB) CLIFTON and PB RAHIM and also Main Operating Base (MOB) PRICE would vary in size and duration depending on the routes available and the complexity of the logistic task in any of the locations. The Squadron also contributed to the transition of Nad EAli district to Afghan control with the closedown of both PB KHAMAAR and PB SHAZAAD, by conducting bespoke CLPs to both locations. Many CLPs have had an emphasis on reducing the amount of unused or damaged material that is held in theatre and often returned in large quantities back to Bastion and the Theatre Logistic Group (TLG) for back loading to the UK.

Downtime and periods of relaxation have been hard to come by over this extremely busy six months in Afghanistan. However, we have used these rare periods to the maximum with charity events, sports competitions (Gurkha Troop easily won the volleyball), B-B-Qs and even a Gurkha curry night, brilliantly hosted by Staff Sergeant Prakash, Sergeant Bikram and Corporal Sitiram, at which 4 LSR and 10 QOGLR could continue to integrate.

Gurkha Transport Troop has done itself proud over the past six months: having to integrate into another squadron and ultimately regimental ethos, whilst still maintaining its own identity and values, has been half the challenge. Completing so many successful CLPs in austere conditions has given the soldiers of Gurkha Transport Troop a skill set and experience they will be able to spread through osmosis throughout the Regiment for years to come.

Jai 10 QOGLR!



REVIVOR ISTAR equipment removed from Checkpoint SARHAD



The CLP on the southern side of the NEB Canal on Route NEPTUNE

QOGLR on the Front Line

By Lieutenant Dexter Bransby RLC



A QOGLR PAT on patrol

Soldiers and officers from 10 The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment have deployed on Operation HERRICK 16 attached to the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards Battle Group. This is in support of the Police Mentoring Advisory Group (PMAG). Throughout Operation HERRICK 16, the QOGLR contingent has been working hand in hand with the Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) and the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) to develop the region's security.

QOGLR has PMAG commitments in two distinct areas providing police advisory teams (PATs), the most forward of the PMAG elements engaging with the AUP, at checkpoint (CP) level. In addition to conducting joint deliberate operations across the area of operations (AO), the QOGLR has another grouping running the Lashkar Gah Training Centre (LTC) to the south of the city, which is responsible for the processing and training of recruits for the AUP in Helmand. A small element also advises the ANCOP in their barracks in Lashkar Gah city (LKG).

With the PMAG being 12 Brigade's main effort, the period of mission specific training (MST) leading up to the deployment has been very demanding; particularly for the PATs commanded by Captain Matt Boomer RLC, Lieutenant Dex Bransby RLC and Lieutenant Alex Mortimore RLC. With such a broad remit of responsibilities, the chosen Gurkha soldiers and their commanders have had to hone their skills with significant time being dedicated to the development of mentoring, culture and language skills. The extensive training has included a battle group exercise in Kenya with more recent MST training focusing on the drills and procedures that are specifically required for the complex operating environment in Afghanistan. Having been tasked with an infantry role, the Gurkhas and junior officers have completed extensive training on the ranges with weapons

such as the SA80 Underslung Grenade Launcher (UGL), General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG), Heavy Machine Gun (HMG), Grenade Machine Gun (GMG) as well as the new 66 Rocket and Sharpshooter Rifles.

Since the Regiment last deployed to Afghanistan on Operation HERRICK 11, using predominantly DROPS and MAN SV vehicles in the combat support logistic regiment (CSLR) role, we needed to become familiar with urban and rural patrol vehicles: MASTIFF, RIDGEBACK, JACKAL and HUSKY, all of which had to be mastered before hitting the sun-baked tracks and desert of Helmand.

The strategy behind the PMAG and what the QOGLR team is working towards is to bring about a more secure Afghanistan, which is Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) supported. This will be achieved by protecting the civilian population from



On patrol - Cpl Volaman Limbu uses an irrigation ditch for cover

the insurgents, building up ANSF capability, supporting more effective governance and developing and transferring security responsibility for districts and provinces to Afghan control as soon as they are ready. For the three QOGLR PATs the real focus has been to build the quality of AUP, as they have an essential role in providing both security and governance in Afghanistan.

For the LTC team, also made up of QOGLR Gurkha soldiers, the mission is to improve the quality of police leadership through focused training at the LTC. The high profile nature of the task is due to the key role the LTC is playing as part of the long-term exit strategy for UK and other NATO troops from Afghanistan. To date, over 3,000 recruits have completed the eight-week course where they undergo training on policing skills such as weapons handling, first aid and vehicle searches. The recruits also receive literacy training and are familiarised with the Afghan Constitution and Rule of Law.

The QOGLR PATs have very much been at the sharp end of deliberate operations. Working in partnership with the AUP and the supporting Coalition Forces (CF), deliberate operations often include: missions to clear contested areas of insurgents, rummage searches of compounds of interest (COI) vehicle checkpoints (VCPs) searching for weapons and narcotics, particularly during the poppy harvest, and gathering feedback from the local nationals at shuras (meetings) in contested areas.

During these operations the PATs have to work hard to support the AUP and deal with improvised explosive device (IED) finds and enemy activity. At some point, all QOGLR PATs have had to deal with effective enemy fire. In each incident the brave and resilient character of the Gurkha has become apparent. On each occasion the QOGLR soldiers acted professionally and fearlessly, returning effective and deliberate fire in support of the AUP.

When not working directly in support of AUP led operations, the PATs move around independently to the respective CPs that are located in their AO. Delivering sustainment lessons - known as blue training - conducting partnered community policing patrols or just having a chat about any issues the CP commanders feel concerned about. Although the PMAG role is predominantly

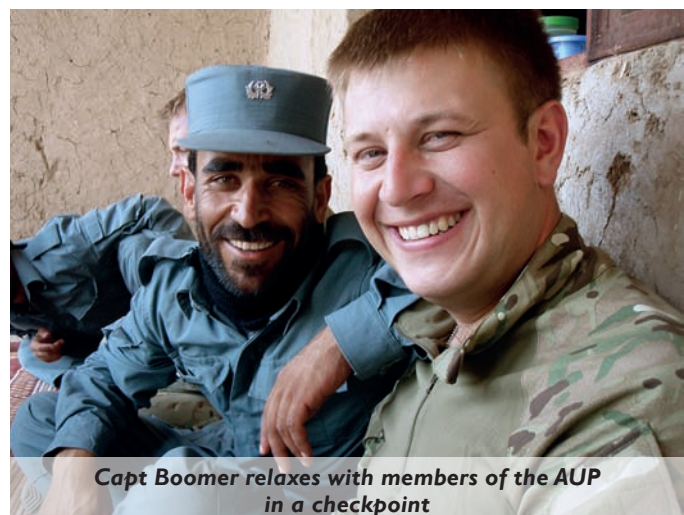
a combat arms task, we have found that a number of the main challenges are ironically logistic ones! We help the AUP identify if the CPs do not have enough weapons, ammunition, water and fuel. We give advice on how to store it properly and identify if there is adequate infrastructure. It is important that the PATs continue to encourage the AUP to use their own logistic support chain to resolve these issues so that they can confidently sustain themselves when British Forces withdraw. Being a Gurkha PAT has considerable advantages. On average, two out of five Afghan policemen will be conversant in Urdu, which the majority of Gurkhas can also speak. With the language barrier effectively broken down we have been able to build rapport quickly with the AUP. Friendships between the soldiers and AUP have reinforced the strong working relationship and mutual trust we have built up. The Gurkhas have also proved to be very culturally astute; their relaxed but professional approach endears them to the local nationals, which underlines the mutual respect between all parties.

The achievements and advancements made have not been without sacrifice. Sadly, three Welsh Guardsmen and one Royal Air Force policeman have been killed. The thoughts of the QOGLR are with them and their families, while we remain focused on our task.

The deployment of the QOGLR PMAG has been challenging. We have trained from a standing start as Driver tradesmen, through a full and very demanding pre-deployment training package. We now operate alongside the combat arms and Royal Military Police mentoring the AUP. We are very proud of the progress the AUP is making in our areas; we conduct joint planning for partnered operations and now advise and reassure rather than directly assist.

Although it has been a challenging journey, it is immensely satisfying to observe such measurable development of both the AUP and our own soldier skills. QOGLR soldiers continue to operate out of trade, in one of the most crucial and challenging roles on Operation HERRICK, towards a stable and self-policing Afghanistan.

Jai PMAG, Jai QOGLR!



Mentoring the Afghan Uniformed Police in Lashkar Gah

By Captain Chakrabhadur Neupane QOGLR

The Police Mentoring and Advisory Group (PMAG) is responsible for the institutional development of the Afghan National Police (ANP) within the boundaries of Task Force Helmand. The PMAG for Operation HERRICK 16 is formed from the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards and attached arms including 58 personnel from 1 Squadron QOGLR. I deployed as the OC Operational Coordination Centre District for Lashkar Gah (LKG) based at the Helmand Provincial Police HQ. In addition, I mentor the District Chief of Police (DCoP) of LKG.

Developing the ANP is key to transition ahead of the withdrawal of ISAF combat troops by the end of 2014. Just like the British Army, the ANP have a recruiting cap that can't be breached and they are now reaching the limit. This means that the ANP have to be able to do more with the same amount of people they now have without expanding to match the ISAF laydown and numbers. We have to improve the police's ability to plan, command and control operations and the focus for development will be on police at provincial, district and precinct levels. As ISAF enters Security Force Assistance (SFA), the emphasis on advising takes on more importance as partnered operations begin to drawdown. This is itself a challenge to those of us who advise, particularly where force protection is limited. Subject matter experts deploy as mentors and advisors to police checkpoints, in order to improve the basic skills of the police. This is where the QOGLR officers and soldiers in the PMAG are working hard to achieve effect.

The Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) has primacy in the Province and indeed in LKG district. They are the largest pillar of the ANP and are stationed throughout the province. They are responsible for protecting the communities and enforcing the Afghan rule of law. As a general rule, most AUP are based at static locations with patrolling regularity dependent upon location and stage of transition for which the precinct is entered. Moreover, the lead for the security for LKG district was transferred to Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) on 31 March 2012 and LKG is the first district to transfer in Helmand Province. This means that the AUP is responsible for security in LKG, with ISAF in support.

LKG district is developing considerably. The AUP in LKG are grasping quickly providing an effective security in the district. The Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) can comfortably reach the majority of the LKG population with small areas remaining under Taliban influence. The ISAF and ANSF forces are continuing to work on it to clear these areas with the prospect of creating a secure place.

LKG AUP are controlled and administered through the District Police HQ (DPHQ). The DPHQ sits beside the Provincial Police HQ (PPHQ) in LKG. LKG District has a huge disadvantage as it co-located with the PPHQ. The DCoP doesn't have his immediate staff in his HQ and administrative and logistical support elements are provided by the PPHQ.



Capt Chakra with the District Chief of Police and all the Precinct commanders after a meeting

Command and control in the AUP is much centralised. As a result, subordinate officers rarely have the latitude to make decisions without first consulting with their chief.

Afghan operational and tactical command is much less formal than in western military forces. It is quite normal for commanders to run operations over a mobile telephone without reference to

wider situational awareness (SA) or reliance on any form of staff. Our focus has been to change the mind set at DCoP, PCT and CP Commander level, as well as developing policemen on the ground. To get it right it requires a high level of professionalism from our officers and soldiers. We are military and training the Afghan police – the police see themselves as paramilitary forces. They are enthusiastic about fighting but not about community policing. Suffice to say, they are developing and it is assessed that they will become ‘Afghan good enough’ in the near future.

Jai QOGLR!!



Capt Chakra with Afghan Uniformed Police and Afghan Civil Order Police officers after a map reading course in Lashkar Gah



Capt Chakra presents a certificate to a member of the Afghan Uniformed Police on completing a continuation training package

OP HERRICK 17

I RGR Commanding Officer's Update (as at Jan 13)

We are approaching the mid-point of Op HERRICK 17 and it has been over three months since I RGR arrived back in Afghanistan; many elements of the Battalion are in similar areas to those they inhabited in 2010 on Op HERRICK 12. Temperatures have dropped significantly from those blistering hot days of our arrival. The Battalion's deployment was spread out over a month to all parts of the Task Force Helmand Area of Operations. I RGR is the second biggest unit in Theatre with nearly 500 officers and soldiers deployed across theatre under seven different chains of command.

The first individuals to deploy from the Battalion were Major Rajeshkumar Gurung, Quartermaster Technical, and Major Paul Corker, the Regimental Administration Officer, together with a small number of soldiers in July and August. Their commitment is to the Camp Bastion Support Unit and Quartermaster's Department. Major Rajesh, as the QM(T) of the 4,000 strong British part of Camp Bastion (there is also a US base next door with over 10,000 personnel), occupies a pivotal position and alongside the RAO, is able to exert significant influence, whilst keeping tabs on any of our Gurkhas passing through.

Over September and October the rest of the Battalion followed, leaving the Gurkha Major, Major Dhyansprasad Rai MVO, and an experienced team of officers and SNCOs to command the 300 strong Rear Operations Group. Major Rambahadur Pun has subsequently assumed the post of Gurkha Major, following Dhyansprasad's posting to Brecon as OC Gurkha Company Mandalay.

In terms of the Operational Tour, RGR officers and soldiers deployed knowing they would be spread widely as formed sub-units, small groupings and in individual posts. Camp Bastion was where our deployment started. It is situated some thirty kilometres to the northwest of Lashkar Gah, in the middle of the desert. On arrival every officer and soldier regardless of appointment or employment undertakes what is known as RSOI - Reception, Staging, Onward movement and Integration. For those likely to be based in Main Operating Bases (MOBs) this lasted two days and included a day of mandatory briefs, followed by a day of basic skills revision - medical, fitness, the law of armed conflict, and weapon zeroing. For all those regularly deploying onto the ground or living in Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) or Checkpoints (CPs) the training lasted a week covering Counter-Improvised Explosive Device (CIED) drills, patrolling on foot and with vehicles, operations in urban areas, cultural awareness and fitness as well as heavy weapon shoots. It reconfirmed the drills learned during our Mission Specific Training back in the UK, with the additional rigour and demands of the environment and changing temperatures of Helmand.

Op HERRICK 17 for 4th Mechanized Brigade formally started on 10 October, following the Transfer of Authority from HQ 12 Mechanized Brigade. It was as seamless a changeover as one could hope for. Over the previous six months 12 Brigade had focused on disrupting and dislocating insurgents while deepening the hold of the Government of Afghanistan, and its security forces, in the Central Helmand River Valley. We inherited a situation which is generally much more positive than the Battalion's last tour in 2010 and we are now setting the conditions for the handover of security responsibility to the Afghan National Security Forces, a process that will be completed in 2014.

Within weeks of our arrival we had the devastating news of the death of Lt Ed Drummond-Baxter and LCpl Siddhanta Kunwar at Checkpoint PRRANG. This rocked both A Company and the Battalion hard and we have all taken our turn to grieve for two fine comrades killed in incomprehensible circumstances. Undaunted we have refocused on achieving the mission and in looking after each other over the remaining months. We will honour and remember them properly on our return.

A Company (attached to 40 Commando RM), commanded by Major David Pack, are in the Nar-e-Saraj area of operations and based out of Patrol Base 2. After a challenging first month in which A Company took four wounded in action (all of whom returned to their Checkpoint within a few weeks) and two killed in action, the security situation in the area has improved significantly. Despite these setbacks, and the personal pain of losing two very fine men, the Company's efforts to improve security and the capability of the local police have paid dividends. The Afghan Police are now capable of operating independently; the local nationals are making decisions for themselves and going to their own Government officials with their issues; and A Company are conducting themselves in a manner which is both supporting and empowering the Afghans that work alongside them. The Company is now split into two locations having originally been in five. The main patrol base sits just off the main arterial road that joins the two big commercial centres of Helmand Province and is surrounded by the 'Protected Community' of Paind Kalay village. Finally, there is an Observation post, (called STERGA 2), manned by 3 Platoon A Company, which overlooks the Green Zone from the cliffs South of the River Helmand.

Most of A Company's operations have been about persuading Afghan security forces that they have the capability to conduct these operations by themselves; and for the most part they have been enthusiastic and capable partners. They may not do things exactly like the British, but it is a better solution for the locals whom they are policing so it is therefore a workable resolution for the future.

B (Sari Bair) Company, commanded by Major Shane Burton, had previously deployed to the KOPAK area in 2010 (HERRICK 12) and IRGR's Champion Company 2012 are back in the same area of Afghanistan again. Once again they are based out of Patrol Base 4 and are under command of I MERCIAN. Stories from the soldiers told of patrols in 2010 unable to advance more than 300-400m from their base in PB4 without being in heavy contact with the insurgency; of farms completely unoccupied and the lack of governance in the area. Things have changed, significantly; what is evident two years on from HERRICK 12 is that the sweat and bloodshed by our 'daju bhai' in 2RGR on HERRICK 14, QOGLR on HERRICK 16 and other British units have achieved a significant improvement in the situation. ISAF forces have freedom of movement in the area; B Company patrols and dominates the KOPAK area not allowing the insurgents to re-establish a foothold and creating the space for the Afghan security forces to take the lead. Of course there are still elements of the insurgency who operate in the KOPAK area and they occasionally come into 'contact' with IRGR patrols, but our soldiers have commented that they have seen as much activity in any given month as they experienced in a 48 hour period back in 2010. There are also numerous areas where the local population has moved back into and begun to re-establish their lives as a farming community. The infamous PADAKA Horseshoe, the hotbed of insurgent activity during 2010 is now home to around 50 families, the land is farmed and the locals enjoy a relatively secure life. GIROA (Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan) security forces, whom we are actively supporting and developing, are beginning to make their impact on security. B Coy are due to close Patrol Base 4 at the beginning of February and redeploy back to the UK later that month.

C (Mogaung) Company are involved in the fascinating and mission critical role of the Police Mentoring Advisory Group (PMAG) under command of the Royal Dragoon Guards. The OC, Major Andrew Todd, is based in the PMAG Headquarters in Lashkar Gah. His teams are at the sharp end of mentoring the Afghan Uniformed and Local Police Forces and their patrols take them across the entire area, meeting Checkpoint Commanders, offering lessons and training and constantly supporting the burgeoning capability of the Police. The men of C Company work in small groups, usually mounted in vehicles and commanded by a Platoon Commander or Sergeant. They have a huge degree of autonomy, responsibility and often find themselves on the 'main effort' of much larger Company level operations. Fortunately for Battalion HQ, some of the I RGR elements of PMAG are co-located in Lashkar Gah which means that there are always Gurkha soldiers close at hand. It should be noted that in Lashkar Gah there are also sizable detachments of QGE and QGS soldiers; so the Brigade of Gurkhas is well represented and this added size and flavour to the IRGR messing at Dashain and Tihar.

D (Kandahar) Company, commanded by Major Leigh Roberts, is based in PB WAHID and he's been busy since it's arrival. Like B Coy, it is also under command of I MERCIAN.

The Company transformed itself into an Advisor Team Enabling Company (ATEC) based at the northern end of Nad-e-Ali area of operations. A number of Police Mentoring Teams and Army Advisory Teams, predominately from other units, now work under the ATEC umbrella. The Company's main task is to support and enable those teams to continue their vital work of preparing the ANSF to assume full responsibility for security whilst simultaneously reducing their physical assistance to those Afghan forces. The direction is clear and the challenge significant, but there are tangible signs of progression. However, this phase of the campaign was always going to test their patience and the urge to reengage and redeploy into areas of 'Transitioned' space has had to be resisted.

Support (Medicina) Company HQ, under Major Alex Biggs, continues to work closely with the Afghan National Army in PB SPARTA in the Lashkar Gah area of operations. They work in the Brigade Advisory Group under command of I SCOTS. Elements of the Afghan National Army Close Support Kandak (Battalion) have deployed with the Support Company attached advisors (I SCOTS Recce, Engineers and Artillery) on a number of Brigade Operations whilst Company Headquarters concentrates on supporting the Afghan Commander in his ground holding role. Planning for future operations is on going although at an 'Afghan pace'. The reduced ANA activity on Fridays has allowed all the British elements to size each other up on the volleyball court, and indulge in team-enhancing Messing events.

The Recce Platoon, commanded by Captain Mike Evans, has been busy with the I LANCS Battle Group controlling the principal route into Lashkar Gah area and has conducted a number of successful operations in the area of its base in PB ATTAL. This was once a major facilitation route for the insurgents who have been forced out both as a result of joint operations with Afghan forces and also the efforts of local elders who are not willing to allow the Taliban to operate from their villages. This is hugely encouraging and reflects the trend across central Helmand that demonstrates the population has largely rejected the narrative of the insurgency in favour of GIROA.

There are five officers from Battalion Headquarters who have been assigned to key positions within the Brigade Headquarters for the duration of Op HERRICK 17. The Commanding Officer has his hands on the tiller on future plans (of which there are many!) including the drawdown of UK forces from Central Helmand over the coming months. The Second-in-Command, Major Chris Boryer is at the heart of close planning as SO2 J3/5. The Adjutant, Captain John Jeffcoat is working for the CO as SO3 J5 juggling TFH planning and Battalion business. The Operations' Officer, Captain Pete Houlton-Hart, runs the busy Brigade Operations' Room and the Intelligence Officer, Captain Alex Brown remains in that area of expertise as SO3 J2 for TFH. Elsewhere the RMO, Major Mike Cameron-Smith and the Unit Education Officer, Captain Ellie Darling are based in Camp Bastion.

There have been numerous challenges for all our soldiers thus far on Op HERRICK 17. Some of them mundane, a cold(ish) winter for example, others far more serious. Nevertheless, our men are both extremely well trained for what they are undertaking and have proved once again that they are more than ready. The way they have embraced their various roles and how well they have done in the numerous training evolutions they undertook to get us here, have been very extremely impressive. The CO is confident that there is

no other organisation in the Brigade that could have stepped up to the mark, often at relatively short notice, to take on so many varied tasks and be based under so many chains of command. Their quality has not gone unnoticed by their operational commanders. This was reaffirmed by them all personally to the new GM on his recent tour of the province with the Pandit and Lama visiting soldiers in their forward bases. That we have been able to achieve this is a testament to the intelligence, flexibility and professionalism of our officers and soldiers.



The Transformation of Malgir - The Delhi Coy Story

I wasn't going to write anything about Delhi Company's tour; I thought the 'Company Group in the Helmand River Valley' story had been told enough. There seemed to be two sorts of stories; the earlier HERRICKs consisted of non-stop nasty little contacts against a determined and fanatical enemy; the later HERRICKs told of partnered patrolling with Afghan Security Forces to 'push the Afghans into the lead'. I had assumed 'the Delhi Company story' would be something similar, but six months into our seven month tour I sensed our tour had been subtly different. We had inherited an Area of Operations ('Malgir') that had been neglected; the battlespace was, in terms of transition, further behind everywhere else within Task Force Helmand; yet the plan we were passed by our predecessors saw us withdrawing from the Green Zone without, or so it seemed to me, any real thought being given as to how to fill the vacuum we would leave. A knotty little problem made worse by the fact all the Checkpoints we were to close were still in contact and we would have to deliver this change with a third of the manpower afforded to the previous Battlegroup. What we are about to hand over is a section of the Central Helmand River Valley which is dominated by the AUP, has no ISAF presence (neither patrols nor static locations) and has witnessed no contacts for three months. So, what follows is 'the Delhi Coy story': it tells how Delhi Company planned and executed a retirement out of contact by defeating the insurgent threat around each of its Checkpoints in turn and developing the AUP to backfill the space they would leave behind; it covers the monumental G4 effort of closing six ISAF base locations, all of which were isolated and vulnerable to attacks during the final moments of closure; and it describes how the Company then went on to protect the security bubble they had created by further enabling police activity and disrupting insurgents in depth by accurate and timely targeting.

What we inherited (15 October 2012)

On our arrival in theatre the Battlespace we were taking over was in the process of being re-organised; we were to inherit what had previously been commanded by a Battlegroup Headquarters and two Rifle Companies. Our area of responsibility consisted of 25km² of Green Zone bordered by the Nahr-e-Bugra canal to the north and the River Helmand to the south and 12km² of desert to both the north (the 'Bowri') and south (the 'southern Dasht'); the northern flank was protected by a series of ANA Checkpoints, the southern flank was open. In terms of real estate we were to own a Patrol Base located in a 'Protected Community' (the village of Paind Kalay which is surrounded by small AUP Checkpoints), 4 isolated Checkpoints in the Green Zone (all of which were meant to be partnered with Afghan Forces, but only one actually was), all between two and four kms away from Company Headquarters, and an OP (Sterga 2) to the south of the River Helmand. To man these locations Delhi Company took under command a Platoon from 1 SCOTS, a Platoon from 3 YORKS, Recce Troop of 40 Commando and approximately 100 attachments

of various supporting arms; a total of 300 personnel. My first impression of the area was that it had been severely neglected over the previous six months: the Checkpoints I took on were in an appalling state (both in terms of Force Protection, Operational Safety and preparation for the fast approaching winter); there was no relationship between the AUP and the local nationals within the Green Zone because of a lack of ANSF investment; and the well publicised drawdown of ISAF and the unwillingness/inability of the AUP to fill the gap had emboldened the insurgents to such an extent that all of my isolated locations were under contact. Our predecessors plan for the area, to replace ISAF Forces in the Checkpoint locations with AUP manpower was detached from reality; it took no account of the fact that the AUP did not have the manpower, the will, nor the local national consent (at that point in time) to take over what they termed 'the hold'. They had failed to see that there was in fact no 'hold', just isolated, non-mutually supporting locations in contested battlespace; any AUP force taking over the locations would have been quickly defeated in detail and any hope of empowering them to deliver security independent of ISAF would have been lost.

We therefore had two immediate challenges; we needed a new operational design for the area (one which was practical and took account of both the present situation and the resource available to the AUP); and we had to set the conditions for handing over or closing our Checkpoints prior to Christmas in line with the Operational drawdown plan. Our planning was based on the following assumptions: the AUP hold of the 'Protected Community' was their (and G1RoA's) main effort and therefore had to be resourced; ISAF had to depart from the Green Zone no later than Christmas, but to depart under contact carried reputational risk and could not be allowed to happen; the AUP did not have the ability or inclination to backfill the Green Zone when ISAF departed; and the vacuum ISAF would leave would therefore be backfilled by the insurgents. These realities informed my direction and started the six month process of turning the area around.

Retirement from the Green Zone and filling the vacuum (October 2012 - December 2012)

Our 'operational design' sought to merge the 'green' (Afghan) plan with the 'blue' (Delhi Company) plan to deliver lasting security within Malgir, and it went something like this: allow the AUP to hold the 'Protected Community' and trust them to deliver it; focus on defeating the insurgency in the immediate vicinity of each Checkpoint, conceiving Company level operations designed to deter insurgent activity so that they could close out of contact; but understand that to defeat the insurgents it would also be necessary to undermine their influence on the local populace and this would require Afghan support; encourage the AUP to provide this support and whilst doing so manufacture situations for them to develop their understanding of the southern Green Zone, gain the trust of

the local populace, build their own confidence and undermine the insurgent influence within the area. This combination of activity would lead to the AUP dominating the Green Zone, the local nationals being reassured that the police had the ability and willingness to patrol into their villages without direct ISAF support and the insurgents that were operating there beginning to feel they were overmatched. This would ensure the space left by our retirement would not be ceded to the insurgents; it would be filled by a resurgent police force who would continue to deter insurgent activity and remove insurgent influence having been emboldened by their successes whilst we were in our Checkpoints.

On paper it all sounds very easy. It was anything but. It was dangerous, complex and frustrating. It required great skill, diplomacy and patience to execute at every level of command. But it was absolutely vital for campaign success and therefore tremendous amounts of resolve and courage were required; never more so than when Lt Ed Drummond-Baxter (DB Sahib) and LCpl Siddhanta Kunwar (Siddhanta) were killed whilst speaking to an AUP patrolman about providing support to their upcoming patrol programme. This single act had the potential to undermine everything, giving the Company justification to be risk averse when dealing with Afghans. But it didn't. The way in which the Company coped with the loss was quite inspirational. Not a single soldier questioned the need to stay close and work alongside the police and every single man continued to do so with the utmost professionalism.

Over a 3 month period we mounted Company level operations around each Checkpoint in turn, always integrating AUP elements to develop their capability and empower them as a force and each time increasing the pressure on the insurgents, demonstrating that they were overmatched and undermining their influence on the local population. The whole process is probably best described by way of a vignette based around just 1 of the Checkpoints, 'Sola':

The Battle for Torghai (as I have named it) was a six week long battle for an area in the south west of our battlespace. Recce Troop 40 Commando assumed command of Checkpoint Sola in early October and from the very first day they were under regular pressure from complex, multi-firing point attacks which were aggressive, offensive and took no account of local nationals. The fighting was savage and the fact that no casualties were taken was a miracle; the first month saw them under heavy contact 14 times; and on one occasion an assessed 15 insurgents from three firing points contacted a two Multiple patrol approximately 1 km from Sola and sustained the contact for 45 mins as the call sign fought its way back to the Checkpoint. Once in the Checkpoint the insurgents continued to engage and contact was only broken when AH came on station, killing four insurgents as they stood their ground and engaged the AH with multiple RPG rounds.

With such an entrenched and aggressive enemy our first priority was to give Recce Troop sufficient protection and we immediately mounted a Company operation to enhance Sola's

defences; within two days we had cleared and secured the single route into the location and forward mounted a Troop of Royal Engineers to enhance the sangars, main gate and firing platforms. This was followed up by increasing the Garrison strength of Sola by 30 (a Troop from B Company 40 Commando who were cut to Delhi Company until the Checkpoint closed); and this enabled Recce Troop to have force overmatch every time they deployed out on the ground. To further unhinge the insurgents we launched regular Company level operations into the area, placing pressure on the enemy by patrolling into Torghai from the north (taking further elements of B Coy under command) and from the east (utilising a Multiple from I Platoon in the adjacent Checkpoint and OC's TAC). Gradually the number and intensity of attacks started to drop off and we seized this opportunity to insert the AUP into the battle; the kinetics were now at a level where they were happy to patrol into the area providing we were either in support on a flank or poised as a QRF within Sola. Initially we had to request their presence and we did so because if we had departed without developing a strong relationship between the police and the locals the entire area would have become dominated by the insurgents. These requests for support were answered enthusiastically (because the police sensed the tide of battle had changed) and over a month long period became less necessary as the police surged into the area on their own volition. It was a combination of Delhi Company pressure and the constant police surges that eventually led to the final engagement in the battle. The balance of power had so clearly swung in favour of Delhi Company and the police that the insurgents felt that in order to retain their grip on the local populace they had to underline their dominance and control - and so attacked a 30 man patrol from Sola when a further Multiple was to their south and 2 Platoons of B Company to their north. They were very quickly overmatched, broke and ran; and did not return. They were unable to do so because of the speed we exploited the success: the messaging to the locals was instant over Radio Lamar (the ISAF sponsored local radio station); a follow up police surge was in the area the following day; and within ten days we had convened a shura which was chaired by the AUP Tolay Commander and a Colonel from the National Directorate of Security (NDS) where the locals clearly expressed their preference to support GIRoA, providing they could deliver the security they wanted.

The contact battle had been won, the conditions were right for closure, but the following four weeks were vital in ensuring it was the AUP that were best positioned to fill the void. We enabled this by advising, cajoling and requesting their continued presence in Torghai to follow up on the success of the shura. This frequent patrolling ensured that they began to understand the area, it prevented any re-establishment of insurgent influence and it allowed them to give the locals confidence in their ability and conduct. Between the final contact and the closure of the location the police surged into the area no less than six times, every time gaining more acceptance from the community, so that when Recce Troop walked out of Sola on 15 December it was the AUP that replaced them as the dominant force in the area.

All base closures were done out of contact and on time. Delhi Company left the Green Zone for the last time on 22 December and did not return; because there was no need. This aggressive retirement from the area and the resultant taking on of security provision throughout Malgir by the police was made possible by the way the Company had enabled and empowered the AUP to fill the space that was being ceded. The Company's work, whilst in their Checkpoints, to give the police confidence, tie them to the local community and develop their own intelligence network, challenged and then defeated the insurgents, influence and thus their ability to move freely and conduct attacks in the area; and it was this that underpinned the successful closures.

The empowering of the AUP (January 2013 - February 2013)

Three months in, all our Checkpoints were closed and the responsibility for security in the areas we had left was being delivered by the police. But the delivery of security was so very fragile and at such an embryonic stage I was concerned that the AUP would falter if they experienced any significant set back. As a result, from January onwards, our focus was on the further empowerment of the police so that what had been established in the short term would endure. Empowerment is a funny word and different people have different views on how to 'empower'. Delhi Company were firmly of the view that to empower the police it was vital that we did not actually do anything for them, but gave them the information to make their own decisions and sufficient support to give them confidence to act upon the decisions they made (by ensuring that they knew we had a QRF on stand by, that we had procedures in place to deal with any casualties they may take and that we would overwatch them using our surveillance systems); but the activity had to be theirs alone and always independent of us. The other big issue with 'empowering' is that it is possible to offer too much when you do so and hence create a dependency that previously did not exist, either in terms of resource (Riflemen on the ground beside the AUP) or relationships (the Tolay Commander being able to engage directly with myself). To prevent this from happening the Company ensured that all interaction with all elements of the ANSF was done through Liaison Officers, meaning that Delhi Company were always one step removed from any issue that arose, making it more difficult for the AUP to seek direct support and thus forcing them to help themselves.

Disengagement from local governance was also vital if the AUP were to be fully empowered. The AUP had to be seen as the providers of security and the face of the government and so for us to remain engaged with Key Elders or members of the District Community Council was to undermine what we were trying to support. If locals used Delhi Company to raise their grievances it would disempower the AUP in no less a way than Taliban shadow governance does because it provided a parallel avenue that had the potential to deliver something better and

quicker to the civilian population. We therefore deleted direct engagement with all local political actors and all interaction was conducted through our Cultural Advisor (a I MERCIAN Captain attached to us), dramatically reducing ISAF influence and pushing all key players into the arms of the police who now stood as the sole face of security and governance within Malgir. Again, I will use a vignette to show how this theory played out in reality:

Support to the AUP disrupt of insurgent activity was our primary activity throughout January and February. But all we did was provide the police with additional information to ensure they could act in a more targeted fashion; they already had the bare bones in place having developed a number of informants during their surges into the southern Green Zone whilst our Checkpoints had been in place. On 25 January information was received from the police that they suspected that there was insurgent activity being conducted in the area of Torghai and fighters there were intending to place a number of IEDs to deny them access to the area; we immediately cross cued this intelligence with our surveillance cameras and Electronic Warfare assets, developing a simple target pack which identified suspect compounds and likely IED seeding locations. This pack was then passed to the AUP, through the AUP Liaison Officer, who briefed the Tolay Commander before leaving him to make his own decision on when and how to strike; guaranteeing that our cameras would overwatch if he chose to act. Within 24 hours the AUP had gathered a force of 40 Patrolmen and surged into the area, avoiding the assessed IED locations and searching the identified target compounds taking two detainees in the process. This action, independent of ISAF involvement, had a significant impact upon the insurgents, the police and the local nationals. It created a sense of insecurity within the insurgency; it emboldened the police and fuelled their ever growing confidence; and it reassured the local nationals that the police were capable of delivering security within their community and undermined the insurgents' influence on them by reinforcing the perception that the police were now the dominant force in the area.

This example was by no means a one-off event; cross queuing of AUP and Delhi Company intelligence occurred on a weekly basis and as we entered March the police were operating at such a tempo and with such confidence that our input became broadly irrelevant; they had ceased to need our support in the close battle. This being the case our focus immediately switched to protecting the AUP's gains by prosecuting the deep battle on their behalf.

Protecting the gains (March 2013 - April 2013)

It would have been easy to declare success at this stage; security delivered by the police who were fully supported by the locals within Malgir; but the prospect of the 'spring/summer offensive' that has become an annual pilgrimage for young Pakistani Taliban could not be ignored and Delhi Company now

set about protecting the gains the police had made. We sought to do this in two ways: developing an ability to find, fix and strike insurgents outside of the Green Zone; and encouraging the police to consolidate their position as the face of governance by convening 'Malgir Security shuras' on a monthly basis in order to press home the advantage with regard the displacement of insurgent influence from the Green Zone.

We already had a well established understanding of the area to our north beyond the Nahr-e-Bugra canal that formed the ANA's defensive line and were able to effectively attrit insurgents in that area through strikes onto targets which threatened the 'Protected Community'; but we had no such capability on the very porous southern flank which was marked by the River Helmand. The Company therefore argued that the enhancement of our OP there (Sterga 2) was a critical element in defending what the police had fought so hard to establish. Fully resourced with the right surveillance cameras and Electronic Warfare collect the location had the potential to understand the battlespace to its south, give pre-warning of insurgent movement across the river, deter movement happening in the first place (because of the perception that all activity would be seen) and reassure both the AUP and the locals that ISAF were still in support, without physically being on the ground. After a month of negotiation our argument was supported and on 1 March the OP became fully operational; possessing all the assets required for it to understand the area in detail and find and fix targets to offer up as strike options to Battlegroup Headquarters. The finished product is incredibly imposing sitting up on the bluff overlooking Malgir from the south and in its first week it enabled strikes on two insurgent IED teams; and this clear demonstration of its capability undoubtedly enhanced its deterrence effect on the insurgents and gave the police breathing space prior to any concerted insurgent offensive.

With regard our second idea for protecting the police's gains it was all remarkably easy. The police of April are a different force to the one we inherited in October; they are hungry for responsibility and are thriving, having won the acceptance of the locals. So, when we suggested a shura to continue to spread their influence and demonstrate their willingness to listen to locals' issues they jumped at the chance. There was no input from Delhi Company, other than planting the seed of the idea. The resultant shuras held in March and

April attracted over 150 people from across Malgir and were a huge success in terms of winning consent. We were invited to the first one, but not the second; a sure sign of the increasing ambivalence of both the locals and the police to our presence - and hence progress.

Endstate (16 April 2013)

In just six months Delhi Company transformed an area with daily contacts and no police independent activity into one which saw no contacts from December and no ISAF activity at all. To illustrate how far we have come I will finish with a final vignette from March.

On 1 March a small force protection party of AUP, who were escorting the Forward Enabling Contractors hired to remove the final perimeter of OP Sterga 1 (an OP location we had inherited in February but were now closing), were attacked by 16 insurgents who conducted a full frontal assault on their position. The police held their ground, returned accurate fire and called for reinforcements. The assaulting enemy were held, pinned down and then broke in the face of the AUP's robust defence and decisive follow up. The net result was three insurgents killed, two wounded and a considerable collection of weapons taken. This first big confrontation between the police and the insurgents could not have happened at a better time or a better place. By occurring right at the start of the spring the police were able to use the opportunity to stamp their authority on the insurgents, giving themselves confidence to maintain the pressure they had built up over the winter; and doing so away from any centres of population and thus enhancing rather than undermining the security within the Green Zone that they have worked so hard to establish.

The ANSF are delivering security independently; and to unpick what we have established will take a significant insurgent effort and I do not believe they have the forces, lethal aid, or local support required. But it could not have been done without the skill and courage of our Riflemen; they have delivered a legacy which has every chance of enduring beyond the final withdrawal of ISAF troops in 2014. For those we have left behind, there can be no greater tribute.

Jai Delhi Coy



Platoon dominating the area around Checkpoint Prrang



3 Platoon at Op Sterga 2



DB Sahib's and Siddhanta's memorial in Checkpoint Prrang



Delhi Coy in PB2, Dashain 2012



OC's TAC patrolling to Checkpoint Sola



Working alongside the AUP

69 Gurkha Field Squadron (Search)

As we look back on 2012 we can feel immensely proud of what we have accomplished and how we have performed. In just over a year we have managed a complex re-role from a field engineering squadron to a search squadron delivering front line advanced search capabilities for operations in Afghanistan. The squadron has proved once again to be both adaptable and professionally competent with nearly 100 soldiers and officers passing the demanding HERRICK specific search course either as a Searcher, Scribe, Team Commander or Search Advisor.

Early in 2012 and under the guidance 29 EOD & Search Group HQ, 36 Engineer Regiment (Search) prepared and reorganised its headquarters for deployment as the EOD & Search Task Force. As the squadron moved towards OP HERRICK mission specific training Maj Andy Gooch, the Officer Commanding was selected to be the Task Force Chief Of Staff and the SSM Manjit Gurung was selected to be the Operations Squadron Sergeant Major. With the support of SSgt Prakash Rai the Squadron Second in Command Capt Ed Thompson and the Squadron Operations Officer Capt Tara Pun planned, facilitated and managed the many training requirements needed for the squadron's six month winter deployment to Afghanistan.

Having returned from a three month squadron level Joint Force Enabling Exercise in August 2011 many of the soldiers had to start their initial Op HERRICK specific training immediately. The training burden was intense and on average each deploying soldier was either on course and exercise for over four months before deploying for a six month tour of duty in Afghanistan. First our soldiers were required to conduct both internal and external driving courses to enable them to drive Mastiff, Wolfhound and Quad bikes; a requirement that took some soldiers about six weeks to complete depending on their initial competence. The search course itself was a demanding six weeks of tutorials, exercises and tests in an unfamiliar discipline. On top of this the individual courses; Team Medic, TRIM, POSM, Psychometric testing and MATTs, took another three weeks whilst supporting either battle-group exercises or deploying on the task force MRX Ex PASHTUN LINKS took the soldiers away from their families for another six weeks.

The most memorable pre-deployment training was without doubt the task force MRX, Ex PASHTUN LINKS. It was a great opportunity to test the squadron's new skills in an environment similar to Afghanistan. The exercise brought together all

elements from the EOD and Search Task Force including the IED Destroy teams, Weapons Intelligence Specialists, military working dogs and ANSF mentoring teams. Each of the search teams were tested over three gruelling weeks completing many demanding search scenarios. The Squadron soon reinforced its suitability to its new role and all of the teams were authorised to conduct high assurance search in Afghanistan.



Clearly exercising in Jordan was not all dust and deliberation and the Squadron managed to enjoy some rest and recuperation in one of the seven wonders of the world, Petra.

In September 2012 a total of 67 soldiers and six officers deployed on Op HERRICK 17 as part of the EOD and Search Task Force. Our OC and SSM enjoyed their roles within the task force headquarters but happily were still able to enjoy the celebrations of Dashain and Tihar throughout their tour. Although our soldiers were originally trained as high assurance search teams they found themselves being employed in a variety of different and interesting roles over their six months tour of duty. The roles included working with the PMAG, ANSF training teams, PM Group, CTAG, RSOI Training and more routinely, search operations in support of brigade ground manoeuvre operations. Both the operational tour and mission specific training was, at times, extremely testing but the opportunities for command at every level has given our soldiers and junior officers great confidence in their own abilities.



Jordan - Petra

Although 69 Gurkha Field Squadron (Search) spent much of 2012 focusing on the preparation for and deployment on Op HERRICK we have still managed to contribute to internal and external events. Of note Capt Tara Pun led the Regimental Squash team in the Army Championship and the team was placed second overall. We also took part in various sports in the RE Games which 36 Engineer Regiment (Search) won overall. We are also very proud to have nurtured this year's winner of the Bowring Trophy LCpl Akash Tamang.

2013 will be another difficult year of change as we move to yet another re-role to Force Support but undoubtedly the experiences gained from a demanding year on operations will position us well for any challenges to come.

Jai QGE!



LCpl Akash Tamang receiving The Bowring Trophy

246 Gurkha Signal Squadron (HICSSS)

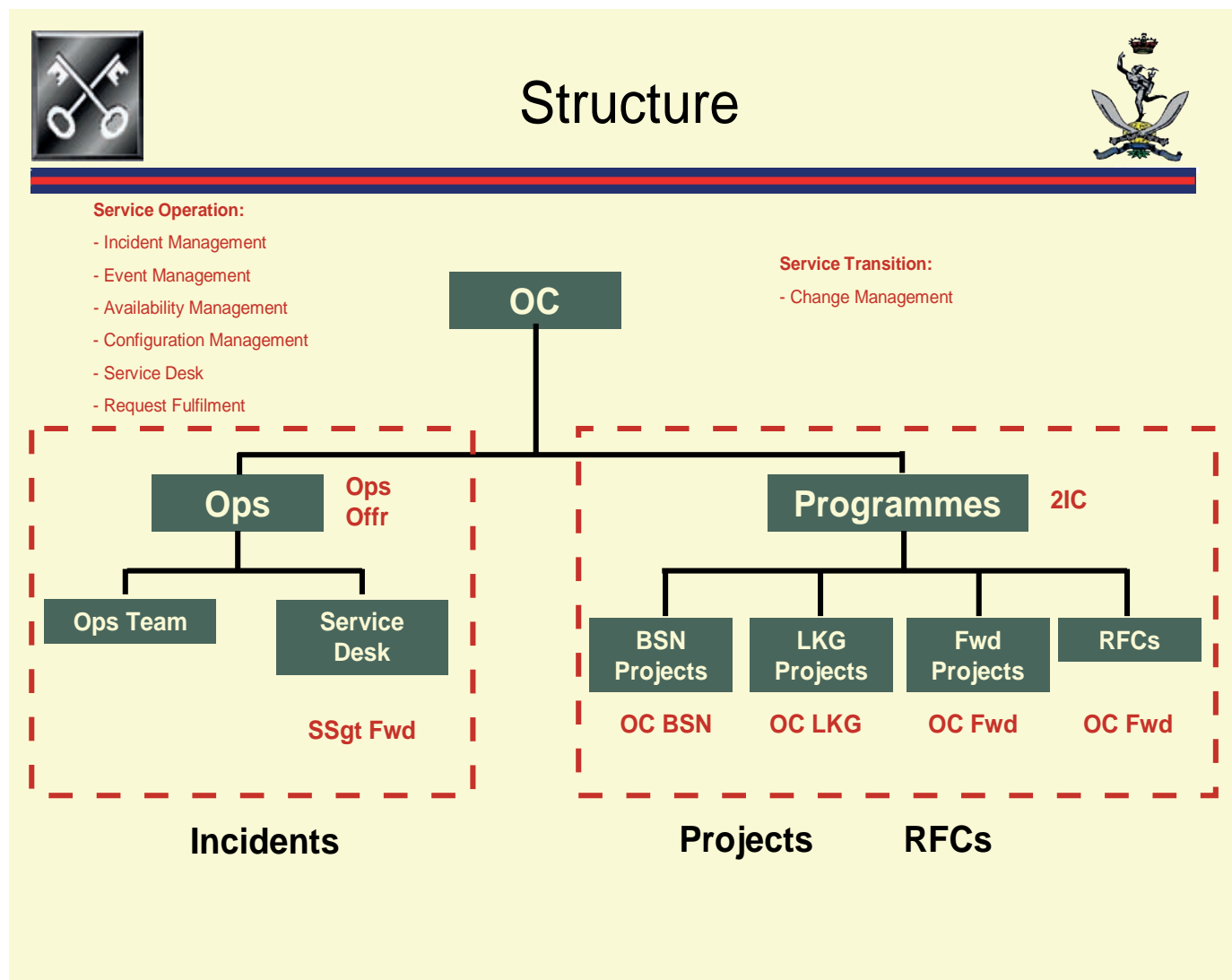
By Capt Lokbahadur Gurung - 2IC 246 GSS

Currently there are total of 156 personnel from 246 Gurkha Signal Squadron (GSS) deployed on Op HERRICK 17. They deployed between 20 October - 3 November 2012 and are expecting to recover back to York by 24 May 2013. The Squadron is known as HICSSS on Op HERRICK 17 and is responsible for providing essential ICS which can be categorised in three levels (Strategic, Operational and Tactical) to some 8,000 British forces that are currently deployed within Helmand Province in Afghanistan including to the JFSp HQ, JFCIS (A) and to all deployed UK Battle Groups.

The HICSSS SHQ and Ops team comprised of Maj David Orr (OC), Capt Hayden Ayres (Ops Officer), WO2(SSM)

Durga (SSM), Capt Lok (Sqn 2IC/Programme Manager) and the trusty Supervisors, SSgt(FoS) Pratap Ghale, SSgt(YoS) Neil Donaghy, SSgt(FoS IS). Andy Kay took control of HICSSS on 13 November 2012 after a good handover programme with 16 Sig Regt. Injected into the team were SSgt Suresh Limbu as Service Desk Manager and Cpl Subodh 'Tea Boy' Sunuwar as a Watchkeeper. The first two months have been very busy, however, much has been achieved to the content of the OC. HICSSS have control of a healthy network and all members know their part in order to keep it this way. A battle rhythm has now become routine. All members ensure that the SSM is kept content with our frequent sessions hitting the gym. FoS IS's attempts at Op MASSIVE clearly come with a health

246 Gurkha Sig Sqn (HICSSS) structure on Op HERRICK 17 (November 2012 - May 2013):



warning as it only seems to develop his chicken legs! The Ops team also played their part in the HICSSS charity event which required each member to give up a number of lunchtimes to jump on the exercise bikes to pound the kilometres. FofS Pratap Ghale pushed out a number of kilometres but clearly suffered from a lack of his daily 'pizza' fix!

R & R has currently begun which has seen a number of key personnel depart for two weeks of deserved rest. The members of the Ops team are happily using the returns as milestone in the tour and 'selfishly' welcoming them back on their return. We continue to work at a healthy pace ensuring that HICSSS continue to serve the user community as well as they have for the first third of the tour.



Are you nuts? OC HICSSS Maj David Orr takes a break with A/Sgt Rabi at FOB OULLETTE

At the time of writing this update, the Sqn personnel are operating in the following locations providing various communication services:

JOB Bastion	- 86
TSU LKG	- 18
TSU NES (PRICE)	- 9
TSU NDA (Shawqat)	- 5
CF BMA (Oullette)	- 3
FOB JUNO	- 4
PB Durai	- 3
SFPTC (Kabul)	- 25
KAF	- 3

Total	156

3 Levels of CIS Support that the Sqn is delivering on Op HERRICK 17

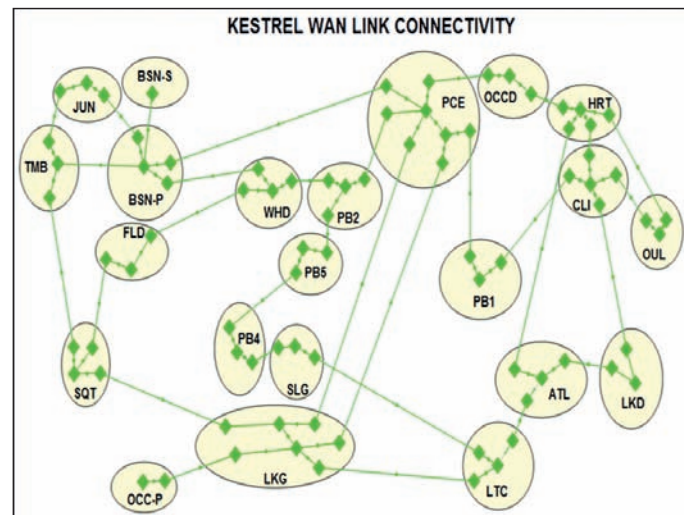
HICSSS mission is to deliver robust and reliable C5ISR to UK FEs (Force Elements) within the TFH (Task Force Helmand) and Bastion Area of Operation in order to enable the exploitation of operational information. To sustain and maintain the operational ICS requirement HICSSS focuses on following tasks; Incident Management (IM) and Request for Change (RFC) for Service Operation. There are also programmes and other

tasks for Service Transition. HICSSS provides three levels of communications systems in the theatre.

Operational CIS Support

HICSSS (Helmand Information Communication Services Signal Squadron) has an enormous responsibility of looking after and maintaining of CIS (Communication Information System) within the Helmand Province for keeping the CIS up to standard and providing the quality service to Staff Users, HICSSS's ICS Dets have been deployed to TSU LKG (Theatre Support Unit Laskar Gah), TSU NES (TSU Nesar-el-Sari) Price, TSU NDA (TSU Nadi-ali) Shawqat, CF BMA (Coalition Force Burma) Oullette, SOTF Juno and Camp LNK (Leatherneck). HICSSS personnel deployed within these detachments have task of providing level 1 & 2 support.

OVERTASK (MS data and VoIP) is the main service that HICSSS provides to users in theatre. Kestrel provides the primary backbone networking inland connection between various TSU (Theatre Support Unit), MOB (Medium Operating Base) and PB (Patrol Base). VSAT is utilised as a secondary connectivity. Connection to UK or other long distance CF (Coalition Force) base is through Promina with satellite bearer system such as Reacher and VSAT. On the other hand there are additional services that HICSSS is responsible for such as; RLI/Housekeeper, Promina telephone, Cortez - BISTAR (Base Intelligence Surveillance Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance) for live ground situational awareness and Op PISTOL.



Tactical CIS Support

HICSSS has provided minimal Tactical CIS Support in theatre with deploying rear link detachment signal personnel.

Bastion ICS Troop (Island Troop)

- OC Capt Amrit Gurung
- SSgt SSgt Suresh Gurung

A Short Note on Base Remediation and Closure (BRAC)

by SSgt Suresh Gurung

We are in transitional phase in Afghanistan. The ANSF are better trained and gradually taking over the responsibility of security of their country. By the end of 2014, they will be fully in charge of security in Afghanistan. During this transitional phase, a lot of bases are closing down or transferred to the ANSF under the banner BRAC. During BRAC, HICSSS Base Closure Teams (BCT) go to the base in question and set up rapidly deployable communication capability in order to support Commanders with continued services during base closure. Once this is set up all original CIS equipment is recovered back to Helmand ICS Signal Squadron at Camp Bastion. Once BRAC is complete, the shut down order is given by the local commander and the BCT team tear down rapidly deployable communication capability and recover back to Bastion.



Nice helmet! SSgt Suresh Gurung on board Merlin on his way to PBI BRAC

Colonel In Chief, HRH Princess' Royal Visit

By A/LCpl Khusdil Limbu

On 18 Dec 2012, our Colonel in Chief, HRH The Princess Royal and her husband Vice Admiral Sir Timothy Laurence visited HICSSS. It was a surprise visit as we were just told there would be a visit but not who the visitors were. It was only apparent in the morning of the visit that the VVIP would be our Colonel in Chief and her husband as we were briefed on some royal protocols.

HICSSS had two teams of five lucky people selected to meet the Colonel in Chief. The first team leader was OC HICSSS, Maj David Orr and the second team leader was OC Bastion ICS Tp, Capt Amrit Gurung. I was in the second team and in our team there was me (Sig Khusdil), LCpl Paul Renton, Cpl Khagendra Gurung and LCpl Andrew Clark. HRH Princess Royal and her husband arrived exactly on time and were met



Your Royal Highness! Capt Amrit meets Colonel in Chief

by the JFCIS(A) Comd and Deputy Comd. They were shown around the Squadron and met other Royal Signals personnel. Our team first met Vice Admiral Sir Timothy. He was very friendly and approachable as he talked to every one of us in turn. Later on, we had the opportunity to meet HRH Princess Royal. Our team leader Capt Amrit introduced her to every one of us. The Princess was very friendly, approachable and easy to talk to. She shook hands with all of us and asked about our jobs, families and day-to-day life in Afghanistan. So far this VVIP visit has been the highlight of my tour. This sort of opportunity does not come often and I find myself lucky to say I was there.

No Comms No Bombs

By A/Sgt Dhan Gurung

It's been a very busy start to the tour so far with a quick handover from 16 Sig Regiment. We have had several short notice taskings from our Ops team with high priority faults that need to be fixed as soon as possible. So far I have gone to 12 Patrol Bases (PBs) and Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) in just two and half months. I was deployed to fix the Kestrel Link in PB DURAI as soon as I took over my post as the FRT IC after finishing my RSOI training. We are responsible for repairing faults out in Patrol Bases and Forward Operating Bases within Helmand, which includes Kestrel Links, VSAT Links and FOB-WiFi, which provides welfare phones and the internet facilities to the soldiers out on the ground.



LCpl Raja (Right) working on Kestrel link



A/Sgt Dhan with his Forward Repair Team



A/Cpl Manoj dealing with a customer on the phone at Service Desk

Our task also includes conducting Recces of all the PBs in preparation for the future Base Remediation and Closure (BRAC) tasks, which help us to determine manpower requirements and time estimates. So far we have closed 3 PBs.

The FRT is very busy going out to the forward locations. There are busier times ahead but the good thing about being busy is that it makes our tour go quicker - two and half months have elapsed in blink of an eye!

Service Desk 'The Face of the HICSSS'

By LCpl Nirmal Rai

In today's IT dominated world we are not strangers to calling a service desk in order to report incidents or to express our grievances with regards to the services provided by the different companies or agencies. As service desk operators we deal with such service request calls 24/7, averaging a call every two min during the day. In addition to that we also face walk-in customers, contractors and visitors in between the calls. Well, in a nutshell, we are extremely busy. The shop window we provide is not just like Mumbai call centre but also the face of HICSSS, the face of Royal Signals and most importantly QG Signals. Well, the intensity and the pace of work was not something that was trained in MST but learning by doing and continual improvement.

Like many organisations Bastion Service Desk also acts as a Regional Point of Contact (RPOC) for Helmand AO. The team consists of SSgt Suresh Limbu, LCpl Nirmal Rai, LCpl Bhesh Gurung, LCpl Manoj Khaling and LCpl Man Gurung (LCpl Man left us after a month to work at LKD). The service desk operators deal with varieties of requests. They range from customer's account requests on various systems that HICSSS provide, IMPEX (Import and Export data) requests, incidents recording and escalation to the right resolver groups. Bastion service desk is a focal point for anything to everything. We strive to bring normal level of service after an incident has been reported to us and feedback plays a very important role to the customers on the reported incident.

Since the takeover from 16 Signal Regiment on 10 November 2012 we have dealt with an influx of new personnel in theatre. The transition process is never an easy task. We have since implemented BMC Remedy as a single Incident reporting tool which replaced the legacy CAS D and SDE. However, SDE is still used for reporting FOC+(Thales). The improvement in fault reporting system has contributed directly to the integration of Incident management processes into the Service management infrastructure. As mentioned earlier, Bastion Service Desk acts as Local Point of Contact (LPOC) for more than 2,000 users based in BASTION JOB and RPOC for similar number of users outside Bastion. The number of users, however, does not truly reflect all the assets and services we cover. The most commonly used method of reporting incidents to us is by phone. Some users prefer to walk in to our humble portacabin to report any incidents directly to us. Others email, while some use the newly introduced online Routine Incident report form. Additionally we have to deal with contractors and visitors who have business with either HICSSS or JFCIS(A) on a daily basis. Due to the nature of the job it requires a great deal of interpersonal skills with which, being Gurkhas, we are not naturally gifted. To make it even interesting we have to deal with some very frustrated or rather annoyed customers occasionally. This also means we have to be prepared to take some abusive calls too. So there is no room for complacency at all. On a positive note, such situations only help to improve and develop us as competent service providers. Without the service desk, customers do not have primary point of contact for any service request and all stages of service restoration.

To sum it up, three months have gone in the blink of an eye. The second half of the tour will hopefully be as interesting and eventful as the first half. At the moment we are all looking forward to our well deserved R&R.

LKG ICS Troop (Kowloon Troop)

OC Lt Rich Greener
SSgt SSgt Laxman Gurung

Since arriving in LKG, Troop has been kept busy with various projects both inside and outside the wire. The busy

pace of life and long days have not dented the troop's morale, the Troop OC, Lt Rich Greener in a close third place on the "Most Parcels Received" leader board. The parcels have generally been enjoyed communally and so you could argue that the good morale has been Haribo fuelled.

Since last time, LKG ICS Troop has undertaken two main projects, the largest getting one of our Battle Group HQ ready for winter, the second smaller project, fits in with the theme across the whole of Helmand, base closure. On arrival we inherited the outline plan of how Transition Support Unit (TSU) LKG HQ would be prepared for the winter, but not until we dug into the detail ourselves did we find out what a large task this would be. As all good plans it appeared simple, however left the Troop OC wondering at what point it would not survive contact.

The work started on time, finishing the build of the temporary HQ in record time, two days ahead of schedule. The first potential issue was dealt with seamlessly as we moved the whole HQ in a few hours one night from one tent to the replacement one. Everyone in and working at speed resulted in a happy HQ. The work to strip out numerous HERRICKS' worth of flooring and a horrific amount of legacy cabling was completed quickly giving the Civi Contractors over two days to refurbish the tent by themselves. This is where friction started to creep in and a two day refurbishment turned in to a seven day refurbishment. We were now most definitely behind schedule. However as a testament to the confidence the HQ had in the "temporary build" the TSU had decided to conduct an Operation whilst there, giving the team an extra day or two to complete the new and permanent. This they did, and with minimal fuss, the whole HQ was moved back in one evening.

The second project that ran concurrently with the HQ move was the closure of a Police Mentoring site in the south of Lashkah Gar town. The Troop OC deployed with A/Sgt Surendra Sampang and Cpl Tirtha Rai at 24 hours notice to move, their job to close and recover all British communications located within the middle of the ANP Compound. After a brief road move they arrived in location and assessed the situation, a simple job turned out to be rather more difficult as the main bearer (a Swedish) was located on the roof of a two storey building. With the help of the US Marines contingent co-located there, the dish was recovered from the roof of the building, the view of a castle built by Alexander the Great being an added bonus. All internal equipment was easily recovered and accounted for before the return journey to MOB LKG in the early evening.

The troop are now very much looking forward to Christmas (a week away at the time of writing) and have a suitable substitute for a Christmas tree constructed out of Cat5 cable, decorated with all sorts of decorations supplied by Homebase.

FWD ICS Troop (Sek Kong Troop)

OC Lt Mike Kearney
SSgt SSgt Suresh Limbu

FwdTp is responsible for delivering the Service Catalogue at Fwd bases and executing changes as directed in order to enable the exploitation of information in Op HERRICK 17. These Fwd bases are scattered around the Helmand AO, led and maintained by a small teams. The team required to be highly motivated; resourceful as the life of the FOBs and PBs are difficult and unpleasant.

The ICS detachment is to provide Local point of contact for all Operational CIS users on all kinds of service requests. They are to carry out accurate recording of incidents, escalating to the relevant resolve groups and updating the customer on all stages of service restoration. The biggest challenge is to deliver service availability and maintain first class user focused service. The detachment commander is to deal with formation unit's head of department and generate a culture of continuous Service Improvement within a context of proactive Service management.

The ICS personnel always generate a network of level 1 verbal support and limited first hand organic support. However, on a number of occasions, the Fwd bases ICS detachment personnel are providing limited level 2 supports to the FOBs and PBs location. The main priority is to support with a strong emphasis on swift incident resolution and continually improve service availability.

So far, the out dets are providing a strong, resilient and robust network across the Helmand AO. The network has been much improved and solid since we took over from I6SR. This is purely because of the boys' understanding of the network architect; depth knowledge on ICS/CIS skills and the work ethic that goes in.

MOB PRICE ICS DET

Det Comd Sgt Navinkaji Gurung

My Bumpy Rides to PBs

By 21171809 LCpl Bhim Isoy Subba

'Welcome to MOB PRICE'. That was the first sentence I heard from Sgt Navinkaji and Sgt Kajiman Limbu as soon as we alight from a Chinook. We were feeling completely lost in the new place. We were looking at each other with the blank faces. That was the start of our six months tour in this new place called MOB PPRICE, later renamed HMS PRICE by 40 Cdo BG. As we get along with our day to day shifts I got chance to visit some of the outdets in our AOR. The first one was PB HAYATULLAH.

In the morning I was told by Sgt Navinkaji Gurung to get ready to be deployed to PB Hayatullah. They were having problem with one of the UPS in the Ops Room. My task was to check the UPS and get as necessary information. I was really excited as this was first time I was going out of MOB PRICE. I was ready in my full PPE and desperately waiting to be picked up by the troops from PB HAYATULLAH. Finally, the waiting

was over. They quickly loaded me in to the vehicle and we were off. I was desperate to get the outside view but to my dismay there were no windows. It was just a fifteen minutes drive out of the main gate. As soon as we reached the location they showed me the way to the Ops Room so that I could crack on with my job. LCpl Sean Heavey was the signaller in the location. He briefed me on their ORAS and the faulty UPS in the Ops Room. I did all the necessary checks and confirmed the UPS to be faulty. I took necessary information about the UPS so that we can demand for a replacement. After that I talked him through the necessary checks and maintenance tasks he needed to carry out regularly. Before I could have a time for a chat, they were ready to drop me back to MOB PRICE.

I thought that I would not get another chance to go out to the outdets. But a couple of weeks later I got another opportunity to visit PBI (40 Commando, C Coy) to install new VoIP phone and produce a Recce report of the location. This time LCpl Marc Carr was coming with me and we were staying overnight. We left MOB PRICE in our full PPE in the afternoon. The ride was bumpy and tiring. We reached PBI in the late afternoon. As soon as we reached the location we were received by CSgt Baudin 40 Cdo. He showed us round the camp and took us to Ops Room where we were working for the rest of our stay. I quickly installed new VoIP phone and meanwhile LCpl Marc Carr started tidying up the cluttered cables in the Ops Room. Our plan was to finish our task in the Ops room that day and do the Recce report on the following day. Luckily, we managed to complete our task in the Ops room by evening. CSgt Baudin showed us our tent which was quite close to the Ops Room. The next day, we started to work on the Recce report after a good breakfast. As we were working on the Recce report one of the signallers came and told us that they were having problems with the system. I followed to the Ops Room and found out that the whole system had drastically slowed down. I did some checks on the system and found out that their Kestrel system was not receiving or sending data. After doing some physical checks, I found out that the fibre cable running from Kestrel to Ops Room was broken. I quickly fixed the broken cable and soon the link was back and running. All Ops Room users were happy and relieved. Suddenly I realised that I didn't have much time left as our flight to Bastion was due to arrive in couple of hours. So, I quickly showed the users how to do a regular maintenance on the system and the simple checks they can carry out in case of system failure. By that time LCpl Marc Carr had also finished the Recce report. We were happy that we finished our tasks successfully. Unfortunately but we didn't have time to look around the location.

My third task was to fix a fibre cable and do a Recce report in PB2 (1 RGR, Delhi Coy). Like PBI, I was staying overnight at the location. I was picked up by the troop in the late afternoon. By the time we left the gate it was quite dark. We reached PB2 safely and on time. I was received by the Detachment Commander Cpl Novraj Gurung 1 RGR. He showed me round the camp and took me to my tent first. He then took me to the medical centre where the fibre cable was broken. When

I checked the cable one of the heads was snapped. I quickly re-headed the cable and everything was in and working. Since it was already late, I went to take a rest. I told them that I will continue with my Recce report on the following day. Next day after having a good breakfast I carried out working on the Recce report. The weather was really bad on that day. I was told that there would not be any vehicle movements. So I had to stay there for another night. I managed to complete the Recce report on that day. On the same day, I showed all the signallers how to do regular maintenance on the system and also taught them about general fault findings. Finally, it was time to leave. I really had a great time away from my working place but good time never stays for long.

I regard myself as one of the luckiest to get chance to step out of my working place and experience rough rides that the outdets are experiencing. These will be my most memorable moments of my tour. I might not be getting opportunities like these but I will definitely be more than happy to put on my full PPE and get in to the Mastiff for another bumpy ride.

FOB SHAWQAT ICS DET

Det Comd A/Sgt Netra Rai

Tour so Far

By LCpl Singha Gurung

Four of us from 246 GSS, 2 Signal Regiment arrived in FOB SHAWQAT on 7 November 2012 for much dreaded winter tour of Op HERRICK 17. On our arrival we couldn't help but notice big mud walls which dominate the FOB and is the most prominent feature within the compound, reminder of the remains of Afghan-Anglo war. A/Sgt Netra Rai had already been there ten days earlier than us. HO/TO with 16 Signal Regiment went pretty smoothly and we took over complete responsibility of ICS Det of TSU NDA from 9 November 2012. Cpl Sailen Thapa has been responsible for VSAT and Promina, I with the servers and LCpl Lalit Gurung with Kestrel links. Sig Sagun Limbu has been more of a Telemech than his actual trade Royal Signals Electrician.

First few weeks were quite busy since we all had to get an idea of each other's trade so that we could get on with resolving faults when the responsible individual is away from Det doing sangar duty, guardian angel, prowler, vehicle search team or any other camp security related jobs.

We are supporting 1st Battalion the Mercian Regiment HQ in FOB SHAWQAT along with their 5 Patrol Bases (PBs) within our AO. All of us have been deployed to out-dets in order to resolve faults and also to carry out husbandry checks of communication equipments. Apart from our mission related communication equipment we look after other welfare kits such as FOB Wi-Fi, BFBS and Welfare phones.

Visits from our commanders in Bastion have been quite more often than we anticipated. There have been more than eight visits from our Department Heads in just more than two months. Visits have always been helpful since we have been getting tips and guidance on maintenance of our equipments.

First person from our detachment has gone on R&R and there will be one person absent at a time until the end of March. With one less person we knew it was going to be busier days but surprisingly we have been coping very well. It all goes down to the dedication by all Det crews on understanding not only theirs but each other's responsibilities.

BASE ISTAR Technical Support (BITS) DET

Det Comd Sgt Nirakal Gurung

BITS Team Update

By LCpl Roshan Baidya

Base ISTAR Technical Support (BITS) works for 5 RA STA (Surveillance and Target Acquisition) Battery providing technical support and help desk manned 24/7 for ISTAR network. The BITS team comprises Sgt Nirakal Gurung (Det Comd), Cpl Saroj Rana, Cpl David Johnson, LCpl Roshan Baidya, LCpl Sunil Gurung, LCpl Ryan Bull, LCpl Gareth Stanley as Forward Repair Teams.

The importance of ISTAR network has been felt widely as it provides better eyes for the ISAF forces on the ground and helps Commanders in their planning and execution of Ops. It allows live video streaming and recording from Base ISTAR assets including PGSS, PGST and PTDS, which are US assets.

We started deploying fixing point-to-point radio links, putting new radios for redundancies and clearing outstanding faults. We had a busy tour recently, deploying to most of the MOBs, FOBs, PBs and CPs. At times, deployments were required on the same day you get back to BSN. It was busy but enjoyable. Things started settling as network got more stable after some intense routine network management by Net Config Man. Now we get a little bit more time in Bastion. This time has been well used for some organised revision in the workshop by senior members of the team.

As a Class 2 CSE, working in BITS team has been fantastic. We have opportunity to play around with routers, switches, building servers and clients and configuring other ISTAR assets under the supervision of highly experienced Class 1 CSEs. It has helped us understand the layer 3 network and IP schema well. Working on our own when we are out on the ground for fault findings has given us more confidence and experience on the jobs.

There is a saying, 'Time flies like a flick when you get busy', the busier we get, the quicker the tour ends. Last two months have gone so quickly that I only realise it when my R&R was coming up in less than a week. We have been to most of the

out Dets flying on Osprey (US), Chinook, Merlin, and even on IRG (Road) moves. Working out on the ground with different people everyday and to learn how the other units work is an experience. What gives us more pleasure is that commanders and guys on the ground appreciate your job when you fix it and say well done and thank you. So far, we are enjoying and loving our job as part of BITS team. We are looking forward to making this tour a great success and return home safely with our heads held high and making our Regiment proud.

FOB JUNO ICS DET

Det Comd Sgt Dan Rai

A Short Note from ICS DET JUNO

By Nagendra Gurung

"Train hard fight easy" was in the hearts and minds of every soldier of 2 Sig Regt from day one of deployment training for Op HERRICK 17. We successfully completed vigorous military exercises, different communications systems courses, in-house cascade training and series of exercises like 4 Mech Bde's CFX and FTX in preparation for Op HERRICK 17. By the end of September 2012, nothing was left to train on and we were more than ready for deployment. Finally, we headed to Afghanistan in October 2012 to put all our training into action and achieve our mission.

We deployed on Op HERRICK 17 under 4 Mech Bde as the CSR (Campaign Signal Regiment) to support the NATO mission for Afghanistan in October 2012. Our mighty Sqn, 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn is deployed as the HICSSS, responsible for providing information communication services for the whole of the Helmand AO. A team of four personnel consisting of Sgt Dan Rai (Det Comd), A/Cpl David McBarron (Tech), LCpl Nagendra Gurung (CS Op) and LCpl Cameron Dowd (IS technician) headed to the FOB JUNO to take over the responsibility of ICS Det. From the beginning, our four man team has been working tirelessly providing robust, resilient and swift communications support to the elements in FOB JUNO since taking over from 16 Sig Regt on the first week of November 2012. We look after a number of communications systems which are vital to communicate within theatre and back to the UK. We are extremely busy providing support to this element but enjoying every bit of our job here, working as a team rectifying faults when they arise. The Det is running smoothly as it should be as we were well trained for this. We hope to hand over this ICS Det to next unit in better condition than what we inherited.

Despite their busy schedule, we had the privilege of having our Sqn OC, Maj David Orr and SSM, WO2(SSM) Durga Gurung in our ICS Det on 12 December 2012. It was nice to hear their appreciation of whatever we are doing as ICS Det in FOB JUNO which has boosted our morale. Now we are halfway through our tour and with the mentality of "Be proactive rather than reactive", I am sure we will have a very successful tour.



FOB OULLETTE ICS DET

Det Comd A/Sgt Rabi Lama

Op HERRICK 17

By LCpl Gyan Rai

The roller coaster ride from Bastion to FOB OULLETTE on a Merlin was extraordinary. It was a great start.

The initial two weeks were a learning curve for us. The people and places were new to us as we had neither been to FOB OUL nor worked with Scots Guards before. We took some time to adjust ourselves and set our work routines. As we thought we were getting on well with our routines, we were taken by surprise by a loud bang which seemed like an IDF. The next thing, we were on the ground, flat like a plank. Amusing to say this but it was the big gun (artillery) that had just fired without an announcement.

Our HOTO with 16 Signal Regiment went swiftly as our detachment commander, Sgt Rabi Lama, deployed to FOB OULLETTE (OUL) two weeks earlier than us. There are three of us in FOB OUL, the Det Cmd, Cpl Dipendra Rai, and me, LCpl Gyan Rai. This is our fourth week in the FOB and we have settled in well. Work wise, we have one person on the night shift and two on the day shift. There will be a rotation every two weeks among us. Twice every week, each of us is on a Sanger duty. While on Sanger, it is an opportunity to blend with the other departmental personnel.

As we are on a winter operational tour, the temperature is rapidly dropping. During the day, it is warm and sunny like summer back in the UK, and dusk to dawn; it is icy cold. I am glad that I have brought my both top and bottom softies for my night shift.

Overall, FOB OUL is a well settled operational operating base where the cookhouse provides healthy food. Moreover, it has all the necessary amenities needed like; gym, a welfare hub with wireless connection, welfare phones, a small local shop, a washing machine, hot shower, and a place to perform the Insanity workout. I think, with a bit of ingenuity and resourcefulness, anyone can create a comfortable place to live.

Christmas Day in FOB OULLETTE

By LCpl Gyan Rai

25 December 2012 - On this auspicious day, we had a wonderful time. It was a warm and sunny morning in FOB OUL when everyone was just about to start work; the ICS team had a comical plan.

The plan was to start everyone's Christmas day with a smile. To resemble the humorous Santa Claus, LCpl Gyan Rai was dressed with a Christmas hat, a long white beard and amusing-looking glasses. For an elf, Cpl Dipendra Rai was equipped with a bag full of Christmas cards and a camera to capture all the smiles.

We commenced our mission starting from the Ops room. "Ho! Ho! Ho! Merry Christmas everyone!", I yelled when I entered the room. The entire room was silent and every pair of eyes was locked on me. Despite the peculiar atmosphere, my elf and I carried on. I gave out cards and shook hands with every individual that we came across. Many of them were surprised and pleased. In return, we received many complimentary remarks. One of them even said that it was his very first Christmas card. Such words were gratifying to hear.

Mobile Communication Unit (MCU)

By A/Cpl Dipendra Rai (FOB OULLETTE)

The Kestrel MCU (Mobile Communication Unit) has been very important asset for the communication across the theatre. Theoretically, the mast is designed to hold four radio links due to the restriction of weight and frequency considerations. It could go up to 30m in height. This MCU is particularly used for the WAN link radio connections in theatre. It is very authentic once it's fully up, however, there are so many considerations such as ground clearance, air interference, space on the ground because the mast can only be prepared whilst it is on the ground and it covers 30x30m space on the ground.

With frequently changing and evolving infrastructure across the theatre, the tempo of J6 operations and development in FOB OUL has been extremely high. Although the total strength of Combined Force in FOB Ouellette is being shrunk down to Company level, there is no sign of any reduction in terms of communication infrastructures. Previously there were two links,

maintained via the KESTREL MCU. Due to the ongoing changes in OUL and various base closures across the theatre, the plan was pushed from JFCIS(A) for OUL to add four more links to rebroadcast or secondary KESTREL links for different out locations. In these locations, we had already set up successful links via the Op PISTOL fibre cable between OUL to LKD.

The new KESTREL mast has been set up to provide robust and resilient links between OUL to CLI and OUL - OCCD with further links yet to be established. Due to the hazardous environment of FOB OUL, cautious planning was required in order to tear down the pre-existing KESTREL mast infrastructure. With no falling derrick on the 20 metre mast, it became a delicate operation to bring the tower down without damaging a nearby ISO container, barbed wire set up and Hesco wall. With the small team of two, Sgt Rabi Lama and A/Cpl Dipendra Rai had to deal with the obstacles, firstly the Hesco wall, barbed wire and the ISO container. This was achieved by laying down the KESTREL mast on the top of the STABAD ISO container; however there were concerns as to whether the ISO container could support the weight of the three disks and motor. Moreover, we were unable to place our ladder in the right place due to the unstable nature of the ground and short length compared to where the mast was situated. As such, we

had to dismantle all the disks with the heavy motor carefully considering the fact that it was very hazardous in terms of the health and safety issues that we learnt through training in the UK.

With no support of falling derrick and insufficient space to dismantle the tower, the whole process was very difficult. This difficulty was multiplied over time due to the dress state having been raised to two, requiring us to carry an extra 15kgs of personal protection equipment. Furthermore, with the appropriate manpower, the process could have been completed within three hours rather than the three days it took due to the hostile conditions and constant IDF threat.

However there was a constant supply of brew from one of our det member LCpl Gyan Rai to the work area which kept us going. The work party i.e. myself and A/Sgt Rabi Lama had never listened to the BFBS Radio as much as we did while performing the task. Thanks to BFBS Radio! There was no need for anyone to go to the gym throughout the task since the task itself turned out to be enough workout for the day. The whole MCU has been accounted and sent back to BSN. Despite the concerns and risks, with careful application judgement and common sense, we were able to bring the mast down successfully.

The Reverse Supply Chain Squadron

By Sergeant Dagalsing Sanwa QOGLR

Combat operations under Operation HERRICK will draw to a close in 2014. As a result, most of the equipment and vehicles currently in Afghanistan will need to be brought back to the UK. To enable this process and to ensure that equipment is back loaded correctly, there is a requirement to establish a Reverse Supply Chain (RSC) squadron within the Theatre Logistic Regiment. As 28 Squadron was acting as the operations squadron for the Rear Operations Group in Aldershot, it was ideally placed to force generate the first RSC squadron and join RHQ 10 QOGLR on operations.

On 7 June, elements of 28 Squadron (OC Major West, AO Captain Baldeep Tamang and me as the Operations SNCO) arrived in theatre to conduct a five-week recce in order to identify the work required to create an RSC squadron. Our main tasks were to analyse the problem and complete an RSC estimate, write the concept of operations and standard operating instructions for each RSC facility and, finally, take over all RSC infrastructure. Our mental capacities were stretched to the limit solving this novel but interesting problem. The recce was an extremely busy time, planning and writing RSC Standing Operating Instructions (SOIs), Statements of Requirement (SORs), taking over infrastructure and turning them into fully functioning facilities. The majority of the RSC infrastructure projects were still under construction but we did take over the Load Holding Area, designed to hold hundreds of ISO containers, and make it fully operational.

On 20 August we deployed again. The aim of this second phase was to deploy a skeleton RSC squadron to theatre in order to take over the remaining infrastructure, vehicles and equipment. 20 of us deployed in total: joining 28 Squadron were personnel from 4 Logistic Support Regiment, 17 Port & Maritime Regiment and 9 Regiment. Staff Sergeant 'Bubbly' Gumm deployed as the Technical SNCO. Our aim was to develop working practices through experimentation then test the process that we had designed in June, in order to establish an RSC process for material that was capable of withstanding the industrial tempo of redeployment from 2013.

The War-Like Scrap Area was placed under the command of the RSC Squadron on 24 August and the RSC Processing Area was commissioned on 10 September. At this time, a team of four, under the command of Lance Corporal Sudip Gurung, deployed to Patrol Base WAHID, Patrol Base 4 and Patrol Base 2 to develop RSC working practices forward of Camp BASTION. This forward team was a huge success and was soon in high demand by Task Force Helmand units.

Towards the end of October, with the exception of the Bio-Security Washdown facility, all of the RSC Squadron infrastructure had been commissioned and proofs of infrastructure conducted. We handed over fully functioning RSC facilities to our successors from 9 Squadron, 7 Regiment RLC. It had been a very challenging period for us but the SHQ enjoyed being deployed for the majority of Operation HERRICK 16: not bad for a Rear Operations Group sub unit!

Jai QOGLR!!

BRIGADE UNITS

Headquarters the Brigade of Gurkhas

Newsletter

With the common understanding that everyone is busy and has been for years, the colloquialism “good busy” and “bad busy” seems to be used to distinguish between the “frantic” HQBG described 1998 or the “frenetic” HQBG of 2011 and the serene-and-efficient HQBG of 2012. HQBG is a steady “good busy” but without the basketball, junk trips on Jaldevi and hectic social calendar enjoyed in the halcyon days of Hong Kong. With the increase to routine workload of Redundancy and Future Army Structure 2020, it is gusting “bad busy” but remains in very good spirits and very much at the heart of all Gurkha matters in the Army and yet another turbulent time for the Brigade. This year there was no HQBG junk trip, and more’s the shame, GTR did not host the Brigade Piping & Drumming concentration in Gun Club Hill barracks, nor did 2/2 GR host the Brigade Bugle concentration in Gallipoli Lines as did some years ago.

Whilst these may be turbulent times and our activities may veer and haul a little, the Brigade remains on a good and very steady course. For most readers the issues of redundancy, transformation, immigration, future structures, the future of the BG will be old hat, but for the serving Brigade it is new(ish). According the old issues of the Kukri, HQBG has often relied on retired officers for advice and a considerable amount of *pro bono* work in the background. This is as true today as it ever was so thank you for your generous support and advice in challenging times.

Redundancy

The Army Compulsory Redundancy Programme has seen 427 Gurkhas leave the Brigade in the first two Tranches; Tranche 3 demands that a further 265 are made redundant. Whilst Tranche 4 may be politically sensitive, but it is necessary to bring the Army and Gurkhas into balance and the BG is planning for it.

Unit	T1	T2	T3	Total
RGR	74	180	125	379
QGE	13	22	9	44
QGS	18	40	46	104
QOGLR	40	40	84	164
GSPS	0	0	1	1
Totals	145	282	265	692

An astounding amount of work has been completed to achieve accuracy in redundancy planning between HQBG, the

Units’ Career Management Officers and the Directorate of Manning (Army). It is worth noting that all of this planning has been set against a degree of uncertainty in the future structures of various units and indeed the lack of clarity in the Non Front Line elements (Sandhurst, Brecon and Catterick are of particular importance to the Brigade).

In addition to redundancy some 665 soldiers have transferred to the wider Army since 2007. The corps units have tended to cross into their Brit units, a notable exception being the QGS; nearly half of all their transfers have gone to the AGC and the other has gone to the RSignals. For RGR the majority have gone to the RLC, with the minority going to other infantry units with which they have served as Reinforcement Companies.

Over-manning in the BG has meant that it has been able to exploit other units’ under-manning and fill their gaps. The most recent examples are the GRCs with the Mercians and Yorks which will have all disbanded by the time you read this. As the redundancy programme pairs the BG down to its correct establishment it also trims the ability to immediately exploit future manning gaps as they occur. This is a concern because it is an erosion of a real strength of the BG in the past 15 years.

Future Army Structure 2020 (A2020)

The Army will reduce from 101,000 to 82,000 and the Gurkhas have taken a proportion of this, but it sees all the units retain their locations amongst considerable churn for others, some of whom are merging and changing location, or even disbanding. A very brief summary follows and as the dust settles Kukri will bring you more.

The QGS have increased their size by cleverly exploiting the demand to support Special Forces with a troop and are rumoured to be establishing another troop (or detachment as they like to call it) in 250 Sqn. They retain the key UK capabilities to provide the communications systems to the ARRC and JRRF which are amongst the most advanced available. We bask in their brilliance!

The QOGLR convert to a Theatre Logistics Regiment... “its provenance drawn from the likelihood of manoeuvre being conducted at brigade level centres on a single regiment able to dominate distribution operations from a theatre rendezvous to the close support environment.” At risk of sounding old fashioned, it is assessed that this is similar to what used to be known as a General Support Regiment!

The QGE change role from an Explosive Ordnance Demolition and Search (EOD&S) to a Force Support Regiment. This is described as “similar to a General Support Engineer Regiment”.

The GSPS retain their structures and work continues to increase their breadth of employment to include RAOs, Regimental Accountants and more besides.

The RGR restructure to form two Light Role Adaptive Force Battalions. This change sees a rifle coy reduced to one rifle platoon and two fire support platoons, Support Company is reduced to Mortars, Recce, Snipers and Assault Pioneers. Other Adaptive Force Bns are paired with a Reserve Force but RGR currently remain un-paired, but with work ongoing improve the situation. In Brunei the Bn has been authorised to stay at its current strength of 640 which is 73 more than original Army 2020 structure.

Importantly the Gurkhas will achieve a sustainable structure, maintain all of their capability and are poised to enter the Army 2020 era to seize all opportunities; this is in contrast to other units that will require significant restructuring and retraining.

Table 1: Current and future Gurkha liability

	Current liability	Current strength	A2020 liability
RGR	1,387	1,689	1,175
QGE	337	365	287
QGS	496	554	421
QOGLR	565	621	480
GSPS	96	125	81
BAND	34	44	34
Totals	2,915	3,398	2,478

Welfare and Benevolence

The Redundancy Programme has seen an increased requirement to support service leavers’ and units’ administration. HQBG have recently established a new post of SO3 Transition

to assist in this difficult process. There has always been more work than time and people to achieve it, so SO3 Transition’s remit will undoubtedly increase to work with the two re-employed retired officers in the Gurkha Welfare Advisory Centre embedded in Citizens’ Advice Centre in Aldershot. With the increase in retired Gurkhas in the Aldershot area their workload has increased dramatically.

The HQBG “immigration office” continues to liaise closely with the UK Border Agency and manage to turn around ex-servicemen’s bids for Indefinite Leave to Remain / Enter (ILR/E) much faster than was previously experienced. Those soldiers leaving the BG as part of the Redundancy Programme have been given dispensation to bid for their ILR/E before they leave which is proving very successful as it means they get it on retirement. Work is ongoing with the Army Secretariat, HQBG and the Home Office to smooth the process for normal service leavers.

Staff Changes

HQBG has seen a significant change in staff over the last year. We say goodbye to Brig Ian Rigden OBE who has taken over as Head of Land Experimentation at the Defence Concepts and Doctrine Centre where he is currently producing reams of new doctrine in addition to his lead role on the Gurkha 200 Everest committee; you can take him out of the Gurkhas, but you can’t take the Gurkha out of him. Colonel James Robinson takes over and has, after nearly four months, completed (nearly) his grand tour of all Gurkha units. He spends a good deal of time on BFBS Gurkha Radio capitalising on connections to Nepal - born in Dharan - and has even been heard to attribute his stature to this fact.

We say thank you, farewell and good luck to Simon Lord (Bde Sec), Major Hemchandra Rai MBE (DCoS), Peter Davies (Fin Offr), WO2 Bishan Rai (Supt Clk) and SSgt Santosh Gurung (Manning & Establishment Clk). We say welcome (and good luck) to Major Tom Pike (CoS), Major (Retd) Nigel Wylie-Carrick MBE (Bde Sec), WO2 Khadak Chhetri (newly established SO3 Transition), WO2 Chandra Limbu (Supt Clk), SSgt Sumit Joshi (Manning & Establishment Clk) and Matthew Curtis (Fin Offr). With all of these changes happening over six months, you may well ask where the continuity is? Breathe a sigh of relief, Major Bijayant Sherchan remains as DCoS and the expert on TACOS, pay, pensions, immigration and many other crucial areas.

Gurkha 200

Planning to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Gurkha Service to the British Crown started on 7 May 2010, with the endorsement of the Terms of Reference for the G200 Committee. Under the joint Chairmanship of Brigadier Craig Lawrence and Colonel William Shuttlewood, the G200 Committee will be planning, arranging and executing appropriate ceremonies to mark this significant anniversary in 2015. The aim of G200 is to mark and celebrate 200 years of loyal service to the British Crown with a series of activities that enhances the Brigade's reputation both nationally and internationally, in order to contribute to the maintenance of the Brigade of Gurkhas in the Army's order of battle, and to engage support for the Gurkha Welfare Trust (UK). All elements of the serving Brigade are represented on the Committee, as are the Gurkha Brigade Association, Gurkha Welfare Trust (UK) and Gurkha Museum, however the G200 Committee will be seeking more direct involvement from all parts of the Brigade, serving and retired.

In general there will be both public and Brigade-only celebrations held within the UK and elsewhere, to celebrate and honour the part Gurkhas play, and have played, in the British Army and in our history. G200 will reinforce the huge contribution the Gurkha soldier has made and our "debt of honour" that we as a nation owe to Nepal and to our ex-servicemen. The celebrations will also be a springboard for a major fundraising campaign for Gurkha Welfare Trust (UK) and an unparalleled opportunity to recruit new supporters. A wide number of events is being planned, and details will be published and promulgated as the year progresses.

To open Gurkha 200 and start the national publicity to celebrate the 200 years of Gurkha loyal service to the crown, there will be the formal opening of the Gurkha Memorial currently under construction at the National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire. Subject to confirmation this will take place on 23 September 2014 and will involve all elements of the serving Brigade and also attendance from the Regimental Associations.

The main event for G200 will centre around the Guard Mounting duties at Buckingham Palace which is likely to be take place in the second week of June 2015. The main event itself is likely to take place on the 9 June 2015, and will comprise a spectacular evening display and Retreat at the Royal Hospital Chelsea for up to 1,500 ticket paying supporters. The Dress Rehearsal will be open to both serving and retired members of the Brigade. At the end of this Pageant, some 120 VVIPs will attend a formal dinner, whilst the remainder can attend a Reception with light eats. As part of these celebrations it is also planned to present the Queen's Truncheon to Her Majesty the Queen after that day's Guard Mounting, and to troop the Queen's Truncheon down The Mall to the Gurkha Statue in front of MOD, where a Memorial Service will be held to unveil and dedicate the updated plaques on the plinth.

Throughout 2015, all the Regimental Associations will be asked to contribute to the 200th Anniversary Celebrations

by supporting as many of the national and local G200 events that will be taking place (details to follow), but also to do something positive for the Gurkha Welfare Trust (UK) and the Gurkha Museum. Each Regimental Association has been asked to consider taking on the following activities:

- Enter a Regimental Association Team into Trailwalker 2015. To raise funds but also to increase awareness and demonstrate to all that we all remain determined to help our old and bold.
- Support Friends of the Gurkha Museum. To sign up at least 50 'Friends of the Gurkha Museum' in order to support our Museum during these very difficult economic times.
- Fund Raising Event. To organise a FR event to raise funds for the Gurkha Welfare Trust (UK) and the Museum. Given enough notice, HQBG would hope to be able to support these events with speakers, pipers etc.
- Organise a Battlefield Tour. To organise a shared Battlefield tour and offer places to the wider members of Gurkha Brigade Associations; possibilities include a Gallipoli Tour for the 100th Anniversary of the Italian campaign, where it will be the 70th anniversary of several major battles.
- Support to Gurkha Welfare Trust Regional Branches. To provide local support to Gurkha Welfare Trust (UK) to any Gurkha Welfare Trust Regional Branch activities.

Everest 200

Finally, to commemorate the 200 years of service of the Gurkhas in the British Army in 2015, the Brigade of Gurkhas intend to send a team of soldiers to climb Mount Everest and put the first serving British Gurkha soldier on the summit. To achieve this will require a great deal of personal motivation, training, commitment and significant personal contributions. All Gurkha Units have been informed and the response has been excellent, with over 150 applications having been received by the closing deadline.

The eventual team size is planned on being eight climbers and four Instructors. To select this from across a Brigade of such high calibre soldiers will not be easy and the best team members will be selected through a rigorous selection process:

- All applications were first screened by units before being submitted to HQBG where they were further screened by the Expedition Management Committee. The best candidates will then be called forward for a selection / training meet in summer 2013, likely to be in North Wales. Training will be based around the Summer Mountaineering Foundation to give all potential candidates chance to gain qualifications regardless of whether they make the final squad or not.

- Successful candidates from the North Wales squad will then form the initial Everest 200 squad who will be called forward for Winter Mountaineering Foundation training in Scotland over the winter of 2013/2014. Once again the squad will be thinned down at this stage and invited to take part in the Alpine Mountaineering Foundation Course which will be conducted in the summer of 2014 in the European Alps.
- The final training event will be held in the Himalayas of Nepal, with the ascent of a peak of over 7,000 metres to assess the members best suited to dealing with the extremes of altitude and working on the systems only found in the high mountains. At this stage the final team plus a few reserves

will be selected for the main event. Team members will be expected to take part in all UK based training events on weekends and will be given individual training plans which they will be expected to stick to, as well as additional team tasks to make the expedition happen.

This is a comprehensive training plan involving a large amount of people and will require a lot of personal sacrifice from the individual team members, their families and units. All will have a role in placing the final team members who will place the Brigade of Gurkhas firmly in the mountaineering history of Nepal and Mount Everest.

Farewell to Mr Simon Lord, Brigade Secretary (2005 - 3 October 2012)

By Major N D Wylie Carrick

After some seven years in post as the Brigade Secretary HQBG, it was with some sadness that we bade Simon Lord farewell on his well earned retirement. Simon Lord is very well known to all the staff at HQBG and to all the past and present Regimental Association Secretaries, both in the UK and in Nepal. His hall mark as the brigade secretary has been one of unflappable diligence and attention to detail in all aspects of his many and varied responsibilities. He has made a significant contribution to HQBG and also to the wider Brigade of Gurkhas.

Many of the serving Brigade will know him as the editor of either the monthly Parbate Magazine or as the editor of the

annual Kukri Journal, which provides such a valuable record of Brigade of Gurkha activities at every level. He is also very well known by the former Gurkha Brigade Regimental Associations as their point of contact into HQBG and coordinator for many of the key Brigade activities. However, what he will be remembered for was his compassion and dedication to the Gurkha Ex-Servicemen and their families now resident in the UK, and the initial establishment of the welfare network to assist them in their resettlement to the UK.

Simon Lord handed over to Major Nigel Wylie Carrick MBE himself no stranger to the Brigade and we wish Simon Lord a happy and productive retirement.





The Royal Gurkha Rifles

RGR Staff List (as at December 2012)

Serving Late Officers RGR

Brig	J C Lawrence CBE MBE MSc FRGS psc+	Late RGR	M Phil
Brig	A J P Bourne OBE BA(Hons) MA MPhil(Cantab) psc j (j) +	Late RGR	Director Plans, Army Headquarters
Brig	I N A Thomas OBE psc+	Late RGR	G2 Chief, ARRC PHQ
Brig	I A Rigden OBE MA psc	Late RGR	Hd Land & Research, DCDC
Col	G A C Hughes OBE psc	Late RGR	British High Commission, Cyprus
Col	N D J Rowe psc	Late RGR	Assistant Director Plans, Headquarters APHCS, Camberley
Col	J G Robinson psc(j)+	Late RGR	Col BG

Officers of the Regiment

Lt Col	A G Alexander-Cooper MBE psc(j) MMS BA(Hons) ph	RGR	A Block, MOD
Lt Col	J N B Birch MA MDA psc(j)	RGR	CO, 2 ITB
Lt Col	J P Davies MBE MA(Cantab)	RGR	SO1, CTG, OPTAG
Lt Col	A W A Forbes BA(Hons) osc(FR) (sq)	RGR	Deputy President, AOSB, Westbury
Lt Col	A G Jones sq	RGR	SO1, Crisis Mgt Pol I Nepal (MOD)
Lt Col	I St C Logan MA BSc(Hons) psc(j)+	RGR	CO, MCTC
Lt Col	G M O'Keefe MA BSc psc(j)	RGR	SO1, Joint CBT Shrivenham
Lt Col	F J Rea LLB MA psc(j)	RGR	CO, 2 RGR
Lt Col	M H Reedman B Eng(Hons)	RGR	SO1, FDT Interoperability, Army Headquarters
Lt Col	D M Rex MVO BA(Hons)	RGR	ACSC Student
Lt Col	D J Robinson BA psa(j)	RGR	CO, 1 RGR
Lt Col	G M Strickland DSO MBE BA(Hons) psc(j)	RGR	SO1 Projects, DEFAC, JSCSC Shrivenham
Maj	R T Anderson MiD BA(Hons)	RGR	OC, Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick
Maj	N J Aucott BA(Hons)	RGR	SO2 Int, JFC Brunssum
Maj	B G Birkbeck	RGR	SO2 C JOTD, Coll Trg Gp Warminster
Maj	C R Boryer MBE BA(Hons)	RGR	Bn 2IC, 1 RGR
Maj	J M L Cartwright BA(Hons)	RGR	SO2 G5 Plans/Ops, HQ 20 Armd Bde
Maj	G Chaganis BSc(Hons)	RGR	OC B Coy, 2 RGR
Maj	SW M Chandler BA (Hons) QCVS MiD	RGR	SO2, J3 15 SFSG
Maj	C P L Conroy BSc(Hons)	RGR	OCA Coy, 2 RGR
Maj	C N A Crowe BA(Hons)	RGR	SO2 DS, ICSC(L)
Maj	R J Daines MiD ph	RGR	Exchange Appointment USA
Maj	Khusiman Gurung	RGR	Resettlement Course
Maj	A M S Hellier BA(Hons)	RGR	OC C Coy, 2 RGR
Maj	W J Hughes MBE MSc MRPharmS	RGR	SO2Plans, G5, 7 Bde
Maj	M J James BSc(Hons)	RGR	SO2 DT Architect Abbeywood, DES Andover
Maj	Daniel Lama MBE	RGR	OC HQ Coy, 1 RGR
Maj	S C Marcandonatos B Eng	RGR	SO2A, Ops Reqs, Army Headquarters
Maj	B R Marshall BSc(Hons)	RGR	SO2 Coord/Visits/Protocol, HQ ARRC
Maj	A R C Mathers MA	RGR	ICSC (L)
Maj	J C Murray BLE(Hons)	RGR	Bn 2IC, 2RGR
Maj	E P Oldfield	RGR	ICSC (L)
Maj	D T Pack	RGR	OC, A Coy, 1 RGR
Maj	T W Pike BEng(Hons)	RGR	COS, HQ Bde of Gurkhas

Maj	Rambahadur Pun	RGR	GM, 1 RGR
Maj	Bhujjit Rai	RGR	OC, TSD Brecon
Maj	Dhyanprasad Rai MVO	RGR	OC, GCM
Maj	Yambahadur Rana MVO	RGR	OC, GCS
Maj	L M Roberts BSc(Hons)	RGR	OC D Coy, 1 RGR
Maj	Dammarbahadur Shahi	RGR	GM, 2 RGR
Maj	H P S Stanford-Tuck	RGR	ICSC (L)
Maj	Chinbahadur Thapa MVO	RGR	QM, 4 MI Bn
Maj	A P Todd BSc(Hons)	RGR	OC C COY, 1 RGR
Maj	T D Usher BA(Hons)	RGR	ICSC (L)
Capt	Gajendrakumar Angdembe	RGR	2IC, A Coy, 2 RGR
Capt	J E Arney BSc(Hons)	RGR	OC FSG, Sp Coy, 2RGR
Capt	C P A E Bairsto BSc	RGR	A Block, MOD
Capt	T J A Baker BA(Hons)	RGR	Int Offr, 2RGR
Capt	B T Ball	RGR	2IC FSG, Sp Coy, 2 RGR
Capt	A S Brown	RGR	IO, 1 RGR
Capt	JW Buckley BA(Hons)	RGR	Adj, 2 RGR
Capt	Dhalindra Khatri Chhetri	RGR	PI Comd, Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick
Capt	Jitbahadur Chungbang	RGR	PI Comd, Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick
Capt	A C Colquhoun BSc(Hons)	RGR	A Block, MOD
Capt	R J Davies BSc(Hons)	RGR	Adj, ROG, 1 RGR
Capt	Gyanbahadur Dhenga	RGR	PI Comd, C Coy, 1 RGR
Capt	R C E Evans	RGR	Coy Fire Sp Pl, 1 RGR
Capt	Yubaraj Garbuja	RGR	HQ RSME/ L6M UK
Capt	N H Gross	RGR	OC Mortors, 2 RGR
Capt	Dilipkumar Gurung	RGR	Ops/Trg Offr, GCS
Capt	Dolbahadur Gurung	RGR	2IC C Coy, 1 RGR
Capt	Junjkaji Gurung	RGR	Resettlement Course
Capt	Kushalkumar Gurung	RGR	PI Comd, GCM
Capt	Lalitbahadur Gurung	RGR	PI Comd, D Coy, 1 RGR
Capt	Liljung Gurung	RGR	2IC B Coy, 1 RGR
Capt	Muktiprasad Gurung	RGR	PI Comd, B Coy, 1 RGR
Capt	Mukunda Gurung	RGR	PI Comd, GCS
Capt	Pitamber Gurung	RGR	2IC, HQ COY
Capt	Prakash Gurung	RGR	2IC, SP Coy, 1 RGR
Capt	Prembahadur Gurung	RGR	2IC, SP Coy, 2 RGR
Capt	Rajeshbahadur Gurung	RGR	QM(T), 1 RGR
Capt	Sherbadahur Gurung	RGR	2IC, GCM
Capt	Trilochan Gurung	RGR	QGOO, HQBG
Capt	P A Houlton-Hart MiD BEng(Hons)	RGR	Ops Offr, 1 RGR
Capt	J A E E Jeffcoat MiD BA(Hons)	RGR	Adj, 1 RGR
Capt	Jogendrasing Limbu	RGR	Pending Retirement
Capt	Kajiman Limbu MC	RGR	UWO, 2 RGR
Capt	Sachinhang Limbu	RGR	QM (T), 2 RGR
Capt	Tubendrabahadur Limbu	RGR	2IC, C Coy, 2 RGR
Capt	N R Lloyd BSc	RGR	Team Leader, Liaison Team, 4 JCTTAT
Capt	Nanibabu Magar	RGR	145 Bde, PRU
Capt	Rambahadur Malla	RGR	2IC, Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick
Capt	ST Meadows BA(Hons)	RGR	17 PI Comd, Inkerman Coy, RMAS & RGR Rep
Capt	Manoj Mohara	RGR	2IC, JSU Northwood HQ
Capt	N J Moran BA(Hons)	RGR	A Block, MOD
Capt	R E Morford	RGR	Ops/Trg Offr, 2 RGR
Capt	B E Norfield	RGR	Trg Officer, Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick
Capt	G E A Norton	RGR	Ops Co-ord Offr, HQ BRIGNEPAL
Capt	D P O'Connor	RGR	SO2, J3/5 B Ops Cell, SFSG Army
Capt	Mahendra Phagami	RGR	PI Comd, GCS
Capt	Chandrabadahur Pun	RGR	2IC D Coy, 1 RGR

Capt	Jiwan Pun	RGR	PI Comd, A Coy, 1 RGR
Capt	Badrikumar Rai	RGR	2IC B Coy, 2 RGR
Capt	Bikulman Rai	RGR	PI Comd, A Coy, 2 RGR
Capt	Dillikumar Rai	RGR	PI Comd, GCS
Capt	Maniram Rai	RGR	2IC, GCS
Capt	Milanchandra Rai	RGR	PI Comd, Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick
Capt	Raghubir Rai	RGR	MTO, 2 RGR
A/Maj	Rajkumar Rai	RGR	QM, 2 RGR
Capt	Ramkumar Rai	RGR	PI Comd, B Coy, 2 RGR
Capt	R I Roberts BSc(Hons)	RGR	Ops / Coord, BG Pokhara, Nepal
Capt	Kishorkumar Roka	RGR	UWO, 1 RGR
Capt	R W A Roylance BA(Hons)	RGR	OC Mors, 1 RGR
Capt	C E F Russell	RGR	RSO, 1 RGR
Capt	EV Simpson BA(Hons)	RGR	SO3, CAAT Advicors, HQ ISAF
Capt	Hemkumar Tamang	RGR	RCMO, 2 RGR
Capt	Sureshkumar Thapa	RGR	2IC A Coy, 1 RGR
Capt	Rabindraprakash Tulachan	RGR	2IC, BGP
Lt	B C Burrows	RGR	PI Comd, Sp Coy, 2 RGR
Lt	A C Connolly (QCVS)	RGR	Career Break
Lt	BA Cork	RGR	Sp Coy, OC Recce, 2RGR
Lt	J Devall	RGR	PI Comd, D Coy, 1 RGR
Lt	J J England	RGR	PI Comd, A Coy, 1 RGR
Lt	M W Evans	RGR	OC Recce, 1 RGR
Lt	J R Gartside	RGR	PI Comd, C Coy, 1 RGR
Lt	A Genillard	RGR	PI Comd, A Coy, 2 RGR
Lt	P Lambert	RGR	PI Comd, A Coy, 2 RGR
Lt	T E B Latham	RGR	PI Comd, B Coy, 1 RGR
Lt	J A Lawson	RGR	OC, Bde Training Team
Lt	W A Plumley	RGR	PI Comd, A Coy, 2 RGR
Lt	M B Reardon	RGR	PI Comd, D Coy, 2 RGR
Lt	C J Schroeder	RGR	PI Comd, A Coy, 2 RGR
2Lt	M Addison-Black	RGR	PI Comd, 1 RGR
2Lt	C L J Collins	RGR	PI Comd, B Coy, 1 RGR
2Lt	C F D Diamond	RGR	PCBC, IBS
2Lt	H H Gardner-Clarke	RGR	PI Comd, B Coy, 1 RGR
2Lt	S R Nightingale LLB MA	RGR	PI Comd, C Coy, 1 RGR
2Lt	A Rose BA MA	RGR	Recce PI Comd, D Coy, 1 RGR
2Lt	J K Armstrong	RGR	PI Comd B Coy, 2 RGR

Attached Officers

1 RGR Attached/Seconded Officers

Maj	S Burton	YORKS	OC B Coy
Maj	A Biggs	R Anglian	OC Sp Coy
Maj	B Cooper	SCOTS	QM
Maj	P Corker	AGC(SPS)	RAO
Maj	MB Cameron-Smith	RAMC	RMO
Capt	Manbahadur Gurung	GSPS	Det Comd
Capt	Ramprasad Gurung	FTRS	USEA
Capt	E Darling	AGC(ETS)	Edn Offr
Mr	Bhishmaraj Niraula		Religious Teacher

2 RGR Attached/Seconded Officers

Maj	S C Pengilly	RIFLES	OC Sp Coy
Maj	J D McCallum	SCOTS	OC CSS Coy
Maj	J E D McInally	AGC(SPS)	RAO
Maj	C Trow	RAMC	RMO

Capt Kamansing Rana
Capt D J Thompson
Capt J Vance
Capt E Withey
2Lt S W Jump
Mr Shankarmani Nepal

GSPS Det Comd
AGC(ETS) Edn Offr
REME PI Comd, C Coy
PARA RSO, 2RGR
AAC PC, A Coy (Temp)
Religious Teacher

1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles - 2012 An Overview

2012 began with sad news. Before the year could start properly, and while we were all away on leave, Rfn Sachin Limbu passed away on 2 January 2012. After a Herculean 18-month battle for survival against the odds following his IED injuries sustained on Op HERRICK 12, he finally succumbed to his injuries. His passing at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has been keenly felt by all ranks of the Battalion. He had been a shining example of fortitude and courage in the harshest of conditions, the whole Bn was and remains deeply proud of him.

The Battalion arrived back from Christmas leave with batteries refreshed to begin a new training cycle which would take us all the way through to September 2012; on the metaphorical treadmill towards operational deployment to Afghanistan. After a successful second half of 2011 conducting Hybrid Foundation Training (HFT), which prepared us for conflict anywhere in the world, we switched our attention to Mission Specific Training (MST) on the build up to Op HERRICK 17. The MST process began with a series of briefs, low level commanders' cadres and study days, and ended with a complex multi-Battlegroup exercise set within a Bde context.

The major exercises of MST started in March. Our first run out was Ex PASHTUN HAWK, a Lydd range package run by Capt Rembahadur Ghale. The whole battalion rotated through over the space of seven days conducting six shoots in both day and night focussing on operational specific shooting. The soldiers all had a chance to employ their full range of night sights and laser aimers as well as employ a number of new weapons systems such as the combat shot gun, Sig pistol and the LI29 Sharpshooter rifle. Another new range practice for the Battalion was the use of "simunition"; paint rounds fired from SA80 rifles.

With the soldiers' shooting fully exercised it was now time for the brains of the Bn and Coy HQ staff to be exercised and tested. Ex PASHTUN LION is the MST Command Staff and Tactical Training Exercise (CSTTX). It is very well resourced with IT systems and infrastructure to replicate theatre assets. The staff are not only exercised in their planning ability and the tightness of their Operational Staff work (OSW), but there are also fully functioning Bn & Coy Ops rooms complete with multiple TV screens for ISTAR feeds to test the 'execute' phase. The Battalion took away a lot from this exercise and was proud of the achievement of being told it was the best performance on a CSTTX that CAST(S) had seen. It had also acted as a

real eye opener to the modern procedures, complexities and process of running a Bn or Coy HQ in Afghanistan.

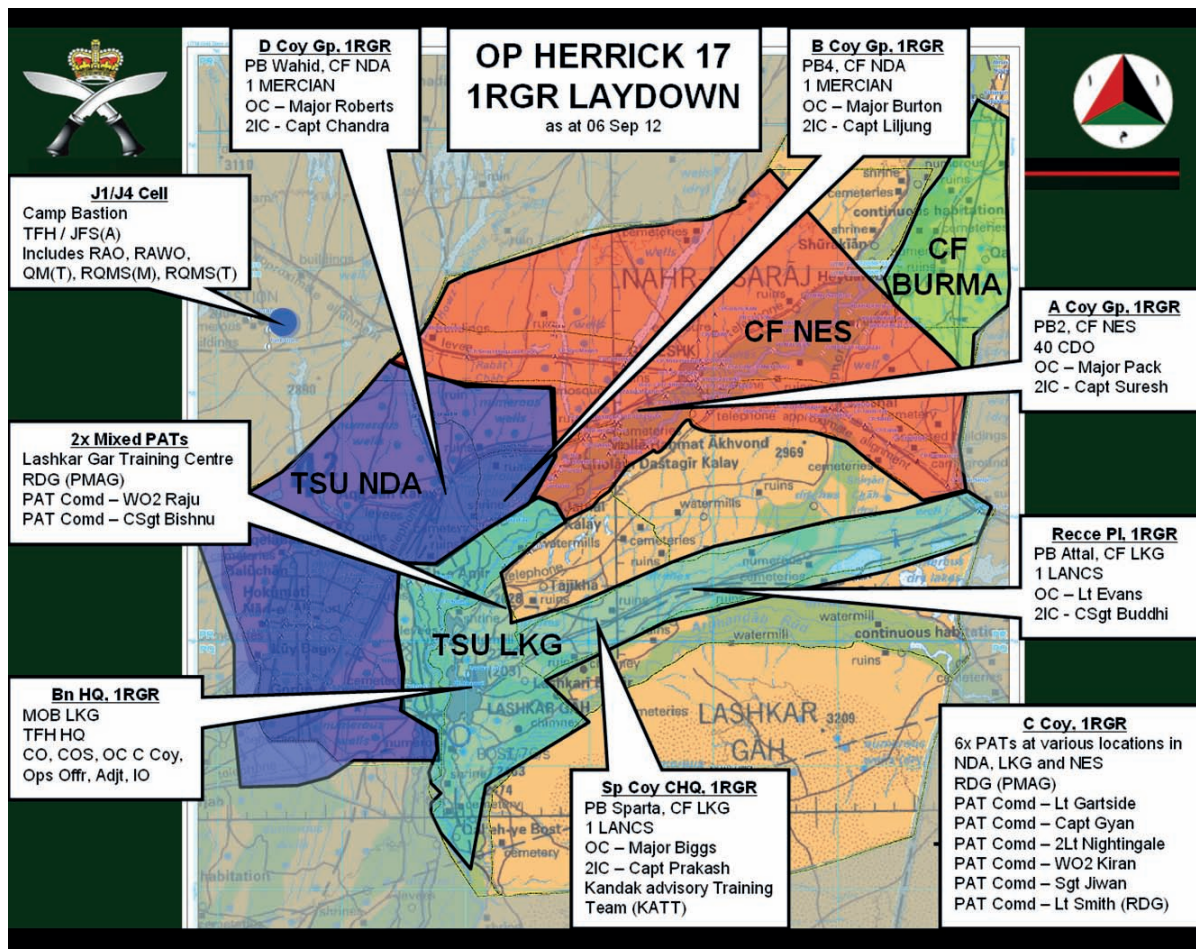
On the second week of Ex PASHTUN LION the Battalion received the news it was dreading. It had been announced that NES (S) and NES (N) AOs were going to merge and therefore there was no longer a need for a 5th Bn HQ for Op HERRICK 17; thus IRGR was to be split across the Task Force for OP HERRICK 17. This was a big blow for the Battalion but as is the Gurkha way, we quickly adapted to the situation, reinforced the remaining units and continued to perform to the very best of our ability.

Of note for Op HERRICK 17 the 4 (Mech) Bde laydown is as follows:

- TSU NDA - 1st Battalion the Mercian Regiment
- TSU LKG - 1st Battalion the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment
- CF NES - 40 Commando RM
- CF BURMA - 1st Battalion the Scots Guards
- PMAG (Afghan Police mentors) - The Royal Dragoon Guards
- BAG (Afghan Army mentors) - 1st Battalion the Royal Regiment of Scotland
- Bde Recce Force - The Queens Royal Lancers and attached Bde troops
- Formation Reconnaissance Sqn - The Queens Royal Lancers
- Warthog Group - The Royal Dragoon Guards

The Companies launched into the remaining MST with a determination to prove they would be the best companies in their adopted Battle Groups. Time and again they have endeavoured to show this. A key determining factor was that the boys' experience on at least two previous HERRICK tours shone through. In fact it was very reassuring to consider that a number of our soldiers are preparing for their third and in a few cases their fourth tour in Helmand!

Some of you may have noted this overview looks suspiciously like a summary of the Collective Training Group Blue Book on MST. At times it did feel like that was all that we lived and breathed. Thankfully we did manage to squeeze in the usual array of Battalion events and competitions to maintain our Kaida and inject a little fun along the way.



In other non-operational lines of work: Back in January, as MST was ramping up, the Battalion conducted its Junior Leadership Cadre (JLC) under the command of Major Charlie Crowe (OC-D). It saw our 2008 intake boys taken through the cadre in a particularly cold and frozen Otterburn training area. The extreme cold weather and rigour of the exercise will no doubt be a topic of conversation for years to come with the survivors definitely earning the right of passage to becoming potential NCOs.

In contrast, on a beautiful day in late April HRH The Prince of Wales visited the Battalion, both on SPTA and in SJMB, and spent time with an array of soldiers and their families. Prince Charles' visit was appreciated by all and he wished us a successful tour of Afghanistan. He has always been a staunch supporter of The RGR and we look forward to welcoming him back as soon as possible.

Over the summer the Battalion found time for the Battalion SAAM (the Roberts Cup) and for the annual sports competition (The Wallace Memorial Trophy). Both were incredibly competitive with the former being won by D Coy and the latter by B Coy. B Coy retained the honour of being Champion Company for another year.

1RGR has traditionally converted its shooting and sporting strength into impressive results in wider competitions and this

year was no exception. With little time for preparation, 1RGR came a respectable third in the Nepal Cup, winning the plate. The Battalion shooting team performed excellently at Bisely, gaining third place in both the Army Operational Shooting Competition and The Methuen Cup with four firers achieving Army 100 status for the first time. Much of the success for this is down to CSgt Bhakta Sherchan our long time champion shot and Capt Prakash Gurung OIC shooting team.

In a far less traditional sphere we had our greatest sporting achievement of the year when Cpl Netra Rana represented Team GB at sitting volleyball in the Paralympics. Cpl Netra lost his left leg in an IED strike on Op HERRICK 7 in 2008. He played brilliantly throughout the tournament as TEAM GB came eighth. He truly deserved being named the Adaptive Sportsman of the Year at the Army Sports Awards last December where he received his award from CGS.

With the Battalion now ready and poised for Final Test Exercise - the last hurdle before HERRICK 17; we are simply making the last minute adjustments and issues of kit and equipment that will take us once again back to Afghanistan.

Jai 1RGR
Unit Correspondent

A Hat-Trick of Herricks - Capt Chandra Pun's memoirs of Afghanistan

By Capt Chandra Pun, 2IC D (Kandahar) Company

Afghanistan is a country at the crossroads between a number of historically important and large empires, including British, Russian, Persian, Indian and Chinese. Mountainous and in many areas largely inaccessible, it has developed its own unique culture without the influence of a central controlling authority. Pride, tradition and religion make for an explosive mix. It shares borders with Pakistan in the south and east, Iran in the west and the Central Asian States of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan in the north. A narrow strip of land in the extreme northeast leads to a short border with China. With an area of 647,500 square kilometres, it is slightly larger than Spain and Portugal combined. Most of Afghanistan is between 600 and 3,050 meters in elevation.

The attack on the World Trade Centre on 11 September 2001 killed 2,823 people from many countries including 67 Britons. The attack by Al Qaeda was the product of several years of planning and was in part co-ordinated from Taliban held areas of Afghanistan where Al Qaeda had established itself. The United States and its allies were left with little choice but to invade Afghanistan, with their intent being to destroy training camps and replace the Taliban regime that was supporting terrorism. The invasion was considered legitimate by the International Community as Al Qaeda had directly attacked the United States.

The US's response was Operation Enduring Freedom, which began on 7 October 2001, with US and British aerial bombing of Taleban positions and known terrorist training camps. This weakened the Taleban, who were then, seemingly, defeated by the Northern Alliance. The US Military subsequently took control of much of the country and began the process of establishing a democratically elected government, starting with the Bonn Agreement in December 2001. Crucially though, the Taleban had not been completely defeated, and as a result the insurgency that we are facing today took hold and began to undermine the democratically elected government that had been installed.

It was this resistance to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) that led to British forces being deployed, with their focus being on prosecuting a counter insurgency campaign in 6 key districts in Helmand Province, namely; Lashkar Gah, Gereshk, Sangin, Musa Qaleh, Now Zad and Garmsir. But in 2009 a coalition force uplift saw the US taking responsibility for the majority of Helmand province including Garmsir.

On Op Herrick 7 (Sep 07 - Apr 08)

'Stay low, move fast was the motto used in Herrick 7'

I deployed to Garmsir in Helmand province as 5 Platoon Commander B (Sari Bair) Company in the ground holding role. Although IRGR deployed as Battle Group, we were attached

to the Household Cavalry Regiment (HCR). We were based in FOB Delhi and manned two check points; JTAC HILL and BALACLAVA. Both Check Points were located at either end of a gravel road which was running from west to east. The gravel road acted as a borderline between the protected community to the North and an area known as "no-mans land" to the south and east. At that time we were able to engage anyone within our arcs under Rules of Engagement 429A, as these areas were used by insurgents only, to attack us or to smuggle arms and explosives into the protected community. It was a dangerous time with little respite from fighting - we even took over the check points from the Coldstream Guards under small arms fire contact. There was a high threat of accurate Small Arms Fire (SAF), IDF attack (107mm), RPG and a very low threat of IEDs during that period. We didn't concentrate on COIN at that time; we mainly focussed on holding ground and defeating a brave and persistent enemy; although we occasionally supported the villagers by building a water pump and distributing warm clothes. Looking into the overall pie chart across the whole AO, Garmsir was the most contacted AO within Helmand province during Herrick 7 with up to 47 contacts occurring every day, with a mixture of SAF and IDF being fired at our locations. Daily life was quite basic; we operated with very limited welfare facilities and without fresh rations. However we used to have messing every 2 days! Although we were only one Coy Group operating in Garmsir, we managed to establish three further new Check Points to the south and east before we conducted our TOA (Transfer of Authority). We used our WMiKs and Pinzgaur's as ambulance vehicles (these were unprotected and open vehicles with a mounted gun on top), had limited amounts of ISTAR equipment and survived by applying basic soldiering skills in an incredibly austere environment.

A number of times IDF and RPG landed inside the FOB, which was only 150 x 150m. We were very lucky that no one was injured as on one occasion 3 x 107mm rockets landed inside. Finally we completed the 6 month tour with only 3 x seriously injured casualties; this could have been far worse and had it not been for the outstanding soldiering skills and endurance of our Rfn, it would have been.

During Herrick 7 I had the honour of serving with Harry Saheb (Prince Harry), when he was appointed as FAC (Forward Air Controller) to control air assets for us. We looked after him very well, and we taught him how to eat curry by using his hands.

Later, B Company 2 RGR deployed in Garmsir during Op Herrick 9. They showed me some photographs of Garmsir bazaar. The gravel road was properly black topped and Garmsir bazaar was crowded and full of people in an area where we used to conduct patrols with live rounds. Our sacrifice and loyal contribution toward Garmsir had clearly had a significant effect on the area; and knowing that I felt some sort of satisfaction.

Op Herrick 12 (May - Nov 10)

'Stay low, move slow' was the motto used in Herrick 12

IRGR Battle Group deployed to the Nar-e-Saraj AO in Helmand province in a ground holding role. As I entered PB3, I was stunned to find that all the soldiers were living in tents. Clearly there was no IDF threat. As A (Delhi) Company 2IC, I took over the Ops room (from where all operations were controlled) from the Grenadier Guards. As the Company started to conduct GDA patrols, we realised there was a high threat of SAF, IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) and suicide bombers. Our ground patrols focused on Biometric Enrolment and ex-spray, link analysis, hearts and minds, and Counter Insurgency (COIN). The ISAF mentoring team started to teach weapon training, medical skills, basic map reading and use of radios to the Afghan National Army and Police. We encouraged them to conduct Vehicle Check-Points, foot patrols and compound searches. Wherever possible we conducted joint planning and preparation prior to conducting joint patrols and operations with the ANSF. We started to encourage them to share our ops room, in contrast to Herrick 7 where ops rooms would have been completely out of bounds to the ANSF. On patrols we encouraged them to take a lead, or at least put an Afghan face on operations. For example, whilst they were conducting compound searches ISAF would be providing flank protection for them. Compared to Herrick 7 it was different in terms of Rules Of Engagement (ROE). Card A for self defence was used throughout the tour due to increased risk of civilian casualties. The IED threat was extremely high and therefore vallons were used on every occasion.

After the first three months off the tour there was a green on blue incident which occurred in PB 3 and resulted in 3 x Killed in action (OC -Maj Bowman, PI Comd- Lt Turkington and Sect comd- Cpl Arjun Purja) and 4 x wounded in action. Immediately after this incident we moved further south west to establish new check points which helped to push bad memories of PB3 out of our minds. Meanwhile, one of the Coys from 1 Lancs took over PB 3.

Initially, we found it was quite hard to establish new Check Points in RAHIM KALAY (it was an area known as an insurgent strong-hold) and check points were constantly hit by Underslung Grenade Launchers, RPGs, SAF and grenade attacks. However, we managed to establish a number of positions in forward locations in order to dominate the ground. Despite the various threats, the ground call signs regularly patrolled in and around the village to protect the community. Gurkhas were known as desert rats in Herrick 12 because we never stopped or moved backwards during contacts, but instead kept pushing towards Insurgents' firing points. This made it difficult for the enemy to withdraw or hide their weapons inside the compounds. Village elders and Local nationals of RAHIM KALAY village praised our hard work prior to our departure from their village.



Prince Harry and Capt Chandra having Dhendo (Gurkha cake) in Garmsir



Capt Chandra in the driving seat

Op Herrick 17 (Sep 12- Apr 13)

'Stay in your PB and don't move' was the motto used in Herrick 17

IRGR personnel were deployed in various locations under different units' command. D (Kandahar) Company deployed to Nad e Ali AO in PB WAHID under I Mercian command within an Afghan Transition Enabling Company (ATEC) role. We took over from I Royal Welsh. PB Wahid was located on the southern side of the NeB canal which runs east to west. Our AO was huge and most of the area was covered by villages which were dominated by ALP and AUP with the NeB canal protected by ISAF and the ANA. Our mission was to support advisory teams, sustain the ANSF in the area and protect the Canal Zone to our south.

We were mainly involved in providing support to advisor teams in terms of manpower, vehicles and taxi-services. Advisory teams were charged with mentoring the AUP, ALP and ANA in their check-points. This was known as the transition phase and involved responsibility of AOs being handed over to the ANSF at a rapid rate. Every week we would conduct joint planning for joint operations by holding security shuras, which would

allow us to create joint ISAF/ANSF patrol matrices. Compared to previous Herricks our framework patrols were significantly reduced and our remit for conducting patrols was limited. Therefore our patrols had to be partnered, or else limited to short range GDA patrols for force protection purposes. Although we were in an ATEC role we conducted a number of Ops with the ANSF into the DASHTE - where the SAF and IED threat was extremely high. On a number of occasions we supported the ANA and AUP directly and indirectly.

The IED and SAF threat was extremely high throughout the tour; however there was limited threat of IDF. More sophisticated ISTAR assets were introduced in Herrick 17 which really helped us to observe IED seeding teams during both day and night. However, due to the more restrictive rules of engagement of this tour we found it was difficult to engage them. This was really frustrating and created a lot of anger in the ops room.

Conclusion

My experiences throughout my three Herrick tours have been different, though ultimately the goal has always been the same. It is satisfying that during Herrick 17 - which is likely to be my final tour, that the ANSF have taken up the reins and are now responsible for security. It demonstrates that the sacrifices and hard work have not been for nothing and that a real difference has been made. Ultimately, the question of whether we have been successful in our mission in Afghanistan will not be answered for many years. It will be the continued development of a strong GIRoA backed by a functioning and confident ANSF delivering a meaningful and prosperous future to a secure population that will serve as evidence of our efforts. We feel proud of our contribution and hope for the best for Afghanistan's future, secure in the knowledge that RGR's reputation is stronger for our endeavours here.

Jai IRGR



Prince Harry and Capt Chandra

2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles - Newsletter

If 2011 was dominated by the deployment to Afghanistan, 2012 was all about a return to soldiering in the Far East; re-familiarising the Gurkha riflemen with the jungle, re-establishing relationships with the Royal Bruneian Armed Forces (RBAF), much needed rebalancing of Battalion talent and the development of a wider regional role for the Brunei Battalion for the post HERRICK era. The year seems to have flown by at a tempo and with a complexity that was rarely matched in Afghanistan – doubtless little different from anywhere else across the Army.

Within Brunei, the environment offers challenging, diverse and attractive soldiering opportunities. There was much to be done to put the Battalion back on an even keel after HERRICK 14. Three intakes of Gurkhas were put through their paces on potential JNCO cadres, still a rite of passage for all in a RGR Battalion. C Coy deployed to New Zealand on Ex PACIFIC KUKRI whilst the remaining Coys maximised their jungle time. Attention was lavished on Sp Coy; rebalanced, refocused and retrained during an extended concentration. The investment seems to have paid dividends and they walked away as Champion Company after a tough but enjoyable competition, which saw a long overdue return of the famous Bukit Teraja jungle 'khud' race.

On the operational side 2RGR welcomed the return of C Coy (GRC 3) to Brunei after a long and successful attachment to 1YORKS which included a demanding Op HERRICK tour. The tragic loss of LCpl Gajbahadur Gurung was a reminder of the sacrifices our men make whilst deployed on active duty.

In March 2012, GOC Sp Comd unveiled the 2RGR Afghanistan Memorial Wall in Toker Lines, dedicated to LCpl Gajbahadur and all those 2RGR personnel who have fallen in Afghanistan.

On the training side, many 2RGR individuals missed career courses last year and thus the Battalion has been playing catch up at Brecon and Warminster for the vast majority of 2012. One unfortunate RTU marred a 100% pass rate from the 29 x NCOs who attended SCBC or PSBC this year. That RTU was offset by a top student award on the Pl Sgts' course, a couple of distinctions and several top third finishes throughout the year. 2RGR aim to better this in 2013 but suspect that there are not many infantry battalions who can match such pass statistics.

The Battalion and Garrison's relationship with the Royal Bruneian Armed Forces (RBAF) is now well established and going from strength to strength. 2 x Rifle Coys were fully integrated into Ex HIKMAT BERSATU at the start of the year - momentum which has been maintained. Voices of experience, school house exchanges, table top exercises, skill-at-arms meetings, staff training, jungle course attendance and capability demonstrations have been reinforced by formalising affiliations and re-energising sporting and social calendars. A joint battle rhythm has been established to update Comd RBAF on a quarterly basis and an annual bilateral exercise programme has been initiated. This continues in early 2013 when a RBLF Coy joins 2RGR for a run out in the jungle. An urban operations training package, assistance with the RBAF PCBC, a RMAS beat up and a LFTT course are also already in the pipeline.



The start of the gruelling Bukit Teraja jungle khud race

As the relevance of the region changes, the Brunei based Gurkha Battalion remains well placed to influence regional partners and support wider policy objectives. We have tried to contribute as and when we can to defence engagement efforts. In addition to regular exercises to Australia and New Zealand, a PI of Gurkhas deployed to New Caledonia on a multinational exercise and a training team deployed to Tonga. Bruneian consent and resources govern just how far and how fast our regional efforts can expand. As has long been the case, the Battalion's most potent weapon of influence remains the Pipes and Drums PI. On top of a busy year in Brunei, they played at the Queen's birthday celebrations at our Embassies in Malaysia and Vietnam. It was after one of these performances that a German diplomat was heard to mutter 'you can't top that.' In Kuala Lumpur, a 2RGR bugler sounded the last post for a RAF bomber crew, lost in the jungle since WW2. Towards the end of 2012 the Pipes and Drums played in Limbang to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Brunei Revolt and the Royal Marines who died in the famous raid. The Battalion has also put our Officers' Mess to good use to host a dinner night for nine international Defence Attachés from across the region.

In competition, 2RGR has been active. We missed the Queen's Medal at Bisley 2012 but were the Major Unit Champions, winning seven individual and a further eight unit trophies. The Battalion designed and delivered the Chindit Trophy - Brunei's inaugural long-range jungle patrols competition. Over a period of ten hard days in deep jungle, C Coy emerged victorious beating the rest of the Battalion, the Garrison and a guest team from the Singapore Police (who finished in a very credible third place). The competition is set to become an annual Brunei event with an expanded guest list of international competitors from 2013 onwards.

On the sporting front, the 2RGR football team finished as runners-up in the Nepal Cup and our endurance racers came in third on Trailwalker (albeit with only three men finishing) - we must tip our hats to our QG Signals cousins who had a stellar year in all events. On the cricket pitch, the Gurkha Lions cricket club formed up and are fast becoming a force to



His Majesty The Sultan of Brunei meeting members of A Company, 2RGR upon completion of Exercise HIKMAT BESATU'

be reckoned with, finishing second to the Singapore Cricket Club at the Jakarta Sixes. Our rugby club, the Flying Kukris has been less successful on the pitch but tours to Singapore, Manila, Kowloon and Bali have made up for the lack of silverware. Perhaps most unexpectedly, 2RGR are now the Army Canoe Water Polo champions. We have some skilled paddlers and will enter two boats in the Devizes to Westminster Race next year. Runner up in the 4XX/ Sp Comd Badminton Championship, a Silver Medal on Cambrian Patrol and £33,000 raised for various charities are other bright notes. The Battalion begins 2013 determined to better this year's results, with several AT expeditions and sporting tours planned and even a staff ride to Burma pencilled into our forecast before we return to Folkestone in the summer.

Encouraging more Gurkhas to attempt and pass SF selection is another target we have set ourselves. For 2013, we have 11 individuals who are keen to put themselves forward. We are taking a much more deliberate approach to their preparation than we necessarily have in the past;



Regional Defence Advisors at the Garrison Officers' Mess



Army Major Unit Shooting Champion - 2RGR



The Champion Company swimming gala

exploiting our proximity to the jungle and focusing on English language skills. We are keenly aware of the long-term strategic benefits of increasing the proportion of Gurkhas serving within our special forces.

Redundancy is the one obvious shadow that continues to hang over 2RGR and the wider Brigade of Gurkhas. Lessons learnt from the first round prompted the establishment of a Redundancy Steering Group and the implementation of a Transition Passport. Both these initiatives have eased the process for our Tranche 2 personnel, both back to UK from Brunei and onwards towards civilian life. Nevertheless, as Army 2020 unfolds and the Battalion reacts to the need to reduce significantly in size, the future appears bright for the Gurkha Battalions in Brunei. A return to contingency operations; a task for which troops stationed in Brunei are ideally suited and strategically well-placed, presents many exciting and varied opportunities for Gurkha soldiers in this region. These opportunities are being actively explored and we expect Brunei to feature more prominently on the radar as the opportunities for retaining the commitment of our people are realised. Underpinning all of this is the relationship with our Bruneian hosts; our hosts and allies. Today that relationship is at hitherto unseen levels of coordination and cooperation. The bedrock of that bond centres upon the operational currency and capacity of an RGR Battalion, which for 2RGR's part, means a Battalion that has deployed on operations on eight occasions in the past 12 years. The presence of a current, competent and capable Gurkha force in Brunei remains highly valued by our hosts. An article by the CO highlights the opportunities that such a relationship presents the Gurkhas and the British Army as a whole.

On the personnel side 2RGR has experienced a year of great churn in the plots - notably as a result of the HERRICK deployment. We have bade farewell to Maj Keith Page RWF (OC A Coy), Maj Jonnie Williamson SCOTS DG (OC B Coy) and Maj Mike Hosegood RIFLES (OC Sp Coy) - all of whom in one guise or another posted to Shrivenham. Maj Tom Pike (OC C Coy) departed to HQBG, whilst the RMO Lt Col Tredget RAMC was posted to the UK and Maj (now Lt Col) Garry Blewitt (QM) departed on promotion to Nepal. Maj Dave Lee PARA (OC CSS

Coy) departed to 3 PARA to become OC HQ Coy. Our Gurkha Officers have also moved onwards or retired. Maj Yamabahadur Rana MVO left the Battalion after two stellar years as Gurkha Major - his departure to Sandhurst was marked in traditional fashion on a memorable day in Brunei. Capt's Yubraj Gurung, Gajendra Dewan and Kulbahadur Gurung have also departed - as service leavers we wish them the very best for the future.

The Battalion has therefore warmly welcomed a raft of new and returning Officers. A welcome to Maj's Chris Conroy, Grenville Chaganis, Tony Hellier, Steve Pengilly RIFLES, Danny McCallum SCOTS and Chris Trow RAMC and their families. Maj Dammer Shahi took the reigns as Gurkha Major early in the year.

On a more sombre note, the Battalion suffered the loss of Rfn Aman Gurung, who died suddenly in Tuger Lines. A young man who had much ahead of him his loss was keenly felt by his comrades in A Coy and the Battalion as a whole. We will remember him.

The last 12 months have not been without their challenges but 2012 has been an overwhelmingly bright, positive and upbeat year. Morale remains high and the Battalion looks forward with great confidence to a move to the UK in the Summer and a placement on the operational roster in due course.



Bilateral engagement with the Royal Brunei Land Forces

Gurkhas in The Kingdom of Tonga 'Ex Khukuri Laka Atu'

A combined training team from The 2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles (2 RGR) and The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) conducted a two week training course in The Kingdom of Tonga. The instructors consisted of a Platoon Commander and 3 Sergeants from 2 RGR and a WO2 and a Physical Training Instructor (PTI) from the NZDF. The two week course ran from the 19 - 30 November 2012 and was held in Taliai Military Camp. It aimed at teaching instructional techniques to NCOs in the Tongan Defence Service (TDS). The 12 students selected to attend the course were a mixture of Junior and Senior NCOs. They came from across all three branches of the TDS. With the TDS aiming to increase the number of courses it runs in Tonga, the need for instructors is greater than ever. Lt Colonel K. Fakalolo who commands the Training Wing of the TDS confirmed, 'We are grateful that 2 RGR and the NZDF have come to Tonga to work with our NCOs. Over the coming year the Training Wing is hoping to increase the number of training courses run in the country. Exercise Khukuri Laka Atu will provide the emphasis for us to do so.'

Given the Tongan contribution to ISAF in Afghanistan, Exercise Khukuri Laka Atu was a good opportunity for Britain to improve the already positive relationship that exists between London and Nuku' Alofa. A Tongan platoon is currently guarding Camp Bastion, and the TDS is on its fourth rotation. With an entire population of only 100,000 Tonga provides the highest ratio of soldiers to ISAF than any other nation. In addition to consolidating relations between Britain and Tonga, the exercise was an opportunity for British soldiers to once again work alongside their New Zealand counterparts. A RGR company group deploys annually on Exercise Pacific Khukuri in New Zealand. The varied terrain of New Zealand's South Island provides a valuable training alternative to the jungle within which the Brunei based Gurkha Battalion usually operates.

The name of the exercise was chosen by the British Defence Attaché to New Zealand, Lt Col Tim Woodman. The Khukuri knife symbolises almost 200 years of loyal Gurkha service to Britain. 'Laka Atu' in Tongan loosely translates as 'moving forward'. As the name of the exercise suggests, the

progression made by the students was considerable. For a few it was revision of instructional techniques which they had already been taught. However, for most the course syllabus was new material. The course started with short presentations given by the students about various aspects of Tongan culture. The presentations allowed students to talk confidently about topics with which they were already familiar, before moving onto more complicated military material. In addition it allowed the instructors to get an early insight into Tongan culture.

From the outset the similarities between Nepali and Tongan culture were evident, with family structure forming the backbone of both societies. At the end of the two weeks the students underwent a final summative assessment. They produced and delivered a complete lesson plan as they would have to do with a classroom of new recruits. The lessons delivered focused upon field craft and first aid, with the topics ranging from the duties of a sentry to the recovery position. Given the initial difficulties which the students had had on day one, the final standard was hugely impressive. The efforts of the students were awarded by a graduation ceremony and buffet style lunch during which gifts were exchanged between all three nations involved. Cpl Siale TDS, as the most improved student on the course, was particularly pleased, 'Exercise Khukuri Laka Atu has given me more confidence as an instructor. I am very grateful for the efforts of the Gurkha and New Zealand instructors. Thank you'.

The success of the exercise did not go unnoticed as in the previous week, the British Minister of Armed Forces, The Rt. Hon Andrew Robathan visited Tonga. On the same day in which he presented medals to Tongan servicemen and women recently returned from Afghanistan, he was given presentations on the 'Kava Drinking Ceremony' by the students, as well as being informed of 2RGR's recent role in Herrick 14. Exercise Khukuri Laka Atu was a great success and enjoyed by all involved. With a batch of recruits joining in the coming months, the TDS will not lack the instructors ready for the challenge of conducting basic training. Lt W. Plumley 2 RGR at the close of the exercise said, 'We are grateful to have had the opportunity to work alongside the TDS and NZDF. We have learnt a great deal in the process and have made some good friends'.



Course Photograph taken in front of the statue of His Majesty King George Tupou V, who commissioned from The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst



Initial presentations were given by the students on Tongan Culture 'Making a Basket from Coconut Leaves', Cpl Salt, TDS

2 RGR wins Army Operational Shooting Competition 2012

By Cpl Sanjib Rai

Shooting competitions in the British Army were introduced back in 1874. The Army Rifle Association (ARA) runs the British Army's premier shooting event annually at Bisley ranges. The weight we carry and the battle scenarios that are imposed onto the matches make this competition physically and mentally challenging and demanding. The aim of this competition is not only to declare the champion unit and top 100 individuals but also to encourage and promote interest in small arms shooting for service purposes, which leads to increased efficiency in the battlefield.

This year 52 teams from across the British Army took part in the competition and 2 RGR has been crowned as the champion unit by winning most of the infantry unit trophies. 2 RGR has won 16 trophies in total which included inter unit Pistol match, inter unit combat Rifle match, inter unit infantry championship, inter Unit championship and many others. The 2 RGR team comprised Corporal Sanjib Rai, Rifleman Jeevan Limbu, Rifleman Subash Rai and Rifleman Hemanta Rai. These firers have also won many individual trophies by becoming the top shot in different matches. They have secured 10th, 9th, 5th and 11th position in the top 100 respectively. Rifleman Subash

Rai was the Class B champion, top shot amongst the firers who are under five years in service, and Tyro winner which means the top shot amongst the firers who were taking part in the competition for the first time.

As it was an overseas exercise, unit management and administration was not as easy for us as it was for the UK based units. However, under the command of Captain Tubendra Limbu, OIC shooting team 2 RGR, and Sgt Naresh Gurung, assistant OIC, the team managed to have 18 days training in the UK prior to the competition. We would like to thank our sister unit, 1 RGR, for providing us with resources during training and competition. We would also like to thank our Chain of Command for the help and support they provided us directly and indirectly.

Everyone knows how important it is for a soldier to be able to shoot accurately. This year, once again, we have proved that 2 RGR is the best unit in the British Army at skill at arms and we are proud to be a part of achieving this.

Jai 2 RGR

An Attachment to 2 RGR by a young Professionally Qualified Officer

By Capt John Naughton (Army Legal Services)

Arriving in Brunei the humidity is such that breathing requires conscious, deliberate effort. A period of acclimatisation would probably have been a good idea...

The Beginning

I had been carefully attached to 'C (Tamandu) Company' of 2RGR. My main effort was to launch myself with cannonball efficiency into the tasks and challenges that waited. Despite these early ambitions however, by the end of the first week I still closely resembled a collapsed beetroot following the daily 0630 PT sessions; falling into the sea after a beach run chasing behind a company of Gurkhas who regarded me with barely concealed curiosity; a tangled mess of arms and legs floundering in the waves. Drastic action was required.

The next week 'A Company' were deploying into the jungle for a five day exercise. Upon their return 'C Company' were leaving on their own two day long jaunt. Armed with the knowledge that the first group were short of numbers, I volunteered for both exercises. I would be a rifleman in a section of Gurkhas, a jungle warrior. I was confident that my intense ten week training at Sandhurst and eight words of Nepali would stand me in good stead.

All the joyous activities from Sandhurst that I had believed firmly left behind returned with a vengeance; applying powder to feet, scrubbing mess tins and instant fatigue induced sleep that colourfully collided with my duties on stag. Somewhere in the dense vegetation the enemy was waiting. Mission verb: 'Survive'.

The jungle in Brunei is unnecessarily aggressive. Each vine that initially seems perfectly crafted to aid balance on obstructive river crossings had virtually imperceptible inch long spikes waiting to bite into the palm of my hand. Eager ants and leeches drop from trees.

I had romantic images of Gurkhas using kukris to clear great swathes. Instead we wait for the jungle to pull at our shoulders and entangle itself around our Bergen before using garden clippers to snip ourselves free. The swamps plunge dramatically in depth with each pace forward. Spluttering in foul water there was finally a reason why each sock was individually wrapped. At the end of the first day, clattering around in the dark assembling my hammock I succeeded in trapping an inquisitive family of mosquitos. As per SOPs, I poisoned them with cigarette smoke and woke the next morning to find only 986 bites.

Brunei

When I received news of my posting, I would have been able to locate Brunei on a map. I knew little however of the country itself. Brunei is a sea of identikit housing. It is wealthy and the vast oil reserves afford the Sultan the opportunity to provide free education and healthcare for citizens who also enjoy tax-free salaries and occasionally benefit from interest free loans. A swinging helicopter ride from one end of the country to the other revealed three principal roads that push between broccoli formation vegetation running inland from the coast. After hiring a white Mitsubishi Lancer, I rejoiced in driving along these routes, BFBS radio blaring from the windows.

Alcohol was only available on camp or in the homes of expatriates, most of them working in the oil industry. The Malaysian city of Miri however is two hours away and delights as the poor man's Blackpool Beach of Borneo Island. A useful weekend trip when a reinvigorating dose of light debauchery was required.

The Sultan's Birthday

I attended the Sultan's birthday as part of the 2RGR contingent. We travelled in a cramped minibus of assorted mess kit and polished No 6 dress. Several days had been reserved for different sectors of civil society to join in the enthusiastic celebrations. 2RGR formed part of the "uniformed brigades". We were a 5,000 strong army of military personnel, fire fighting teams, boy scouts and girl guides. In a sea of light coloured tropical uniforms, I proudly displayed the woollen, scarlet mess kit of the mighty Adjutant General's Corps. Clearly impressed by this fine couture, my reward was to be harassed and harried by girl guides and other junior civic groups each of whom wanted an individual photo with this burning vision of embarrassed audacity.

Not everybody asked permission to take my picture and I saw at least one young lady skipping beyond my reach with images of an Army Legal Service Officer's red and blue encased posterior still showing on the iPhone that she clutched in her hand. Leaving the table was now dangerous and whilst the Gurkhas laughed uproariously as my cheeks slowly blended to match the colour of my jacket, so onerous and in demand were my new found responsibilities that I believe that I may have missed a course or two in what was otherwise a delicious meal.

Sport

I engaged to varying degrees of success with a number of sports teams in Brunei. My surprise at being asked to participate in a forthcoming tug-of-war was alleviated somewhat when it was explained that the team simply needed somebody light in order not to exceed a weight limit imposed by the organisers of the competition. The team's collective disappointment at being knocked out in the first round was compounded by the

fact that our opponents were a team of Dutch Shell employees who added insult to injury by wearing orange skirts to match our own MTPs.

Despite my misguided efforts as a roving right back, the 2RGR Officers' Mess football team had better luck against the Sergeants' Mess in the 2RGR sports day / 18th anniversary celebrations. Blood, sweat and tears were shed on the pitch and were rewarded with a penalty shoot-out victory after extra time. We were aided by the fact that our pre-match pint of Port was actually Ribena whilst the Sergeants and senior NCOs, not suspecting our subterfuge, manfully downed their own beverages.

After lashings of Gurkha curry, an evening visit to the Sergeants' Mess followed where the officers were soundly punished for our sporting success and temerity. I put in a manful performance in the arm wrestling competition but was destroyed in the "cockfight", a Nepalese game that involves hopping on one leg and using your shoulders to knock your opponent off balance. The winner is the best of three bouts and on one occasion I confess to having lost balance before the onrushing NCO had even reached my position. Bruised body met bruised pride.

The Officers' Mess

The Mess in Brunei is a shimmering Aladdin's cave that reflects the collective wealth of 2RGRs antecedent regiments. Amongst the silverware is an ornate kukri that was presented in 1909 to General Viscount Kitchener before being returned 50 years later by his great-nephew. Numerous paintings depicting the Gurkhas' illustrious past cast a glorious shadow over evening meals. Dinner nights were concluded with snuff passed around inside a silver elephant. Cigar smoke circled the dining hall and the pipes and drums ensemble meant that history and tradition quite literally reverberated from the walls. Drinks were served into gleaming flagons that had been presented to the Mess by officers past, each with a name and date inscribed on the side. My favourite item amongst these treasures is a clip of pouch ammunition used by a rifleman in a skirmish against Chinese communists in 1949. The centre two bullets are crushed and deformed, struck by an enemy round that is still lodged in their centre. An ironic statement to amuse, entertain or provoke serious contemplation. It sits on the right hand wall next to the bar.

Sumer Ball 2012

With such lavish surroundings the detail that went into the preparations for the annual summer ball reached dizzying heights. The theme was 'Pioneers and Frontiers'. A saloon bar, jungle passageway and beach dance floor melted into the tropical surroundings. An Afghan fort manned by a section of snarling Gurkhas greeted startled guests who were chased into the entrance by fire teams equipped with ancient muskets, traditional dress and enthusiastic flash bangs.

My own spaceman costume was soundly usurped by a chap who with seconds left before the party began, cut himself into a cardboard box and somehow became a makeshift rocket. His ingenious arts and crafts skills were failed only by his inability to sit down at dinner or indeed reach his mouth in order eat at all. As we observed him swerve between guests with an elongated straw linking his drink to his boxed mouth, we were all left to ponder the utility of thinking to the finish.

The End

Throughout my attachment with 2RGR, I performed with ease the duties expected of any new officer joining a regiment following their initial training. I diligently braced-up and saluted anything that moved: men, women, and small children; some animals. I stumbled around the parade square and unwittingly carried bags in my right hand, causing me to fall on a number of occasions when returning unexpected compliments from overzealous riflemen.

Once I even succeeded in driving past the RSM, sans beret with both windows down, music reaching out from the speakers of a borrowed car. I smiled cheerfully and raised my hand in greeting. I was past him before I realised my mistake. He gawped after me in shock and awe, too furious to immediately react. Rooted to the spot. A pressed volcano with polished toecaps, waiting to implode.

I have chosen just a few select memories from a glorious three months, my attempt to illustrate the scrapes and misadventure in which I was found. I had understood from the start why ALS wanted to send its new officers to gain experience in an infantry battalion. I understood how I could learn and hopefully develop as a result of the attachment. I was however initially perplexed as to why 2RGR would want to willingly subject themselves to this stumbling mass of confused inefficiency. The answer, I suspect, is that they realised that no matter what my own failings may have been I would act as a conduit.

It would have been impossible not to be impressed by the Gurkha soldiers. In the end I will guard their example and add my own small stories to the many others that circulate about these fine individuals and their role in the British Army:

“Once more I hear the laughter with which you greeted every hardship. Once more I see you in your bivouacs or about your campfires, on forced march or in the trenches, now shivering with wet and cold, now scorched by a pitiless and burning sun. Uncomplaining you endure hunger and thirst and wounds; and at the last your unwavering lines disappear into the smoke and wrath of battle. Bravest of the brave, most generous of the generous...”

From the foreword to A Comparative and Etymological Dictionary of the Nepali Language by R.L Turner.

Jai 2 RGR!



The Queen's Gurkha Engineers

History

Formed by the Royal Warrant as the Gurkha Engineers, part of the Brigade of Gurkhas, on 28 September 1955. On 21 April 1977 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II approved the title of the Queen's Gurkha Engineers.

67 Gurkha Field Squadron Royal Engineers raised at Kluang, Malaya in October 1948. Re-designated 67 Independent Gurkha Field Squadron in September 1994. Disbanded on 31 December 1996 in Hong Kong.

68 Field Squadron RE raised at Kluang, Malaysia in August 1950. Disbanded on 18 December 1993 in Hong Kong.

69 Gurkha Field Squadron raised at Sungei Besi, Malaya on 1 April 1961. Disbanded in Hong Kong on 17 August 1968.

69 Gurkha Independent Field Squadron reformed on 1 March 1981 in Hong Kong and moved to Kitchener Barracks, Chatham later that month. Re-designated 69 Gurkha Field Squadron and incorporated into 36 Engineer Regiment on 1 April 1993. Moved to Invicta Park Barracks, Maidstone 13 September 1994.

70 Gurkha Field Park Squadron raised at Sungei Besi, Malaya on 1 April 1960. Disbanded in Singapore on 31 July 1971.

On 6 August 1982, Support Squadron re-designated 70 Support Squadron. Disbanded on 18 December 1993 in Hong Kong. 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron was reformed and became part of 36 Engineer Regiment with effect from April 2000.

Both 69 and 70 Gurkha Field Squadrons re-rolled to Search Squadrons in February 2011.

Staff List

Regimental Headquarters The Queen's Gurkha Engineers

69 Gurkha Field Squadron (Search) QGE

70 Gurkha Field Squadron (Search) QGE

Affiliated Corps

The Corps of Royal Engineers

Regimental Marches

Pipes Far o'er the Sea

Band Wings

Affiliated Colonel in Chief

Her Majesty the Queen

Colonel of the Regiment

Lt Gen Sir D R Bill KCB

Officers of the Regiment (as at December 2011) RHQ QGE

Lt Col EG Robinson

Commandant

Maj Ekbahadur Gurung

Gurkha Major

Capt LJ Parkinson
Capt Bishnubahadur Ghale

Adjutant
GRCMO

Field Officers

Maj AA Gooch
Maj MAS Baker
Maj Yogprasad Thapa
Maj Rajen Gurung
Maj Devkumar Gurung MVO

OC 69 Gurkha Field Squadron (Search)
OC 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron (Search)
HQ Sp Offr, 63 Works Group RE
Ech Comd 70 Gurkha Field Squadron (Search)
SO2G7, 170 (Infrastructure Support) Engineer Group

Captains

Capt EJDeM Thompson
Capt H Crosby
Capt BJ Marsh
Capt SA Mayland
Capt Tarabahadur Pun
Capt Mohankumar Tamang
Capt Meenjang Gurung
Capt Yambahadur Pun
Capt Ashokkumar Gurung
Capt Mohan Gurung
Capt Dirgha KC
Capt Buddhibahadur Bhandari
Capt Bishwabahadur Rai
Capt Kamalbahadur Khapung Limbu
Capt Purnasingh Tamang
Capt Ganeshprasad Gurung

Subalterns

Lt DW Luttig
Lt DC Snook
Lt MJC Romaniuk
Lt HMG Bailey
Lt C Marris
Lt D Waddington
Lt H Engelbrecht

Commandant's Newsletter

By Lieutenant Colonel E G Robinson

My first year as Commandant The Queen's Gurkha Engineers (QGE) has been at a frenetic pace. I arrived at the end of 2011, having completed the Nepali Survival Language Course in Nepal as this was my first assignment with the Brigade of Gurkhas; such a privilege. Since 2011, Gurkha Sappers have deployed on Operations HERRICK 14, 16, 17 and 18. A primary focus for the Regiment in 2012 has been supporting the preparation for and then deployment on Operation HERRICK 17. Concurrent to this The QGE has provided a considerable level of support to Operation OLYMPICS. This was all successfully delivered against a backdrop of uncertainty due to redundancy and the long awaited, now public, Army 2020 announcement.

Ahead of the Regimental deployment, the Gurkha Mechanized Troop in 33 Armoured Engineer Squadron, 26 Engineer Regiment, deployed on a very successful Operation HERRICK 16 from April - September 2012. The QGE's road to Operation HERRICK 17 was intense; 69 Gurkha Field Squadron (Search) and elements of Regimental Headquarters, including myself, deployed. We led the Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Search Task Force from October 2012 - March 2013. In preparation, we deployed to Jordan for Exercise PASTHUN LINKS 4, as a part of our Mission Specific Training and a myriad of exercises in the UK; separately, but continuing with the Afghanistan theme,

70 Gurkha Field Squadron (Search) deployed on Exercise PASHTUN LINKS 5 in Jordan during autumn 2012. They provided the Real Life Support Squadron for the 700 hundred or so personnel deployed to prepare those deploying on Operation HERRICK 18. In the UK, 70 Gurkha Field Squadron (Search) led the Regimental Potential Non Commissioned Officer Cadre and were hugely successful in facilitating and making up much of the Regimental team that brought home much silver from the Corps Operational Shooting Competition. Their efforts ensured the Regiment was the Corps of Royal Engineers champions for another year. They also provided The QGE focus in 2012 for the Nepal Cup at Sandhurst and TRAILWALKER. During the summer months, the vast majority of 70 Gurkha Field Squadron (Search) deployed on Operation OLYMPICS to provide a Venue Security Force. I particularly enjoyed catching glimpses of members of our Regiment on national television and in the broadsheets throughout the period. 70 Gurkha Field Squadron (Search) has also provided an Advanced Search Troop at Very High Readiness for 12 months since spring 2012.

The outcome of Army 2020 for The QGE has been very fortunate and its funded size will remain largely unchanged. However, The QGE has enjoyed a manning surplus in recent years and this is now being trimmed back to establishment. Having joined The QGE post Tranche 1 Redundancy announcements and with Tranche 2 looming, the atmosphere was uneasy. We worked hard to intelligently inform The QGE's future manning models. These were well refined, briefed and subsequently well understood at the highest levels. Thankfully, this contributed to ensure that only those absolutely necessary will be made redundant in Tranche 2 and the same approach has informed Tranche 3. With a final Tranche 4 of redundancies anticipated in 2014/15 we expect to see The QGE's manning settle close to 300 all ranks. I am very pleased with the dignity with which soldiers and officers have tackled this period of uncertainty. With the continued support we receive from ex-members of The QGE and wider Brigade of Gurkhas, supporting those unfortunate to be selected for redundancy and their transition to civilian life remains a very high priority.

To unlock promotion deadlock, stemming from the extension of Gurkha service from 16 to 22 years and to reduce redundancy targets, a good number of The QGE have accepted transfers to the Corps of Royal Engineers over the past year on promotion. I appreciate how difficult a move this is and am very grateful for those bold enough to take such a courageous step. Each transferee is an advert of the outstanding talent within The QGE, to the wider Corps of Royal Engineers and Army. We will never forget them and they will always be most welcome; once a Gurkha Sapper, you are forever. It is an individual achievement and identity that can not be bought, nor taken away.

The future for The QGE is now clear, in synch with the plan for the Corps of Royal Engineers and 36 Engineer Regiment (Search) which provides Regimental Headquarters The QGE and includes 69 and 70 Gurkha Field Squadrons (Search). Many will be aware of the 36 Engineer Regiment re-role to Advanced Search in 2011 for operations in Afghanistan. The Regiment, with The QGE, has recently received orders to re-role to Force Support over the course of 2013-14. The Gurkha Troops at 24 (Commando) Engineer Regiment and 26 Engineer Regiment are now returning to the home of The QGE, at Maidstone. These outposts were only possible from the surplus manpower that The QGE had enjoyed. Both 69 and 70 Gurkha Field Squadrons (Search) will re-role to Force Support over the coming year and lose the suffix 'Search'. I know the Gurkha Sappers' flexibility, legendary work ethic, pride and professionalism will make them even stronger at the conclusion of this restructuring.

It is an honour and privilege to command The QGE at such a pivotal time in its history. The Regiment faces a myriad of changes which have presented many difficulties. With careful and thoughtful management, a forward leaning attitude and a very considerable depth of talent, I know we shall succeed. The QGE's standards - on operations in Afghanistan, at the Excel Centre in London during the Olympics, or in the middle of the Jordanian desert on exercise - remain extremely high. The Regiment is rich in spirit, culture and importantly, a most sacred Kaida. The close knit family ethos that permeates through every event rivals anything I have seen throughout my 20 years of military service. I am extremely proud to be a part of it, as Commandant The QGE, and wholeheartedly appreciate the unique responsibility of such custodianship.

Hamiharu baliyo rahanechhaun; Jai QGE!



**Standing (L to R): WO2 Arjankumar Rai GSA , Mr Premprasad Gaire Pundit, Capt Bishnubhadur Ghale GRCMO
Sitting (L to R): Capt L J Parkinson Adjt, Maj Ekbahadur Gurung GM, Lt Col E G Robinson Comdt QGE, WO1 (RSM) R J Davies, Maj M A S Baker Deputy Comdt**

69 Field Squadron (Search)

The newsletter for 69 Field Squadron (Search) which deployed on Op HERRICK 17, can be found in the Operations Section of the Kukri Journal.

70 Gurkha Field Squadron (Search)

2013 will be another year of change. Having settled into role as a High Assurance Search (HAS) Squadron over the past year, 70 Gurkha Field Squadron (Search) now looks forward to re-rolling into the Force Support role next year. Added to this will be the honour of becoming a Field Squadron for the first time in the Squadron's short but tumultuous history. In light of this the Squadron has been involved in an array of activities hailing from both roles in order to maintain its current role, but 'keeping an eye in' for the future.

The Squadron's main operational role this year has been to maintain HAS teams at five days notice to move in support of both the Airborne Task Force (ABTF) from 16 Air Assault Brigade and the Lead Commando Group (LCG) from 3 Commando Brigade. The Squadron has been well suited to support these elite units having sufficient Commando trained personnel to form a Troop from within our ranks. The support to these Very High Readiness Organisations has so far been restricted to training, culminating in Ex JOINT WARRIOR, the largest Joint exercise on British soil this year.

Also in April, the bulk of the Squadron deployed in a more familiar role, to run and support the Royal Engineers Corps Operational Shooting Concentration (CORPSOSC). Whilst providing the real life support, Sgt Hemraj Gurung led the 36 Engr Regt (Search) Shooting Team to sweep up the 16 trophies including those of Champion Unit, Champion Young Soldier (Spr Nabin Pun) and Overall Top Shot (LCpl Kumar Pun).

Looking back on 2012 the most important event of the year, in addition to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, for the nation has certainly been The Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Squadron played a vital role in ensuring the success of the Games with 56 personnel, supported by other members of the Regiment, performing in three key roles: The first saw SSgt Krishna Pun and Cpl Raju Sunuwar working in the HAS role alongside 50 Field Squadron (Search) as part of the "Flying Columns"; Search Teams based out of Central London, at an hour's notice to move providing a HAS capability to any incident. Second saw SSgt Raju Pun and a team of seven operating as medal ceremony flag raisers. In this role they showcased the Brigade of Gurkhas in the full glare of the international media at every major venue in the Games. Most notable was when they raised the Union Flag for both Bradley Wiggins and Chris Froome on the completion of the Men's Road Cycle Time Trial. This footage has already been recycled by the BBC a number of times, most notably at the Sports Personality of the Year 2012! Finally, the majority of the Squadron helped to provide



Dry practice of Cbt Shooting positions



During Para cup match

security at the ExCel Centre in London's Docklands, which played host to a multitude of indoor sports. Over 150,000 spectators passed through the doors of the Centre during the Games all ably kept safe by The QGE.

The Venue itself consisted of two 600 x 100 metre halls, subdivided in to six to eight sports arenas for both the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The sports hosted at the ExCel Centre varied from Weightlifting to Women's Boxing, during the Olympic Games, and Sitting Volleyball to Boccia during the Paralympic Games. The boys were largely employed as the Perimeter Security Force, responsible for ensuring that all vehicles, personnel and consignment were appropriately screened prior to entering the venue throughout day and night. The majority of their time was spent managing entry points and key areas on the perimeter. The need for the military to back fill the short fall of personnel provided by the security contractor G4S made headline news in the build-up to the Games. 70 Squadron deployed at the ExCel Centre found working with



Receiving RE Unit champion trophy

G4S worked well; partnered with service personnel and with some basic instruction in leadership and command and control from the Squadron's SNCOs, the combination produced really good results. Working long hours took its toll, but there were some benefits: free London travel allowed the boys to visit London on a regular basis; free tickets for key events such as the opening ceremony were given to a lucky few, and the guys were regularly invited to watch the sports taking place at the Excel Centre.

Over a seven week period in November and December, under the command of Major Rajen Gurung, 70 Squadron's Echelon Commander, the majority of the Squadron deployed to Jordan to provide real life support for Exercise PASHTUN LINKS 5, the pre-deployment training and testing for the EOD and Search Task Force. Arriving by air in the historic Red Sea port of Aqabar our boys were responsible for the support of the entire exercise half way around the world on an entirely bare site in the Jordanian desert - what better training for Force Support can there be!



Queen's Gurkha Signals

Two Kukris point upwards, the handles crossed in saltire, the cutting edges of the blades inwards, between the blades the figure of Mercury on a globe, the latter supported above by a scroll bearing the motto "Certa Cito" and below by nine laurel leaves, the whole surmounted by Saint Edward's Crown.

Raised in Kuala Lumpur in 1948, by Maj A C Cox Royal Signals, from Gurkha soldiers of each of the eight battalions of the then new Brigade of Gurkhas. They, together with re-enlisted ex-servicemen of the Indian Army, British officers and soldiers of the Royal Signals, formed the Gurkha Signals Training and Holding Wing in early 1949.

The first elements were designated "Royal Signals Gurkha". In 1952 this was changed to "Gurkha Royal Signals". The present badge was granted on 23 September 1954, which date is now the official Regimental Birthday. The regimental title became "Gurkha Signals" in 1955 and on 21 April 1977, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II approved the title "Queen's Gurkha Signals". On 16 May 1983 Queens Gurkha Signals restructured to a Regimental organization.

QG Signals Recent Operations

Iraq/Kuwait	OP GRANBY	-	January 1991
Turkey	OP RESINATE NORTH	-	May 1991 - April 2003
Balkans (Bosnia/Croatia)	OP GRAPPLE/RESOLUTE/PALATINE	-	April 1992 - April 2004
Saudi Arabia	OP JURAL	-	August 1992 - February 2003
Rwanda	OP GABRIEL	-	October 1994
Congo/Brazzaville	OP DETERMINANT	-	March - April 1997
Kuwait	OP RESINATE SOUTH	-	November 1997 - February 2003
East Timor	OP LANGAR	-	October - December 1999
Macedonia/Kosovo	OP AGRICOLA	-	March 1999 - 2002
Sierra Leone	OP BASILICAS/SILKMAN	-	June 2000 - August 2002
USA	OP VERITAS	-	October 2001 - Ongoing
Ivory Coast	OP ORACLE	-	2002
Afghanistan	OP SAPPHIRE/FINGLE	-	February - September 2002
UK	OP FLAK	-	April 2003
UK	OP MEDWAY/BASILISK	-	2000 - 2005
Iraq/Kuwait/Qatar	OP TELIC/GRIMES	-	March 2003 - August 2009
Kosovo	OP MERCIAN	-	March - April 2004
Afghanistan	OP HERRICK	-	October 2004 - May 2005
Lebanon/Cyprus	OP Highbrow	-	July - August 2006
Afghanistan	OP HERRICK	-	August 2010 - January 2011
Italy	OP ELLAMY	-	April - November 2011
Libya	OP ELLAMY	-	April - November 2011
Afghanistan	OP HERRICK	-	November 2012 - Ongoing

The organizations and units which currently comprise Queen's Gurkha Signals

Regimental Headquarters Queen's Gurkha Signals (Bramcote)
246 Gurkha Signal Squadron (York)
248 Gurkha Signal Squadron (MOD Stafford)
250 Gurkha Signal Squadron (Bramcote)
11 (RSS) Signal Regiment (Blandford)

Brunei Signal Troop (Brunei)
Nepal Signal Troop (Nepal)
Alpha Troop 217 Signal Squadron (MOD Stafford)
Royal Signals Infantry Support Team 1 RGR

Also personnel in RMA Sandhurst, Gurkha Coy/Language Wing ITC Catterick, 10 Sig Regt, 15 Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt, 18 (UKSF) Sig Regt, HQ SOINC (A), 2 (SE) Bde, DST Leconsfield, DES Net, EPIKOSPI Cyprus, BGSU and 11 EOD Regt.

Affiliated Corps: The Royal Corps of Signals
Affiliated Regiment: 32nd (Scottish) Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Regimental March Past: Scotland The Brave

Staff List

Colonel of the Regiment

Maj Gen N A W Pope CBE

British Officers of the Regiment

Lt Col	R J Watts MBE	Comd	RHQ QG Signals
Maj	D R ORR	OC	246 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Maj	J S Stephen	OC	248 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Maj	J Malcolm	OC	250 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Capt	H R Ayers	Ops Offr	246 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Capt	T Draper	Ops Offr	248 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Capt	J J Sillito	Ops Offr	250 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Capt	S Watt	SO3 G6	HQ Brunei Garrison
Lt	R J Greener	Tp Comd	246 Gurkha Signal Squadron
2Lt	MT Kearney	Tp Comd	246 Gurkha Signal Squadron
2Lt	C J Gordon	Tp Comd	246 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Capt	J McEvoy	Tp Comd	248 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Lt	P Rowland	Tp Comd	248 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Capt	M Bucknall	Tp Comd	250 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Capt	D Tope	Tp Comd	250 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Lt	T Rowe	Tp Comd	250 Gurkha Signal Squadron
2Lt	J Fraser	Tp Comd	250 Gurkha Signal Squadron

Gurkha Officers of the Regiment

Maj	Yambahadur Rana	Gurkha Major	RHQ QG Signals
Capt	Ganeshbahadur Gurung	Gurkha Adjutant	RHQ QG Signals
Capt	Ambar Gurung	RCMO	RHQ QG Signals
Capt	Lokbahadur Gurung	2IC	246 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Capt	Tesharjang Gurung	2IC	248 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Capt	Omprashad Pun	2IC	250 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Capt	Rajeev Shrestha	CI 1 Sqn	11 (RSS) Signal Regiment
Capt	Hebindra Pun	OC DST	11 (RSS) Signal Regiment
Capt	Shankar Gurung	OC	Brunei Signal Troop
Capt	Kedar Rai	OC	Nepal Signal Troop
Capt	Dhirbahadur Khokaja Pun	Tp Comd	217 Signal Squadron
Capt	Amritkumar Gurung	Tp Comd	246 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Capt	Surendrakumar Gurung	Tp Comd	248 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Capt	Bharat Shrestha	Tp Comd	250 Gurkha Signal Squadron
Capt	Nimbahadur Garbuja Pun	PI Comd	Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick

Gurkha Officers holding EI/E2 Appointments

Maj	Hitman Gurung MVO	Gurkha Major	British Gurkhas Nepal
Maj	Dhanbahadur Gurung MVO	BGSU 2IC	11 (RSS) Signal Regiment
Maj	Nirmalkumar Bhattachan	OC CIS Div	DST Leconsfield
Maj	Yamkumar Gurung	SO2 G6 CIS	2 (SE) Bde
Maj	Narayanbahadur Bhandari	MVO Station QM	Episkopi Cyprus
Maj	Buddhibahadur Gurung	Trek Asset Mgr	DES Net
Maj	Prembahadur Ale	QM	5 Signal Regiment
Maj	Tolbahadur Khamcha	2IC	RMA Sandhurst Support Unit
Capt	Purna Gurung	MTO	30 Signal Regiment

Colonel of the Regiment's Notes

By Major General NAW Pope CBE

As I look out of my study window at a snowy landscape (the weather gods have been particularly rude this January) I reflect on three strategic paradigms that will profoundly affect us as individuals, and as soldiers, over the coming decades.

The first paradigm is that of **finance**. The current British Government believes that its biggest strategic threat is economic. This threat is based loosely on the 'Micawber Principle' (I can expand to those who are interested over a pint of beer!) which in Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* is neatly explained as:

"Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen pounds nineteen and six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery."

In other words, the Government believes that the nations' coffers are empty. And that as a nation we are spending more than we can afford. Resolving this issue has meant taking difficult choices. For the Army, it involves a reduction in the size of the Regular Army from 102,000 to 82,000, offset by an increase in the size of the trained Reserve to 30,000. Getting from Point A to Point B is not easy: the latest round of Redundancy (up to 5,300 soldiers) was announced by the Secretary of State only last Tuesday.

We must understand the context within which this redundancy for the Brigade of Gurkhas is taking place. Although we have had the good fortune to retain our Brigade structure in the new Army 2020 ORBAT, we are still dealing with the legacy implications of the changes in Terms and Conditions of Service resulting in Gurkha service extended from 15 to 22 years; the consequential loss of outflow produced a sizeable part of the Brigade manning excess. Two of the Gurkha Reinforcement Companies are also disbanding. The Brigade therefore remains significantly out of manning balance.

QG Signals are not immune from this issue. As the Royal Corps of Signals brings in new equipment, its manning requirement for each Squadron changes. Although there are some up arrows, the net result is a reduction in the number of

soldiers needed to deliver capability in the Army 2020 model. I am very conscious that for some of our soldiers this will result in a difficult choice; either seek employment in another part of the Army, or seek employment as a civilian. But you should all be aware that the Commander, the Gurkha Major and I continue to fight for every post that we get to minimise the impact.

The second paradigm is that of **operations**. The British Army has 'played away from home' in every year since 1967. For over a decade we have had soldiers, sailors and airmen deployed in Afghanistan. Operation HERRICK remains Defence's Main Effort. Real progress has been made - and continues to be made - both by ISAF troops but in particular by the Afghan National Security Forces. The success of the ANSF in assuming a lead role in delivering security in central Helmand province will allow, on current planning, British troop levels to reduce to around 5,200 by the end of 2013, as announced by the Prime Minister in December.

The Transition process is well underway. The number of UK bases has already started to reduce and we can expect this process to accelerate. Redeployment has also started to commence, with Reverse Supply Chain facilities in Camp Bastion established and material recovered by road and air movement. By the end of 2014, the UK will have completed its combat role in Afghanistan, although there will still be a small residual presence to help our Afghan partners.

The Regiment can be proud of the part that it has played (and continues to play, with 246 Gurkha Signal Squadron in theatre) in support of Operation HERRICK. In many respects it has provided our *raison d'être* for the last decade. But this operational paradigm will soon come to an end - and the inevitable question is: what next?

And so I turn to my third **paradigm** - that of contingency. The Army 2020 blueprint requires us to modernise to face an unpredictable future. We must establish a Reaction Force built around a divisional headquarters, three armoured infantry brigades and one air assault brigade, support by Force Troops. This is not a return to the past, but more a development of a

deterrence, stabilization and war-fighting force that blends the best of the old with the hard-learned lessons of the present.

We also have to develop Adaptable Force Infantry Brigades under the direction of a second divisional headquarters. When the structure for this force was developed last year, many people were sceptical about its role and utility. While the need for local engagement and meeting Standing Commitments was understood, the requirement for a force optimised for 'Defence Engagement' or 'Upstream Capacity Building' was not proved. The idea is to demonstrate UK commitment now by better utilising our deployed air and maritime components and - making use of the AF Infantry Brigades - by engaging in capacity building and training partnerships with regular, scaleable deployments in the land and joint environments.

Recent events in both the Middle East and in Africa have given real impetus to this concept. CDS has spoken of accelerating the delivery time frame for Adaptable Forces. The Prime Minister

has talked of the challenge of dealing with a decades-long battle against Islamist terrorism in North Africa.

So what? Well, the Regiment can expect to play its part in supporting both Reaction and Adaptable force structures, as well as continuing to contribute in the wider NATO and Joint environments. In other words, we have an exciting, if unpredictable, challenge ahead of us. To meet this challenge we must retain our characteristic humility and have confidence in our strengths and values. We must continue to deliver professional excellence at all times and concentrate on delivering our high end operational effectiveness. I have every confidence in each and every one of you that we will achieve this.

My wife Jo and our numerous offspring join me in sending all members of the Regiment, serving and retired, our deep affection and very best wishes for the coming year.

Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals

Commander's Newsletter

By Lt Col RJ Watts Commander QG SIGNALS

Introduction

In order to draw inspiration for these notes I have just read the first few pages of the 2011 Newsletter. Last year Maj Gen Pope Saheb commented on the amount of change that the Army is currently facing - as you will see from this issue that change has already started. Probably the most obvious of these changes, and one you will note from the photos, is that most of us have been issued a new uniform!! Further, redundancy has started and planning is in full swing to work out how Army 2020 will shape the future size of the Regiment. Thankfully, some things don't change I am once again honoured to report that this has been another outstanding year for the Regiment. In work, at play and through our charitable/social activities, the soldiers of the Regiment have continued to uphold the finest traditions and standards of Queen's Gurkha Signals.

Manning and Redundancy

At the time of writing, the regiment is 560 strong including the trainees in Blandford and the recruits in Bramcote. A2020 has set us the target of reducing our manning to 425 over the next two years and there is therefore likely to be further redundancy. On the subject of redundancy, the Regiment had 41 personnel selected for Tranche 2 and our thoughts are with them and their families as they transition to civilian lives or transfer to another arm in the Army. RHQ continues to identify and pursue additional employment opportunities for our soldiers, not only to increase the size of the Regiment but also to provide broader experience for our gifted soldiers.

Promotion

Promotion remains fiercely competitive and our soldiers are generally promoted much later than their R SIGNALS contemporaries. The aim is to move to comparative promotion zones as R SIGNALS as the Regiment returns to manning balance.

Regimental Update

Each of the Squadrons has had a demanding year in many different ways. 246 Gurkha Signal Squadron has completed its pre-deployment training for Op HERRICK and deployed to Afghanistan in Oct 2012. The training for Afghanistan is very advanced and the soldiers had to work hard, not only attending many courses for the specialist equipment in theatre but also supporting a large number of the deploying brigade's exercises. 248 Gurkha Signal Squadron has also had to conduct a huge amount of training before deploying on its first ARRC exercise in September. As the staff were preparing for NATO accreditation so 248 Gurkha Signal Squadron had to establish the Enabling Command HQ and pass NATO accreditation. A Troop in 217 Signal Squadron were also heavily involved in the three month Autumn exercise programme providing ARRC ICS to 16 Air Assault Brigade HQ. 250 Gurkha Signal Squadron started 2011 in the middle of preparing FALCON for deploying to Afghanistan under Op PEREGRINE. Unfortunately the deployment was cancelled due to a changed operational context, however 250 Gurkha Signal Squadron continued to train on FALCON in preparation for its introduction into service. Nepal and Brunei Signal Troops have continued to provide essential garrison

communications to their respective supported HQ and units. In particular Nepal Signal Troop have done a lot of work to ensure that resilient communications are in place to the Area Welfare Centres in case of natural disaster. Brunei Signal Troop have joined the Brunei Battalion as they have refocused their training after Afghanistan and spent two weeks in the jungle. I also want to mention the Regimental members and families in Blandford. They have had a particularly challenging year and have pulled together as a community, not only maintaining the high standing of the Regiment on camp but also in the local community.

Sporting Success

On the sporting field the Regiment has had one of our most successful years in recent times. In June the Nepal Cup team lifted the Cup for the first time in 11 years. What was most impressive about this performance was the way that the team used their own initiative to ensure that they were prepared for the Cup, meeting and playing at weekends in order to negate the geographical disadvantages of having three squadrons distributed over the country. Ex TRAILWALKER was a very one sided affair with the Queen's Gurkha Signals leading from a very early stage and beating their closest rivals, who were a team of Queen's Gurkha Signals' recruits from Blandford, by over 40 minutes. The scene was therefore set for the Army Operational Shooting Competition and the question was clear - could Queen's Gurkha Signals complete the clean sweep. 2 RGR had clearly prepared for the competition and won the Army inter-unit competition, with 2, 30 and 22 Signal Regiments taking second, third and fourth respectively. Equally, in the Inter-Corps Methuen Cup the AGC had brought together a very strong team and finished deserved winners with an outstanding combined score. However in the individual competition, Queen's Gurkha Signals were once again

dominant with Sig Sudin winning his second Queen's Medal and LCpl Robin and LCpl Ramesh finishing second and third but pushing for the top slot until the very last moment.

Social and Charity

You will see throughout the Newsletter that the Regiment continues to generate a large number of social and charity events. I would like to pickout two in particular. In April the Regiment was honoured to entertain Gen Sir David Richards GCB CBE DSO ADC Gen and Lady Caroline at the Annual Regimental Dinner. They both clearly enjoyed the hospitality and particularly enjoyed the Regimental Kaida of Warrant Officers and SNCOs attending the dinner as well as officers. TRAILWALKER 2012 was another success in spite of some horrific weather conditions. The size of the event was deliberately reduced from the 2011 highpoint and therefore fund-raising was down slightly - only raised £1.3 million gross. Numbers will once again be increased in 2013 in order to maximise the fund-raising potential of this unique event.

Summary

I noted in the 2011 edition that the Regiment remains in a strong position as the Army enters into a period of substantial change. This remains the case with our three field squadrons fully employed and working with cutting edge equipment in Afghanistan, in support of HQ ARRC and introducing Falcon into service. The family remains strong and our next focus is to improve the links to our UK based bhuros.

Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals

Operational Shooting 2012

By LCpl Ramesh Rai

CORPS Operational Shooting Competition 13 - 20 April 2012

The CORPS Operational Shooting Competition was held from 16 to 20 April 2012 at Ash and Pirbright ranges. All the Corps from the British Army came together over this week for the competition. The TA had their competition over the weekend whilst the Regular units had theirs over the full five days of competition; with a total of 1,000 firers competed over this week long competition. On the final day of the competition the top six individuals from each Corps competed in the final Inter-corps championship, the Methuen Cup. Once again this year the Royal Signals Team won the event. The Royal Signal Corp's Champion shot for 2012 was LCpl Ramesh Rai from 30 Signal Regiment who was also the Overall Combined Corps champion. Sig Uttam Rai won the top class B (under

five years service) category whilst Sig Hom Yonga (under two years service) won the Best young soldier award. The top five individuals from Royal Signal competing were as follows:

- | | |
|-----|----------------------|
| 1st | LCpl Ramesh Rai |
| 2nd | Sig Sudin Gurung |
| 3rd | Cpl Khagendra Tamang |
| 4th | Capt Bharat Shrestha |
| 5th | LCpl Robin Gurung |

2 Signal Regiment were again the Champion Unit at CORPOSC closely followed by 22 Signal Regiment and 30 Signal Regiment.

Army Operational Shooting Competition (AOSC) 1 - 6 July 2012

The Army Operational Shooting Competition (AOSC) is the British Army's premier shooting competition. This year the Army Operational Shooting competition took place in the first week of July 2012 at Pirbright and Bisley ranges. The shooting competition promotes interest in small arms shooting for service purposes by means of collective competitions, matches being framed to induce practice in methods which lead to increased efficiency on the battlefield. Different individual and team matches are fired throughout the competition which has been modified every year according to the operational scenarios in Afghanistan.

This year was a total of 208 individual firers which made 52 four men teams from different units across the army. The most prestigious award for an individual, the Queen's Medal winner was Sig Sudin Gurung and LCpl Ramesh Rai was the runner-up. The chief guest was HRH Prince Andrew, Duke of York. HRH Prince Andrew presented the Queen's medal and Army medal to the top 25 shooters.

The top 6 Individuals from Royal Signals were as follows:

- 1st Sig Sudin Gurung
- 2nd LCpl Ramesh Rai
- 3rd LCpl Robin Gurung
- 7th Cpl Khagendra Tamang
- 8th SSgt Devprakash Gurung
- 17th Capt Bharat Shrestha

The final unit positions in the Inter Unit Operational Championship were as follows:

- 1st 2 Royal Gurkha Rifles

- 2nd 2 Signal Regiment
- 3rd 30 Signal Regiment
- 4th 22 Signal Regiment
- 5th 1 Royal Gurkha Rifles

The Methuen Cup - 5 July 2012

This year's Inter-service shooting competition, the Methuen Cup was held on 5 July 2012. This is a match where the six best shots from each service (cap badge), compete against each other. All six members' scores for the match are aggregated together and the team with the highest score wins. There was a total of 23 different teams competing for this Cup. Royal Signals team (predominantly QGS members) had won two consecutive years in a row, in 2010 and 2011. We were confident to win this year as well, however we had to settle for Runner-Up. There was also international representation from the Omani and Canadian Armed Forces who took part in the international event.

The top five services teams for the Methuen Cup were as follows:

- 1st AGC
- 2nd Royal Signals
- 3rd RGR
- 4th REME 'A'
- 5th RAF

Finally, this year has been an outstanding year for Queen's Gurkha Signals in the shooting field. This is all due to our predecessors who have put a lot of effort into bringing up the standard to where it is now. We hope to maintain this standard.

Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals

Queen's Gurkha Signals wins Nepal Cup 2012

By Cpl Nishan Gurung

The Queen's Gurkha Signals (QG Signals) Nepal Cup team, led by OIC Capt Om Pun and Team Manager Sgt Dipendra Gurung, began the quest for the cup against Gurkha Company (Catterick) on 25 June 2012 with the winning score of 4-0. The following day, they beat one of the tournament's favourite teams, the Queen's Gurkha Engineer by 3-1, on the journey to the final.

A clear blue summer day and a magical performance from the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas prefaced the final of Nepal Cup 2012, in front of the Old College, The Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst on 28 June 2012. With QG Signals and 2nd Royal Gurkha Rifles (2RGR) in the final, even the weather did its best to make it a perfect day for both players and the spectators.

The much awaited final game got underway at 1415, slightly later than planned. The QG Signals team dominated from the start and took the lead in the fourth minute goal scored by Signaller Brindan Tulachan. The opponent kept attacking for most of the first half but the score remained 1-0 to QG Signals. As expected, the 2 RGR team started the second half, putting QG Signals team under pressure. Their hard work paid off when they managed to equalise soon after the start. The QG Signals took the lead for second time in the 68th minute, courtesy of LCpl Pukar Gurung, but it was once again cancelled with a header in 71st minute by 2 RGR.

The match looked like it was heading for a draw, until into the third minute of the injury time, when Cpl Sailen Thapa struck the winning goal, from the beautifully crafted free kick by Sgt Dipendra Gurung. There was not much time left to the final whistle and, 2RGR had nothing left in their tank. The final score was 3-2 in favour of the QG Signals ending the quest of more than a decade to win the Nepal Cup. The result was a fair reflection of what these two teams brought to the contest; it was certainly a thrilling match which was fiercely contested in true Brigade of Gurkhas style!

2 RGR were certainly a strong team to win the cup. They had worked hard to get to the final, beating the likes of Gurkha Company (Mandalay) and then, 2010 Champion QOGLR teams. They presented QG Signals with a worthy challenge and should return home proud and encouraged.

Cpl Sailen Thapa, who had been the fulcrum of the team throughout, deservedly took the Sam Cowan Trophy for his winning goal and the 'Man of the Match' display. As a result of the win, Sgt Dipendra Gurung also became the first person in the QG Signals history to lead a team to the Nepal Cup victory as a manager who was also a member of the winning team when the QG Signals won the cup in 2001.



Team manager and captain receiving Nepal Cup from Col BG

Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals



Nepal Cup 2012 Winner Team, QG Signals with Comd and GM

Trailwalker 2012

By LCpl Bhim Isyo Subba, 246 GSS, Fwd Troop

“One of **THE** most demanding team and personal challenges you could undertake. You will learn so much about yourself and your teammates!”

Scott Cummines, Mountain Gorillas

Trailwalker is one of the most gruelling endurance charity events and is organised by Queen’s Gurkha Signals and Oxfam. The money is raised for the Gurkha Welfare Trust and Oxfam. This year Trailwalker 2012 took place over the weekend 14-15 July 2012, and consisted of a 100 km race across the South Downs starting from Queen Elizabeth Park. Trailwalker is highly respected for the great determination and teamwork it demands - but in return, the sense of achievement is immense and the pride felt upon completion is unbeatable. The event calls for a team of four to complete 100 km within 30 hours.

QG Signals has been providing the finest runners to take part in this event every year and has achieved great successes in its history. This year the training was centralised in 248 Gurkha Signal Squadron, Stafford, led by OC Lima Troop Capt Hudson. Nine strong runners selected from 248, 250 and 246 GSS volunteered for the training and Sgt Kiran Gurung, Lima Troop was responsible for the overall training. Our Training PTI was Sig Pranesh Hembya, an experienced Trailwalker trainer who was involved in Trailwalker 2010 when QG Signals won the glory.

This year, QG Signals had one main team and two teams of young runners from Blandford. Four runners, LCpl Kishor Gurung, LCpl Thamansing Rana, LCpl Bhim Isyo Subba, and Sig Kiran Limbu out of nine were selected as this year’s QG Signals main team. The training was divided into three phases; Base Training, Training Camp and the Tapering week, not to forget lots of stretching after runs. During Base training we trained in the local area depending on the programme. For Training Camp we went down to the South Downs and trained on the actual route. The Tapering phase felt the best as these were last two weeks of the training programme where we gradually reduced the training tempo for muscle recovery.

As in previous years, the start point in QE Park was crowded in with volunteer runners from across the UK. A spectacular opening performance was displayed by Brigade of Gurkhas Bands and Pipes and Drums in the eve of actual competition day.

On the actual day the weather was in our favour but in contrast the route was soggy and slippery. Our race started at 0800 from the Queen Elizabeth Park. The South Downs have the most challenging terrain from the start to the finish and because of the continuous rainfall before the event the route was more challenging than ever! Our strides were not in our control and the steps were fiddly. We crossed through all the obstacles with efficiency and managed to cross the finish line in Brighton Racecourse ahead of everyone coming first and 40 minutes ahead of the team that came second, which happened also to be QG Signals from Phase 2 training, Blandford. Once again QG Signals were able to hold the title of “Trailwalker Winner”. Our combined effort, hard work, determination and team work had paid off. Not to mention our support crew who were the most important members of our team! Without their mighty support at the checkpoints it would have been a much tougher day for all of us.

Trailwalker 2012 has been another successful event for Queen’s Gurkha Signals this year. As an experienced Trailwalker team member I am proud to say that Trailwalker is not just about finishing the route under 10 hrs or in 30 hrs. It is about accepting the challenge as a team, working as a team, completing as a team and for us, winning as a team. You will only feel the immense pride and satisfaction of victory as a team.



Brigade Band performing in QE Park in the eve of Trailwalker 12



QGS Trailwalker 2012 Winners, LCpl Bhim, LCpl Thaman, Sig Kishor and Sig Kiran

The Queen's Gurkha Signals 63rd Birthday Celebration and Queen's Gurkha Signals Association Dinner - 22 September 2012

By 21171355 Sig Kishan Gurung

'AAJA KO DIN GARVA KO DIN HO'.....!
The mantra of the Regiment has been the blueprint for the soldiers and the officers of the Queen's Gurkha Signals since the formation of the Regiment in Lamjung Camp, Malaya on 23 September 1949. On 22 September 2012, the Queen's Gurkha Signals celebrated their Birthday for the 63rd time at Gamecock Barracks, Bramcote. The birthday celebration was divided into three phases:

1. The 63rd Birthday Parade
2. Inter Rank Sports competition & Family Fun Games
3. QG Signals Association Dinner Night



CO Memsahib cutting the Regimental Birthday Cake with Col of the Regt and GM

The first phase of the Birthday "The Parade" started at 1030. Serving and retired members of the Regiment from squadrons and across the UK assembled at the parade square in their smart Regimental Mufti suit. The parade RSM, **WO2(SSM) Tirthakumar Rai** collected the report from the respective SSM and in turn reported to the Gurkha Adjutant, Capt Ganesh Gurung and waited for the arrival of the Colonel of the Regiment, **Major General NAW Pope CBE**. At 1100 the Colonel of the Regiment arrived and the Adjutant reported to him on the music provided by the QG SIGNALS Pipes and Drums. The Commander QG Signals, **Lt Col R J Watts MBE** and the Gurkha **Major Maj Yambahadur Rana** read out the Birthday message in English and Nepalese respectively. The Regimental birthday cake was brought out and was cut by the Colonel of the Regiment, GM and CO memsahib. The yearly awards were also presented by the Colonel of the Regiment as follows:

Best All Round Performance of the Year -
Cpl Ghanendra Jimi

Best Sportsman of the Year - Sig Ramesh Pun

Best Piper of the Year - Sig Tshering Tamang

Best Shot of the Year - Sig Sudin Gurung

Best Trainee of the Year - Sig Ruben Limbu

There was also congratulatory felicitation for the winners of the Nepal Cup team, the shooting team and the Trailwalker team with Khadas being presented by the Colonel of the Regiment, CO and GM Sahib. The first phase of the Regimental Birthday came to an end with a fantastic display from the Pipes and Drums of the Regiment and a speech by the Colonel of the Regiment

Following on, a delicious curry was served for all followed by the second phase of the Birthday, the "Inter Rank Sports & Family Fun Games". There were three sporting events: Football, Volleyball and the Tug of War. In the football, the Signallers beat the Corporals 3-0 and the SNCOs and Officers beat the Lance Corporals on a tie breaker to earn a place in the final. In the final, the Young Foxes outgunned the Old Lions. The same sequence was repeated in the volleyball where the Young Signallers were able to rub the salt in the wounds of the SNCOs and the Officers, whereas the Corporal and the Lance Corporal were having their own rivalry to escape the wooden spoon. The final event of the sports meeting was the Tug of War. The Signallers won their match against the Lance Corporals whereas the SNCOs and Officers made their statement by destroying the Corporals. Again for the third event in a row the final was between the Signallers and the SNCOs and the Officers. This time the event was in favour of the Old Lions. The Godzilla size and the rhythm of the Old Lions were too much for the Young Signallers this time. The SNCOs and the Officers finally had a sweet revenge on the Young Signallers who had been giving them sticks on two events because of their lightness, swiftness and fitness. Finally there was the prize giving by the Colonel of the Regiment, CO and GM Sahib to the winners and runner-ups and the Final table looked as below:

Events/ Teams	Signallers	Lance Corporals	Corporals	SNCOs & Offrs
Football	1st	3rd	4th	2nd
Volleyball	1st	4th	3rd	2nd
Tug of War	2nd	4th	3rd	1st
Overall Position	1st	4th	3rd	2nd

Last but not least, the final event, the Queen's Gurkha Signals Association Dinner Night started in the 30 Signal Regiment Officers' Mess. It is the only formal dinner night where the past and present members of QG Signals and their families get a chance to know each other, share their experience and knowledge. The night started with a meet and greet, which was followed by delicious Gurkha Curry. As always, an inspiring speech was given by the Colonel of the Regiment and another spectacular performance by QG Signals Pipes and Drum made the night wonderful. The night concluded with a new plan and

hope of gathering all the past members of the association who could not make this year.

All in all, it was a proud and successful day for the Regiment. Another epic Regimental Birthday welcome and celebration in typical fashion was added to the history of Queen's Gurkha Signals.

Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals



Attestation and Commissioning Parade 2012

By Sgt Jagatram Rai

On 26 September 2012, 23 Trainees arrived at Queen's Gurkha Signals Headquarters, Bramcote after the successful completion of nine months of Infantry Training in ITC Catterick. Then, after nearly three months of Induction Training, the attestation parade took place on 16 December 2012 for them according to the tradition of Queen's Gurkha Signals.

The weather was very beautiful as the morning sky opened up with shining sun and the parade got under way at 1035. The parade RSM, **WO2 (SSM) Khagendra Pun** reported to the parade commander **Capt Ganesh Gurung**, Gurkha Adjutant. The Col of the Regt **Maj Gen NAW Pope CBE**, took the salute and Comd QG Signals **Lt Col Watts OBE**



and GM **Maj Yam Bahadur Rana** witnessed the attestation of trainees in front of the Union Jack. Then, the Col of the Regt officially commissioned **Capt Nimbahadur Pun** and **Capt Surendra Gurung**. Also present were Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas, Commanding Officers, Gurkha Focus Blandford Garrison and other officers from across the corps. The event was also witnessed by parents and the families of the Regiment from across the UK.

QG Signals Pipes and Drum played fabulous tunes throughout the Parade. In his speech, the Col of the Regt welcomed the new trainees to the best regiment in the Brigade and said that this is the beginning of your career and you are the future of the Regiment. The parade was concluded with the in-column March Pass of the Trainees. After a while, the trainees took group photographs with all officers followed by lunch in the Himali Club. That is where Lt Col Watts OBE, Comd QG Signals, announced the trade allocation result for the trainees. The trade was given to individual trainees according to their performance and potential during Induction training. The trainees will now move to Defence College of Communications and Information Systems (DCCIS) Blandford for their respective trade courses.

Jai QG Signals!



Capt Nim & Capt Surendra being commissioned

Exercise DRAGON TONGBA TIGER - 2011

30 Signal Regiment AT Expedition (Exped) to Nepal

By Sgt Sanjeev Rai

Ex DRAGON TONGBA TIGER, a 26 day Level 3 AT expedition to Nepal, started with extensive research and preparation led by Sgt Gopal Krishna Saru under the direction of OIC Exped, Maj Narayan Bhandari MVO. He started early with meticulous planning and liaison but, even with lots of work and preparation, the ultimate goal seemed very distant. There were a lot of obstacles with cancelled flights, late additions to the group, questions over medical, fitness and so many official administrations. It was certainly a relief when, on the afternoon of 19 November 2011, everything seemed to fall into place.

The aims of the exercise were to develop teamwork, administration and personal robustness as well as increasing cultural awareness through the exposure of individuals to cultural environment in remote places of Nepal. Sgt Gopal had selected a trekking route that would meet these aims, ultimately reaching the Everest Base Camp (EBC) at an altitude of 5364m above sea level.

The day after we landed in Kathmandu, we flew to Lukla to avoid the delay due to bad weather at Lukla where hundreds of tourists were stranded for nearly two weeks. After a heart-

stopping flight into Lukla airport (rated by the BBC as the most dangerous airport in the world and the nearest road being four days' walk away), we started our walk up to Namche (3450m). Namche provided the perfect chance to both acclimatise to the thin air and make a leisurely exploration of the Sherpa heartland and their culture. The next day, we managed to hike to a very famous village called Khumjung which is believed to house the Yeti's scull within the local Gumba (Buddhist monastery).

The following day we started our trek which included the monastery of Tengboche (3,860m), the outpost of Dingboche (4,410m), Pheriche (4,500m), desolate Thokla (4,700m) and Lobuche (4,940m), before reaching the EBC. Despite experiencing some minor difficulties by some members, we all made it to the Base Camp which was an overwhelming experience. We then headed back to Gorak Shep (5,140m) before attempting at Kalapatthar the next morning, climbing up to 5,550m, our highest point. Setting off at first light, we trudged along at a snail's pace breathing in air that has half the oxygen content than that at sea level. 1 km of distance and 380m of ascent from Gorak Shep was tough; however, it was all worth because of the spectacular view from the top. Mt Everest looked so stunning and amazing!



Exped Team at Everest Base Camp

On the way back, Lobuche was packed full of tents and people from all around the world to take part in the Everest Marathon the next day. We met some of the famous runners and a few of our friends from the British Army. Unfortunately we didn't see the actual race. After a good night's sleep at Jhongla, we headed towards Gokyo (4,790m) via a very famous pass called Cho Lo pass (5,330m). Our ultimate aim of passing Cho Lo was to get to a view point called Gokyo Ri (5,360m). It was another hard and long day trek. All of the Sherpas were excited about Gokyo Ri and they were explaining how amazing it feels to be at the highest Buddhist prayer spot. All of the members were also excited after seeing the view from Kalapatthar but the Sherpas told us that the view from Kalapatthar is nothing compared to the view we would get from Gokyo Ri. Well we had to get there to confirm that, so we started our journey early in the morning. 600m of ascent felt like nothing because, as the Sherpas used to say, 'the more you ascend the better

the view gets.' From the top we could see Tibet and had an astonishing view of the whole of the Everest Himalayan Range, including Mt Makalu (8,700m); a view never seen in my life.

By this time, we were snotty, coughing, sneezing, dirty, sunburned, chapped and tired. Everybody wanted a nice hot shower, a good sleep, a proper meal and a relaxing time but we still had three days of trekking to Lukla and a flight to Kathmandu. Then the weather started to worsen; we noticed wild animals and birds descending and local people told us it is a sign of bad weather in the high mountains. The news of cancelled flights and stranded marathon runners came from Lukla. Yet, a small function was organised to show our appreciation towards the porters, Sherpas and guides, with food and drinks during the evening in Lukla. They were the actual people who made our journey successful and comfortable, and a big thank you must go to them. The next morning we started to hear some promising



Team preparing for white water rafting in Trisuli River

noise of aircraft at the airport. It was almost 90 minutes flight to Kathmandu, which is only supposed to take 45 minutes; a thrilling experience when you see a low fuel indication while airborne!

As part of the exercise, a mountain flight, rafting and a visit to Chitwan National Park were also organised. I never thought the mountains would look so dramatic from the sky and it was surprising to find out how high we actually trekked. Although it was not the best time of the year for rafting, it was as exciting as ever in the freezing cold water. All rapids were conquered in style by both extremely experienced raft guides and enthusiastic soldiers. Camping on the bank of the river with a camp fire and a deed fried fish starter was a treat after tiring and bitterly cold rafting. Chitwan was the next stop for us. It is situated in the Tarai region of Nepal which allowed all members the experience of all three regions of Nepal where life styles and cultures are different. After spending a quality time in Chitwan, we headed back to Kathmandu. While in Kathmandu, visits to the British Gurkhas Nepal Camp and

local attractions were organised. That allowed everyone to see the city of temples, relax and also to buy some souvenirs. Before flying back to the UK on 12 December 2011, OIC Maj Narayan Bhandari MVO thanked everyone at the dinner night before for their time and effort to make this exercise successful.

All in all, it was an amazing privilege to be a part of this Exped. It was an opportunity of a life time to kiss Mt Everest and to experience such a diverse but fascinating Nepalese culture and life style. Nothing else could produce such memories of difficult times and a sense of achievement like this Exped. Finally a big thank you goes to Narayan Saheb for taking the responsibility of OIC and Gopal Guruji for his hard work to make this Exped successful. I would definitely recommend a similar Exped to everyone as it offers such a thrilling experience that words alone are not enough to explain.

Jai 30 Signal Regiment
Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals,

246 Gurkha Signal Squadron (246 GSS) Newsletter

Officer Commanding: Major David Orr
Second in Command: Captain Lokbahadur Gurung
Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class II Durgabahadur Gurung



2 Signal Regiment (2SR) is one the Campaign Signal Regiments (CSR). Since the beginning of this year, the Regt has been actively involved in preparation for Op HERRICK 17 (H17). This year H17 has been in the zenith of the priority for the Regt. The majority of soldiers from the Regt deployed on several Mission Specific Training (MST) Exercises and attended a myriad of Specific Training to Arms (STA) courses. Needless to say, 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn is an indispensable part of 2SR along with its sister Squadrons within the Regt. 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn is entirely dedicated to perform "Certa Cito" as Helmand Information and Communication Services Signal Squadron

(HICSSS) in Afghanistan. By end of October 2012, Squadron personnel, with all their relevant courses, experience, knowledge, skills and wisdom, found themselves on the verge of deployment. The Squadron has equally juxtaposed the other events within its annual calendar with great care and success. Whilst we were preparing ourselves for the deployment, we also provided support to the various units including 4th Mech Brigade and Battle Groups during the MST. Below is some of the feedback that was received from the Battle Groups to whom we provided CIS during their Pre-Deployment Training:

Ex PASHTUN DAWN - 14 August - 3 September 2012

By Cpl Jayaram Puri

Ex PASHTUN DAWN is a Collective Training (CT) Level 4 Final Training Exercise (FTX). It was the final Op HERRICK 17 Battle Group (BG) training event which provided an opportunity to Ex the whole of the Op HERRICK BG in its Operational TASK Org. It was conducted across Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) during 14 August - 3 September 2012. The Ex was conducted over two FTX scenarios, each running for a period of 10 days. 2 Signal Regt's intent was to create a training environment that would allow each BG to Ex without unnecessary time spent establishing the Forward Operating Bases (FOB) and Patrol Bases (PB) locations. 246 GSS were responsible for the delivery of representative theatre comms.

246 GSS mission is to prepare, deploy and maintain a representative theatre Command, Control, Communication and Information Systems (C3IS) network to the Coy level in order to (IOT) ensure Force Elements are properly prepared to deploy on Op HERRICK 17. In order to achieve this mission, the Squadron under the command, control and co-ordination of Squadron Ops executed with meticulous Concept of Ops. After the successful completion of Ex PASHTUN PANTHER, all Operational Training Equipment Pack (OTEP) equipment was packed, loaded and transported to SPTA by 18 July 2012. For the first three weeks of Jul, the continuity team received all equipment and initiated a logical In Barracks Data Preparation (IBDP) at West Down Camp (WDC) in SPTA based on the FTX network design and Information Exchange Requirement (IER). Twenty personnel from Forward (Fwd) and Lashkar Gah (LKG) Tps deployed as Advance Party on 23 July 12 IOT assist IBDP, conduct and build HICON/ EXCON ready for Ex PASHTUN SCRIBE NLT 30 July 2012. The remainder of 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn

deployed on 30 July 2012 to WDC IOT to conduct network build and configuration to meet Full Operational Capability (FOC) NLT 10 August 2012 as the Main Body and Build Surge. On arrival to WDC, the Squadron conducted a ten day build phase over the period 30 July to 9 August 2012. The RADWIN bearer network was established followed by the installation of the Operational Terminal Emulation System (OTES) LANS in thirteen different locations across SPTA. On completion of the build and Testing and Commissioning of the network, Field Training Unit (FTU) UK and 2 SR, conducted rehearsal scenarios to ensure the necessary environment for BGs to start their first FTX on 14 August 2012. Tranche 1 of the FTX was lead by Fwd and LKG Tps of 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn over the period of 30 July to 25 August 2012, 219 Sig Sqn providing Application Specialist Support. This was under the command, control and vigilance of Tp OCs Lt Kearney and Lt Greener and the Tp SSgt, SSgt Laxman and SSgt Suresh Limbu. Tranche 2 of the FTX was led by Bastion Tp under the command of Tp OC, Capt Amrit and Tp SSgt, SSgt Suresh. FTX 2 was conducted over the period of 23 August to 15 September 2012.

During the FTX, 246 GSS deployed a robust representative MISSION SECRET (MS) network of 13 Points of Presence (PoP) to SPTA by 10 August 2012. The Service Catalogue comprised of various elements like Sand Piper (SP) broadband IP radio network, Operational Theatre Emulation System (OTES) - Mission Secret Network, Video Teleconference (VTC), Voice over IP (VoIP), Tactical Network Gateway (TNG) and several applications such as JCHAT, TiGR, JADOCs, and SHAREPOINT. The Squadron was also tasked to establish a Regional Point of Contact (RPOC) for all Service Management responsibilities.



Evaluating Our Performance on CFX & FTX



98.6% Availability

The support in setting up OTES and VOIP made it swift and easy

1 LANCS

We received every possible help and support from the ICS Det

1 RGR

Always ready to help whatever the time – really good service

1 MERCIAN

They were very good, especially when fixing frozen laptops

4 Regt RA

Perfect - always there when needed

1 SCOTS

After the ENDEX was called on 3 September 2012, a comprehensive Data Migration and controlled shutdown of all communications systems took place followed by RSIT assurance check which went extremely well for the Squadron and the Regt, a pat on back awarded to all those detachment commanders and crew by FofS 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn, SSgt Pratap Ghale. After a thorough serial check, the equipment was handed to 3 (UK) DSR.

Although 19 CSS Battalion provided the Real Life Support (RLS) to the Ex, the morale service support was maintained all the way through by Tp hierarchies. Now and then, Ex personnel were provided some down time. There was often mouth-watering messing during evenings, a real morale boost to Gurkhas during the Exercise.

This Ex was followed by another Ex ROMAN PASHTUN 12/02 (Ex RP 12/02) which was the HQ Joint Force

Communications and Information Systems Command Post Ex conducted at CAST (N) Catterick over the period 3 - 24 September 2012. 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn deployed on this Ex IOT provide RLS and representative Theatre C3IS. IBDP was conducted in WDC over the FTX from 3 - 7 September 2012. CIS/ICS and RLS equipment including personnel deployed to Catterick on 10 Sep. FwdTp co-ordinated RLS requirement for all Ex personnel in support of Ex RP 12/02. LKGTp conducted IBDP and later deployed and sustained for the duration of Ex RP 10/02.

All in all, 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn delivered its entire mission with great skills, knowledge and professionalism upholding Regimental Badge in high esteem. The Ex was a huge success on the road to Op HERRICK 17.

Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals!!!

Dashain 2012 and Pre-Deployment Party

By Cpl Jayaram Puri

Nepal is a rich country with its diverse culture, traditions and colourful natural aspects. Throughout the year, Nepalese people observe several festivals. Amongst these Dashain, also known as Vijaya Dashami, is the main and the most important and auspicious one. It is joyously celebrated by Nepalese throughout the world. It is a huge event and lasts for 15 days. Because of various commitments, the Brigade of Gurkhas only observe it for four days - Phulpati (7th day), Kalaratri (8th day), Mar (9th day) and Tika (10th day). Many mythological stories are interwoven within Dashain but the common thread is the triumph of good over evil. So, it is the celebration of victory and also a time for families to get together to exchange gifts and blessings. York based Gurkhas celebrated Dashain on Friday 12 October 2012.

Dashain preparation started for the Squadron from Mon 8 Octobe 2012 under the command, control and management of Co-Coordinator Capt Amritkumar, Master of Ceremony, SSgt Suresh and the respective ICs. It was grandly constructed inside the Regimental gym with a spacious stage, moving colourful lighting, projector, sound system, well decorated tables and improvised but skilfully adorned entire Hall. It was indeed eye-catching and fabulous; after all we all had toiled upon it for four days! On the eve of Thursday 11 October 2012, the Squadron was given a road show by Gurkha Major QGS, Major Yambahadur Rana regarding the Regimental issues and update. There was a rehearsal for the cultural team on the same evening. On Friday 12 October, the Squadron had a series of events throughout the day. In the morning at about 0730 hrs, we had a Squadron photograph taken followed by Regimental photograph at 0830 hrs. All Squadron personnel assembled for Temple Service at 1000 hrs where three religious teachers (RTs) and families were waiting. RTs Pandit Aatmaram Dahal

and Pandit Jagatram Paudel and Lama Chewang Gurung carried out various pujas. This lasted for nearly 2 hours with religious activities and some humorously presented moral teachings. BFBS Gurkha Radio representative, Yograj Rai kindly travelled to York and broadcast the whole day's activities live and later recorded messages. 246 Sqn OC, Maj Orr and 2IC, Capt Lok thanked the RTs, all families, British counterparts including the CO 2SR Lt Col Vaudin, RSM WO1 Lamont and Mrs Vivien Kearney mother of Lt Kearney as well as the BFBS Gurkha radio. Then, the Gurkha ladies were given families brief by GM, OC, 2IC and the Gurkha Welfare SNCO regarding the incomparable responsibilities of family members during our deployment and also keeping them updated with Regimental issues.

In the evening, at about 1815 hrs, all the Gurkha ranks and families, dressed in traditional costumes, started to arrive towards the Dashain Hall. Yes, there was no Linge Ping (a traditional swing) swinging to and fro but the hearts of attendees were without a shadow of doubt swinging with higher frequency. They were busy capturing those swings of their hearts and minds on the lenses of cameras. Then, there was the arrival of distinguished guests - Col of the Regt Maj Gen NAW Pope CBE, Comd Offr 2 Signal Regt, Lt Col Vaudin and Gurkha Major, Yambahadur Rana. Indeed the Col of the Regt was escorted by the OC 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn, Maj David Orr and Sqn 2IC Capt Lok to the venue. BFBS Gurkha Radio representative, Yograj Rai continually covered the celebration and activities throughout the night. After we gathered in front of Dashain Hall, initial drinks and delicious tikan tapans were served in order to counter-balance the coldness of the chilly weather. In the background, families were busy taking shots in the local studio created by Sgt Sanjeev. The festive mood was clearly roaming across the environment. Then, all



246 GSS Members and Families with Col of the Regt

personnel entered inside the Hall and took their respective well-decorated round tables according to the seating plan. The children's food was served which was followed by Bada Khana (Big feast). After the delicious and satisfying feast, entertainment IC Sgt Dan started the engine of the cultural programme. Col of the Regt, OC and 2IC Sahebs delivered their Dashain message to the Squadron and all attendees. On the flight aboard, we had a variety of cultural menus. It began with a Nepalese patriotic song and then a series of cultural and traditional dances. There were the traditional dances of Magar Community - Kauda, Rai Community - Chandi, Tamang Community - Tamang Selo, Gurung Community - Sorathi and various Bollywood and Hip Hop performances as well. Indeed music has no boundary so we had it all! It had a surprise package for all, the Khukuri Dance from the team of OC, 2IC and Tp Commanders which made the floor resonate "once more". The performances from didi bahiniharu, children and Gurkhas Nepalese Cultural Group Nuneaton were fascinating.

At the end of the cultural show, everyone was on the dance floor claiming their space to outperform each other in a series of songs played ranging from Simple Simple Kanchi ko Dimple parne Gaalaa to Gangnam style. The fever of songs, music and dance could be seen well beyond midnight.

The next day, the Squadron personnel gathered in order to dismantle it properly. Success of a function depends not just on safe-take off but also on safe landing. All decorations were safely and soundly taken off. The Event Coordinator expressed his words of thanks and big "well done" to all those who directly and indirectly were involved for the success of this function. This was not just Dashain party but a Pre-Deployment get-together function for all York based Gurkhas. Overall, the function was a great success.

Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals!!!

Helmand Information Communication Services Signal Squadron (HICSSS) - Operation HERRICK 17

Finally, the Squadron found themselves deploying on Op HERRICK 17 between 20 October - 3 November 2012. At the time of writing this update, a total of 156 members of 246 GSS are operating in the Helmand Province, responsible for providing three levels (Strategic, Operational and Tactical) of Communication Information Systems (CISs) to some 8,000 British forces that are currently deployed in Afghanistan including to JFSp HQ, JFCIS(A) and all deployed UK Battle Groups. HICSSS personnel are operating in the following locations:

JOB Bastion	- 86
TSU LKG	- 18
TSU NES (PRICE)	- 9
TSU NDA (Shawqat)	- 5
CF BMA (Oullette)	- 3
FOB JUNO	- 4
PB Durai	- 3
SFPTC (Kabul)	- 25
KAF	- 3

Total	156

Lashkar Gah ICS Troop

By Lt R Greener OC LKG Tp



It has been a very busy first month for LKG ICSTp. After the one week's initial RSOI package, all eighteen members of the troop departed for our final location, MOB LKG. After a rather interesting flight into location, we were met by our counterparts on the HLS who appeared very pleased to see us. The first 24 hours in location allowed time for the boys to relax into their new surroundings whilst it gave SSgt Laxman and myself time to start the initial stages of our handover.

It is safe to say that MOB LKG is not the most austere location in Helmand by any stretch of the imagination. Clearly lacking a lot of the facilities of BSN, it makes up for it with excellent food and pleasant surroundings. A relaxing first 24 hours was enjoyed by the entire troop in preparation for a frenetic week to come.

The HOTO started in earnest at 0800 the following morning, with my Troop meeting up with their opposite number to start signing for the huge amount of kit for which we are responsible. This proved to be a rather long and drawn out affair and consumed the following three to four days. However, six days after we arrived, we were able to bid farewell to 16 Signal Regiment and crack on with the task in hand.

Once in the chair it was clear to see that every department within the troop would be busy for the first few months at the very least, completing a large array of tasks from simple equipment upgrades to large full scale headquarters move. Quite a task for the 18 strong LKG ICS troop, however everyone is in good spirits and are very much looking forward to the challenges ahead.

MOB PRICE ICS Det

By LCpl Ramesh Pun

On 31 October 2012, with heavy hearts, members of 2 Signal Regiment bade farewell to their loved ones and departed to Teesside for their 6 month Op Herrick17 tour. We touched down at Camp Bastion on 01 November 2012, making transit stops at Brize Norton and Minhad on our way. H17 welcomed us with the dust, dirt and the glowing red sunsets. Next day we were billeted to our transit accommodation. On 03 Nov 12 the RSOI package started, for some this was 2 days, others 5 or 7 days depending on their roles during the tour. It was an informative and important 5 days for me. I was able to revise all the lessons previously taught and receive an update of the current situation on the ground.

The detachment (Cpl Sunil, LCpls Dhanesh, Ramesh, Bhim, Bipendra, Cassidy and Carr), boarded an early flight to MOB PRICE on 8 November 2012. After a short flight we were greeted by our Det Comds, Sgts Navin and Kajiman, who were the advance party for MOB PRICE, and also the eagerly waiting members of 16 Signal Regiment. Handover and Take over (HOTO) started the same day along with the camp familiarisation and safety briefs.

HOTO was carried out thoroughly and in a professional manner. We had received good training during the exercises back in UK in preparation for the deployment. They seemed to be in hurry to do the HOTOs and understood their situation as it was their time to leave and be together with their families after a long separation. We did not leave any stone unturned to get as much information as possible from the members of 16 Signal Regiment. The next few days we shadowed them. It took us time to get into the H17 routine but after a couple of days, everyone was zoned into their roles and responsibilities. Keeping in mind the CO's and OC's mission directive, we gave



The MOB Price Service Desk in action

our best efforts and had a few restless nights to keep our customers pleased and content with the services provided by us. We had visits from OC and SSM of 246 GSS, followed by CO and RSM of 2 Signal Regiment. They were very pleased with our services that we provided to our customers and the comments they gave us. We vowed to maintain the standard and commitment throughout the deployment.

Knocking on the door was the Gurkha festival, 'TIHAR'. We decided to celebrate our festival 'TIHAR' along with a few other members from the Brigade. We had members from 1 RGR, Queen's Gurkha Engineers and a few other British counterparts, who took part in the celebration. We were missing our families and loved ones but the BFBS Gurkha radio helped to shorten the distance with our messages, greetings and beautiful songs dedicated to them.

It is a long way to the end of the 2 Signal Regiment H17 deployment. Our standards and professionalism are at the highest and we are determined not to let them fall from their peak.

248 Gurkha Signal Squadron (248 GSS) Newsletter

Mountain Bike Instructor Award Scheme (MIAS), Level 2

By Lt A R Cave

On 02 February 2012, 13 members of 248 Gurkha Signal Squadron took part in a two day mountain bike instructor scheme (MIAS), organised by Cpl Khem from 'L' Tp. Under the direction of Mr Paul Massey from 'Mountain Bike Adventures', the training began with an introduction to the internationally recognised qualification and its use. This was followed by guidance in the planning of routes, navigation and management of groups on the trail. It was not until late morning before we even laid eyes on a bike, and this was used as a familiarisation exercise: as 'wannabe' instructors, we had to be familiar with the parts of a mountain bike from hydraulic disc brakes and gears to

suspension systems, including how to fix common faults when inevitably they occurred. Unfortunately, this was not just about how to fix a puncture but also included fixing snapped chains, emergency single-speed conversions and general maintenance. Of course, safety plays a large part in any adventure training and this was no exception with training delivered in conducting risk assessments and dealing with common injuries.

In spite of the freezing weather (so cold, in fact, that water from a stream crossing started to freeze on the bikes) the second day started bright and early on Cannock Chase

with a skills session. Previously, most riders had described themselves as 'average'. However, the instructor's tutelage ensured everyone made huge improvements in bike handling, including how to climb, descend, and overcome objects or drops on the trail. These skills were put to the test soon after as all participants had to lead and instruct the group over a section of trail. Naturally, new skills employed on testing terrain inevitably means getting it wrong and Sig Hom was the first to go 'man down' as he lost control on a descent and crashed in spectacular fashion. As the temperature increased, riding conditions became perfect and the group progressed to riding the Chase's red graded trails, conducting impromptu risk assessments and tutoring sessions as practice. As daylight faded, the day's riding came to an end with the great news that we had all achieved a Level 2 pass, permitting us to lead and instruct groups on red grade trails. This was a great course: challenging, enjoyable and, no doubt, it will prove very useful to us all in the future.



Ex BEACON KHUKURI

By Sig Omprakash Gurung

Ex BEACON KHUKURI is a Troop level exercise conducted in Swynnerton Training Area in order to maintain and inspect the Communication Information System (CIS) equipment for its operational capabilities and provide refresher training to detachment commanders and crews.

Our convoy left the camp in the early hours of Monday morning, 23 March 2012 and as soon as we arrived, a quick area site plan was carried out by the exercise co-ordinators with all assets quickly deployed on their respective sites. The main effort of this day was to set up the HQ area and get the Bowman link up and running. Sigs Baikuntha and Manoj provided us with the power which made our job easier and quicker. By the end of day one, the HQ layout was finished, and Bowman detachment was already up and running, providing initial entry voice service. Sig Narayan and I were working on the ARRC Infra, while LCpl Pawan and Sig Rabikiran were busy trying to get the AIRMUX link engineered. Since we were dealing with the crypto, we had to man the exercise location overnight so a stag system was applied. Our main aim of day two was to establish a communication link between the two ARRC Infra Nodes with AIRMUX as the primary link and fibre being secondary which was achieved by midday. Staff Officers would now have the service facilities of Data and Voice. In addition, lessons on how to set up a cam net for the Bowman detachment was also carried out, reminding us of the good old days when we used to struggle with them back in our basic training in Blandford.

Day three was focused on carrying out cross-training to all the troop personnel. There were several stands: ARRC Infra, Richelieu, AIRMUX, Bowman, 2KW LFG & FEPS generators. There was a lot of enthusiasm from every individual, which resulted in everyone getting their hands on the equipment and

gaining some experience on unfamiliar equipment. On the final day of the exercise, everyone was busy again tearing down the HQ & other detachments and packing all the assets in order and to return safely to the camp.

This was a very successful exercise, co-ordinated by Cpl Arbind lead by SSgt Bharat Kumar Rai. This kind of exercise creates an ideal learning environment and proved to be very beneficial for every individual, especially those who are new in the Troop and have not used the equipment before.



Ex ARRCAD E RETURNER 2

By 2Lt Budden

ARRCADE RETURNER 2 was a staff exercise for the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) from 29 April to 4 May; although for 22 Signal Regiment (22SR) and the ARRC Support Battalion it began two weeks earlier and ended a week later. Senior representatives from NATO nations gathered at Beacon Barracks in Stafford to practice operating in a complex joint environment and to test 22 Signal Regiments' ability to cater for the ARRC Headquarters (HQ) since taking over the role from 7 Signal Regiment.

248 Gurkha Signal Squadron was responsible for delivering the Enabling Command, the forward entry element of the ARRC HQ to enter a theatre of operations. 222 Signal Squadron took control of ARRC Main, whilst 252 Squadron offered support from SCP Innsworth. Together they provided a communications network utilising Reacher, Bowman, ARRC Infra and Richelieu systems.

The initial construction of the HQ was a well fought battle by everyone involved, they faced heavy horizontal rain and temperatures normally associated with the winter months.

Stafford Gurkha Community Celebrates Dashain 2012

By 30120638 Sig Gyanendra Rai

'Vijaya Dashami', often known as 'Dashain', is a 15 day long Hindu religious festival celebrated round the globe. Being the most anticipated event in the Nepalese calendar, Dashain is when the people celebrate the triumph of good over evil embodied by the Goddess Durga slaying the demon Mahishasura. During the 15 day celebrations the Goddess Durga is worshipped with numerous Pujas, abundant offerings, and the ritual of holy bathing. Dashain is also known for its emphasis on family gatherings with people returning from all over the world to celebrate together.

This year, overcoming obstacles from other commitments, 248 Gurkha Signal Squadron celebrated Dashain in style. Although the whole Regiment was heavily engaged with exercises, the squadron was able to secure enough time to prepare for the Dashain celebrations back in Stafford; with the festival just round the corner we were lucky enough to be able to return to barracks for a short break from the exercise. Working hand in hand various team leaders were nominated to make preparations and it wasn't long before things started piecing together. With dance rehearsals in full swing and decorations liberally applied, things inside the Fragger's Club started taking shape.

By the evening of 19 October the Fragger's Club had finally been transformed into a festive environment with colourful



Cpl Milan and Cpl Dipendra holding the fort

Despite nature's best efforts to ruin the day, the HQ was ready for the start of the exercise. The real value of this exercise became clear once it had begun, this was the first time ARRC HQ staff had properly tested 22 SR in a realistic scenario. Inevitably there were teething issues but they were dealt with swiftly and professionally and valuable lessons were learnt. Long hours and poor weather conditions were dealt with by the chefs of the ARRC Support Battalion who proved their worth by offering refuge with plenty of good food, notably the curries. A successful exercise for 22SR and the ARRC HQ staff, all are now ready for their next challenge.



CO 22 Signal Regiment with other guests

lights and decorations adorning the room. Finally the most awaited moment had arrived. The men dressed in their smart traditional 'Daura Suruwals' and 'Dhaka Topi', and the women in their 'Saris' started arriving. Our British counterparts were not left out either as they also showed up in traditional Nepali costumes - to our amazement.

With everyone looking their best we proceeded to the Hub Dining Hall for one of the main highlights of the evening - the Dashain Feast, also known as 'Bada Khana', specially prepared by our very own Gurkha chefs. Everyone was spoilt for choice



248 GSS Gurkha Officers and SNCOs with 2IC at Temple

as the Bada Khana was laid out before them, and with wine on the tables, everyone left with a contented stomach. The celebration was in full swing and everyone was making merry. With the crowd expecting more, the main show of the evening commenced with a display of ethnic and modern dances which the crowd thoroughly enjoyed.

To conclude the evening, 'Kushiko Nach' was declared and the chief guest was called upon the stage to join in. With everyone dancing all over the place, Dashain fever was on! The drinks and dances continued till the early hours. Dashain was not over yet as the climax was everyone being able to spend time with their families. With a few days off in the next week, there was more festive happiness bound for sure. On the morning of 24 October, all Gurkha soldiers and officers assembled in Stafford Gurkha Temple to perform the Dashain Tika ceremony. Pujaris and offerings were made to the Goddess Durga followed by Tika (rice with red vermilion and yoghurt) and blessings made by the Squadron 2IC, Capt Tesharjang Gurung, symbolising the blessing of the younger members.

From a personal point of view, I would say that Dashain in Stafford extremely successful. Although we did not have much time to prepare, everyone came together for this joyous occasion to celebrate the festival as it really is meant to be. The event left me content in my heart, and made me feel at home.

250 Gurkha Signal Squadron (250 GSS) Newsletter

Ex CANYON DRAGON - AT Expedition to USA

By Sgt Dipendra Gurung

Ten members of 250 Gurkha Signal Squadron deployed on a Level 3 Adventurous Training exercise to the United States of America over the period 27 July - 7 August 2012. The aim of the exercise was to introduce soldiers to unfamiliar environments giving them opportunity to conduct mountaineering experience in order to develop leadership, teamwork and navigational skills in challenging and diverse territories of Grand Canyon National Park.

The expedition route predominantly stretched across two different States of America: Utah and Arizona. Needless to say, road journeys were unavoidable due to the distance and the area covered. When road maps were preferred to expensive Sat-Nav systems, you could feel the sense of disappointment, especially amongst younger members of the team who nowadays rely so heavily on technology. It was a painful navigational experience and great deal was learnt by all members of the expedition.

The itinerary consisted of visits to 5 National parks: Zion, Bryce Canyon, Arches, Canyonland and Grand Canyon National Park. Each National Park offered unique mountaineering challenges as each trail was different. From the thrilling hike of Angel's Landing to refreshing river hike of Zion Narrows; extremely dry trek of Fairyland loop of Bryce Canyon to breathtaking nature-made monuments of the Arches, and finally an arduous trek to the depths of Grand Canyon; unforgettable experiences were gained by all and will remain in memory for a very long time.

After an incredible mountaineering experience, it was time to head to the lively city of Las Vegas for a day of R+R. Cpl Nishan, having visited the city before, was tasked to organise a recreational package, which included visits to Atomic Testing Museum and Hoover Dam. The package was enjoyed by all and added an extra flavour to the truly memorable expedition.

The expedition provided excellent opportunity, especially to the younger members of the team to develop leadership and teamwork in an unfamiliar and challenging environment. As an organiser, I would like to thank Sqn Chain of Command for releasing the soldiers and providing all the assistance in order to make it a highly successful expedition which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.



Team members posing at Delicate Arch

Nepal Signal Troop

EXERCISE KHUKURI ASCENT (TIGER)

By Cpl Milankumar Rai

British Gurkhas Nepal (BGN) organised a 3 weeks high altitude mountaineering expedition into the Everest region of Nepal in early April 2012 with the intent of climbing two peaks; Island Peak (6120m) and Lobuche East (6119m). The main aim of the expedition was to introduce intermediate and novice mountaineers to Himalayan mountaineering techniques, through the ascent of two technically straight forward but physically challenging mountains in the Everest region, under the guidance of two experienced instructors; Capts Richard Gale and Benjamin Foster, both from RE. A team of six consisting of Capt Frances Fox (RLC), WO2 Mark Black (REME), SSgt Chris Graham (RLC), Cpls Prem Sambahangphe and Milan Rai (QG Signals) and, Cpl Liam Goulding (RE).

On 4 April 2012, the team left Kathmandu for one of the world's most dangerous but, busiest domestic airports in Nepal, the Lukla airport, which leaves pilots no room for error when landing. The airport is quite popular as Lukla is the place where most of the trekkers begin their trek into the Khumbu region and Everest Base Camp hence, in the peak season the airlines operate over 50 flights a day. The team spent the night at Lukla, which is a small but beautiful town in the Khumbu area of the Solukhumbu District in the Sagarmatha Zone, situated at 2860m. An early morning start on 5 April saw the team begin their voyage for Namche Bazar (3440m) that should normally take 2 days to reach. However, it took 8 hours even for us when carrying our kit ourselves without using any Sherpas (porters). After reaching Namche, we had one day's rest for altitude acclimatisation during which time we had the opportunity to log onto our face book accounts and twitter to update our situation.

We then headed for the next stop, which was Chukung through Tenbouche and Dingboche. It took us 3 days to get to Chukung where we were to undergo our first bits of training in handling ropes, snow and ice techniques as well as glacier training on the Chukung Glacier. After the training, we would prepare to climb Island Peak from Chukung. Following a day's rest after the training, we set off for one of the most popular climbing peaks in the Everest region at 0100 hours on 12 April 2012. No matter what, we were just moving ahead through the dark, cold and ice in the hope of conquering mountain. With few stops along the way, we reached the base of the summit at around 0800 hours after which, it took us another grueling 3 hour climb to reach the top of Island Peak (6120m), from where we were rewarded with fabulous views of the Khumbu region, the Chukung valley and also the huge south face of Lotse and the peak of Amadablam.

It was the most exhilarating and breathtaking moment for all of us - so joyful in life! We stayed on the peak for 30 mins and headed down from the summit, fighting with snowstorms



A group photograph taken after climbing



Cpl Milan posing for a photograph at the summit of Lobuche East

again. It was approximately 1700 hours when we arrived at base camp. Next morning of 13 April 2012, we headed back to Chukung and had a day's rest before heading to our second peak, Lobuche East. After 3 days of trekking through Dingboche and Khukla, we arrived at Lobuche base camp after spending a night each at Dingboche and Khukla. Next morning, we all again set off at 0100 hours in the hope of triumphing over the summit of Lobuche East. Here we went again; we summated another wonderful and amazing mountain after 9 hours of arduous and continuous climbing.

Without a doubt, the climb was worth it because we could see Everest base camp as well as gorgeous views of Mt Everest itself from the summit. Again after 30 minutes on the summit, we headed down to the base camp from where it took us four days to get back to the Lukla. With the mission accomplished, the exercise came to an end with the safe recovery of the team back to Kathmandu on 24 April 2012.

Altogether it was a great and memorable experience as it was the first time climbing a Himalayan peak for most of us. We had the opportunity to face extreme conditions and test ourselves but, managed to accomplish our aims and return to Kathmandu in one piece. This expedition gave us an opportunity to develop ourselves as mountaineers, as a team and as soldiers. Finally, we all thank Capt Richard Gale and BGN for providing us with such a great opportunity. It is hoped that this kind of expedition will be held again in future.

Jai BGN!!

Brunei Signal Troop

Seoul International Marathon 2012

By 21171662 LCpl Sanjaykumar Rana



BST Team at the start of Marathon

Having just arrived back from a month's leave in Nepal and on my first day back to work, OC BST Capt Hebindra and Guruji's were planning on running a marathon. I thought this would be an ideal way to improve my fitness and lose all the weight gained during my leave, so I volunteered to join the team. After looking at all the forth-coming marathon events, all of us agreed to compete in the Seoul International Marathon 2012 which was to be held on 18 March 2012, since it is renowned all over the world and it holds IAAF Gold Label Road Race status.

This was a great and a very real opportunity for the Brunei Signal Troop members including Rear Link Detachment to take part in the Seoul Marathon 2012. Due to various commitments only five members from BST, Capt Hebindra, Cpl Shiva, LCpl Kali, LCpl Sanjay and Sig Surya and 1 member from RLD, LCpl Tula took part in the race. Cpl Dilip was doing the admin for the runner and to give morale while running. The marathon event was led by LCpl Kali under the direction of Capt Hebindra, OC BST with a view to assess individual fitness level in long distance running whilst also developing team spirit and team harmony among troop personnel. We all want to do the marathon for a cause, so we decided to do as in charity for the GURKHA WELFARE TRUST and NEPAL CANCER RELIEF

SOCIETY. LCpl Kali applied the team entry for the race and also managed to book all the flights, hotel booking and Visas for the relevant countries.

Since we were doing the marathon run, we started our training two months early under the programme made by LCpl Kali, who is also the Physical Instructor of BST. The training was progressive day by day. Due to the heat condition of Brunei usually we were doing our training in the morning. Once we did the half marathon run training, all of the runners were feeling positive to finish the whole marathon. As the training progress, some of us were feeling the pain of the long run as most of us running for the long distance for the first time. In spite of the long distance run and two months training with pain we all managed to complete the 20 miles (32 km) run of training. We were working very hard to get in good possible shape before the race with lots of sacrifices including dieting, training hard in working days and so on. Along the training we were also gathering some money for the charity from all the departments in 2 RGR Bn and Garrison. Since our all mind set for the marathon we headed towards the Seoul on 15 March, three days before the actual race as to acclimatize ourselves to cold weather and to do a quick recce of the route.

Once we reached Seoul, everyone was feeling the cold weather. Moreover I was feeling a little bit nervous when we were doing the recce of the route because of the pressure to do well in the race. I feel all other team members were also under slight pressure as some of us had planned to finish well under 3:30 hrs. We collected our race package from the Donga Daily News Building. A day before the race, we all managed to get a couple hours of rest before waking up early in the morning to get our stuff ready. We reached the race site one hour before the start off. It was such a freezing cold morning. We managed to warm up and get ready for the run. There were about more than 1,000 competitors from different backgrounds but mostly local people and we managed to chitchat with some local people followed by a photo session. The race started at 0800 sharp. The first to go off were the elites, as usual. We were eagerly waiting our turn as we had been placed in the last group as being first to take part in the Seoul Marathon. As planned to stay together for first 5 km, we tried to stick together but we couldn't because of so many people. The atmosphere was very nice and Korean people were very supportive along the way. They all cheered us all the way and we could see Korean traditional dance and hear some sweet music which really boosted our energy. We met Cpl Dilip our Admin IC at the 20 km point where we had some refreshment waiting for us. The event was well organised with water and food point in every 5km gap. During the race, I did not see much of the awesome scenery because I chose to focus on the race and my own pace. In spite of the pain and grief in body, we all managed to cross the finish line in Olympic Stadium, with the awesome support from the Seoul neighbourhood along the way. Fastest time in our team was set by LCpl Kali (3 hr 38 min) which was a pleasing result considering our training time and condition of training in hot weather. Once we all gather around we congratulated ourselves for completing the run and had a quick photo session with our medals and the flags of Nepal and QGS.

Apart from the marathon run, we took the full advantage of being in Seoul by visiting different places and learning the culture. We managed to visit the DMZ (De Militarized Zone) between N Korea and S Korea. We also got some time to visit the Seoul Tower and National War Memorial museum which reflects the history between two Korean countries. We also got chance to taste the local food (kchimchi) and wine (soju and makuli). On the last day before we left, we did a tour with a guide, who showed us the beautiful inner city and some very old traditional places of Seoul where you can see the local made products. We came back having a great pride in ourselves for completing marathon run and sad at leaving a beautiful, historic and a very much traditional city behind us.

To finish the 42 km Marathon run was not an easy task but determination and team spirit among the individuals throughout the run made this event achievable. It was a good test for all team members to check their physical and mental strength under different weather conditions whilst running. On behalf of the marathon team we would like to thank the Seoul Marathon Organiser for giving us such a lifetime opportunity to take part in the race. Also thank you to those who provided the financial support for our event as it would not have been a successful event without it and also to those who supported us and showed great generosity to raise the money for the charity organisation. We would also like to particularly thank OC BST Capt Hebindra Saheb and LCpl Kali Gurung for organising such a memorable and challenging event. Finally, thank you all for believing in us and those who gave us plenty of advice for the event. We hope to take part in such an event in near future, may be in Tokyo Marathon.



Seoul Marathon Team



The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment

An eight pointed Star in Silver, thereon a Scroll inscribed 'Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment' issuant therefrom a Wreath of Laurel all in Gold, over all two kukris in Saltire, the hilts Gold, ensigned with the Royal Cypher in Gold.

28 Company Gurkha ASC formed in July 1958.

30 Company Gurkha ASC formed in July 1958 and disbanded in December 1968.

31 Company Gurkha ASC formed in July 1959 disbanded in October 1994.

Headquarters Gurkha ASC 17 Gurkha Division formed 01 July 1960.

34 Company Gurkha ASC formed in July 1960 and redesignated the Gurkha All Arms MT Training Wing GTR on 01 July 1970. It was further redesignated the Gurkha MT School and absorbed by 31 Squadron on 19 July 1971, but disbanded in September 1993. Gurkha Troop, Army School of Mechanical Transport was formed on 01 November 1993.

The Gurkha Army Service Corps was redesignated the Gurkha Transport Regiment in 1965.

29 Squadron RCT and 415 Maritime Troop RCT were included in the Regiment establishment from 01 September 1976 to 08 April 1994 when they joined the Hong Kong Logistic Support Regiment RLC.

Extract from Royal Warrant

Our will and pleasure is that the Gurkha Transport Regiment shall be redesignated as The Queen's Own Gurkha Transport Regiment. Our further will and pleasure is that the changes mentioned in this Our Warrant shall have effect from 30 August 1992.

Changes of Title

Her Majesty The Queen graciously approved the change in title of The Queen's Own Gurkha Transport Regiment (QOGTR) to "The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment (QOGLR)" with effect from 05 April 2001. The Bde of Gurkhas Chfs were recapbadged to QOGLR with effect 05 April 2002. On 12 May 2006, on parade at New Normandy Barracks, 10 Tpt Regt RLC was officially re-titled 10 Tpt Regt QOGLR. To coincide with the 50th Anniversary, 10 Tpt Regt QOGLR was retitled 10 QOGLR on 05 July 2008.

Organisation

Regimental Headquarters The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment

1 Transport Squadron QOGLR

28 Transport Squadron QOGLR

36 (HQ) Squadron QOGLR

66 Fuel Squadron RLC

94 Stores Squadron QOGLR

LAD QOGLR

QOGLR Detachment Brunei

QOGLR ERE Detachments with other units

Affiliated Colonel-in-Chief

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal

Affiliated Corps

Royal Logistic Corps (RLC)

Colonels of the Regiment

Colonel - The Gurkha Army Service Corps

1960-1965 Maj Gen P G Turpin CB, OBE

Colonel - The Gurkha Transport Regiment

1965-1973 Maj Gen P G Turpin CB, OBE

1973-1978 Maj Gen D G T Horsford CBE, DSO

1978-1984 Brig P I Attack MBE

1984-1987 Brig R M Llewellyn OBE

1987-1992 Maj Gen R M Llewellyn OBE

Colonel - The Queen's Own Gurkha Transport Regiment

1992-1993 Maj Gen R M Llewellyn CB, OBE

1993-1996 Brig P C C Trousdell

1997-2001 Maj Gen P C C Trousdell CB

Colonel - The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment

2001-2003 Maj Gen P C C Trousdell CB

(Promoted to Lt Gen June 03)

2003-2008 Brig S P Cowlam CBE

2008 - Brig A S J Fay

Active Service Campaigns

Malaya, Brunei, Borneo, Malay Peninsula, The Gulf, UN Cyprus, UN Former Republic of Yugoslavia, Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Staff List (as at January 2013)

Officers of the Regiment

Lt Col T R Blackmore RLC	Comd QOGLR
Maj R J Browne RLC	Second in Command
Maj Khimprasad Gauchan	Gurkha Major
Capt M Harris RLC	Adjutant
Capt A D Watson RLC	Operations Officer
Maj J Kerr RLC	Regimental Quartermaster
Capt N S Homer RLC	Regimental Technical Quartermaster
Capt C Brown AGC(SPS)	Regimental Administrative Officer
Capt I K Bartlett RLC	Regimental Technical Officer
Capt A P Brazier RLC	Regimental Operations/Plans Officer
Capt Devendra Ale	Regimental Career Management Officer
Capt D B Stewart RLC	Regimental Welfare Officer
Capt Tikbahadur Gurung GSPS	AGC(SPS) Detachment Commander
Capt Chakrabahadur Neupane	Regimental Training Officer
WO2 Dalbahadur Pun	Gurkha Chef Manning Officer
Capt J A Hill REME	OC LAD
Capt N P W Evans RLC	Regimental Signals Officer
Maj S N Townsend RLC	OC 1 Sqn QOGLR
Capt Palijar Tamang	2IC 1 Sqn QOGLR
Capt M A Boomer RLC	Ops Offr 1 Sqn QOGLR
Capt Ganeshkumar Tamang	31 Tp Comd 1 Sqn QOGLR
2Lt S M Ingram RLC	34 Tp Comd 1 Sqn QOGLR
2Lt W Jung RLC	94 Tp Comd 1 Sqn QOGLR
2Lt C J Godwin RLC	32 Tp Comd 1 Sqn QOGLR
Maj A F West RLC	OC 28 Sqn QOGLR
Capt Baldeep Tamang	Admin Offr 28 Sqn QOGLR
Capt S P Banks RLC	2IC/Ops Offr 28 Sqn QOGLR
Capt Rudrabahadur Chhantyal	A Tp Comd 28 Sqn QOGLR
2Lt C Genari RLC	B Tp Comd 28 Sqn QOGLR
Capt J D Howse RLC	C Tp Comd 28 Sqn QOGLR
Capt Nandprasad Kala	D Tp Comd 28 Sqn QOGLR
Lt A G Shepherd RLC	Tp Comd 28 Sqn QOGLR
2Lt M T Howard RLC	Tp Comd 28 Sqn QOGLR
Maj A C Punter RLC	OC 36 (HQ) Sqn RLC
Capt Indrabahadur Tamang	2IC/Ops Offr 36 (HQ) Sqn RLC
Capt Bhimprasad Gurung	OC Gurkha Tp, DST
Maj Rudrabahadur Sahi	COS HQ Aldershot Garrison
Capt E Bowman RLC	OC/SO3 Log Sp QOGLR Det Brunei
Capt Hariprasad Rai	Det Comd, QOGLR Det Brunei
Capt Diwan Limbu	2IC/MTO British Gurkhas Kathmandu
Capt Ganeshbahadur Gurung	PI Comd, Gurkha Coy, 2ITB

Commander's Review

By Lieutenant Colonel Tim Blackmore RLC

Although I The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment has always been a busy unit, as I look back over a year of multiple commitments and challenges, it is with no small degree of pride that I sit to write to you as part of this year's Journal. Following a particularly busy week in the autumn of last year, the Regiment went from having one established commitment, supporting the United Nations on Operation TOSCA, to being warned off for deployments in three other lanes. We were to become the Theatre Logistic Group (TLG), provide a squadron to the Welsh Guards in the Police Mentoring and Advisory Group and a troop to 4 Logistic Support Regiment RLC in the Close Support Logistic Regiment (CSLR) role. At the same time we were preparing to reorganise our structure, bringing 94 Squadron under command. In this respect, the stars seemed to be aligning in that the Squadron had also been warned off to deploy on Operation HERRICK 16 and so would fall under operational command anyway. A very happy coincidence and a momentous occasion for the Regiment as all Gurkha Squadrons reunited under one banner.

It has been a particularly challenging preparation period and in many cases a very steep learning curve. Re-rolling off the back of a successful Operation HERRICK tour in 2010 and following an intense year in Aldershot, including moving from New Normandy Barracks, the Regiment found itself embarking on the next demanding round of pre-deployment training. Committed to a plethora of tasks, the squadrons embarked on a round of exercises from Kenya to Wales focusing on a diverse range of mission specific skills; I Squadron honed their infantry skills whilst Gurkha Troop revised Combat Logistic Patrol procedures. At the same time, 66 Squadron practised their riot control tactics, while 94 Squadron leant into supply depot operations and completed the multitude of trade specific qualifications.



Col Ismael Khan, Director Operational Coordination Centre, Helmand Province, with Comd, Senior Maj and Capt Chakra at TLG HQ

There have been so many highlights this year I could run to pages; fire walking on the JNCO leadership cadre, the robot at the pre-deployment families' day, the QOGLR Birthday, the charity games night and the medal parade to name but a few. Behind each event I know that there has been an immense amount of hard work. I am always humbled by the dedication and pride with which our officers and soldiers embrace the regimental ethos and continually invest their time and effort into the growing reputation of the Regiment.

Operationally, hosting the Chief of the Defence Staff to a QOGLR curry, visiting the boys in Lashkar Gah or being hosted by Gurkha Troop in the CSLR and the TLG photograph in front of the C17, were all very memorable events during the tour.

In Afghanistan, meeting the multitude of operational commitments has been an achievement in itself. During the first mention of the task, The Chief of the General Staff even said himself that he could not see QOGLR soldiers realistically back-filling the infantry. Not only did I Squadron fulfil this role, they brought a considerable amount of cultural understanding to the party which allowed the group to make strong bonds with the Afghan Uniformed Police Force in support of the main effort in the Helmand Province.

The TLG successfully integrated personnel from 24 separate contributing units and two services in order to provide support to the force. Amongst many notable successes, 28 Squadron headquarters arrived in theatre to initiate the Reverse Supply Chain process, setting the conditions for redeployment on an industrial scale. 94 GS Sqn moved the £500 Million inventory of the Vehicle Replenishment Section and optimised the breadth and depth of a £900 Million account, in preparation for redeployment.

During their attachment to 29 Regiment RLC on Operation TOSCA in Cyprus, 66 Squadron very successfully integrated a multinational force of Hungarians, Argentineans, Slovenians and a mixed Gurkha/British contingent. At a particularly sensitive period, the Squadron respectfully and diplomatically handled the 30th anniversary of the Falklands War and the destabilising effect of continuing Greek economic concerns during their tour.

It has also been no easy time for the Rear Operations Group. During our deployment they stood up as contingency to mitigate against fuel strikes, provided invaluable support to the Olympics (protecting the horse riding at Greenwich Park, including the Queen's granddaughter) and provided short notice trawls to both theatres. Throughout they have provided valued support to the wider regimental community and organised a number of families' social events.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the tremendous effort put into raising money for charity this year. Before deploying, 94 Squadron raised hundreds of pounds; the TLG

subunits raised \$3,500 as part of a charity games night and those deployed in Kandahar raised over \$500 through various initiatives. All the money was split between the Gurkha Welfare Trust, the QOGLR Trust and Help for Heroes. I would also like to thank Paul Gilham for coordinating such a tremendous presentation to mark such an important period in the history of the Regiment. The Gurkha bust is a fitting reminder of the QOGLR's contribution this year.

In summary, it has been a truly momentous year for the QOGLR; one that has been as challenging as it has been rewarding. The Regiment has again proven its place amongst the most deployable units in the British Army and can be rightfully proud of its contribution, across two theatres, as well as the UK, during the busiest summer in its history.

At the very centre of all these achievements are our people. With stoicism, forbearance and good humour, they have 'made it work' adding a good deal of signature QOGLR zip, style and flair along the way.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our families, friends and all those who have supported us all in



the Rear Operations Group throughout a very difficult and demanding year. I am ever mindful that being on tour is a team sport and that our supporting elements are as integral to success as those deployed.

Jai QOGLR!!

Gold Medals 2012

The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment Gold Medal is awarded annually to both Gurkha and British serving and ex-serving members of the Regiment who the Regimental Council feels have made outstanding contributions to the benefit of the Regiment, its soldiers and their families. The first medals were presented during the parade on 05 July 2008 to celebrate the Regiment's Golden Jubilee. Major General SA Burley MBE, General Officer Commanding Theatre Troops, presented Gold Medals to the following, as part of the parade on 01 November 2012.

Lieutenant Colonel Richard McAllister

Lieutenant Colonel Richard McAllister joined the Regiment as a Platoon Commander in 31 Company Gurkha Army Service Corps (Gurkha ASC) in Singapore in 1962. This tour of duty coincided with the Brunei Rebellion in 1962 and the Indonesian Confrontation of 1963-65. After a short four month tour of duty with 28 Squadron Gurkha Transport Regiment (GTR), Lieutenant Colonel McAllister became the Regimental Adjutant (1966-68) in HQ GTR Kluang Malaysia before returning to HQ GTR now based in Hong Kong as the Second-in-Command (1975-77). Lieutenant Colonel McAllister has completed two tours of duty in Nepal - as the Deputy Recruiting Officer (East) (1983-85) and then as the Assistant Military Attaché in Headquarters British Gurkhas Nepal, Kathmandu (1993-95). He was awarded the Disaster Service Medal (Nepal) in 1995 for his sterling work during the catastrophic floods that year. In 1996 he assumed the appointment of Honorary Secretary of the Regimental Association, an appointment which he also held in 1969-71. He quickly went about computerising all of the Association data, which was no easy task but was completed with his normal enthusiasm and competence.



He has seen the Regimental Association grow from strength to strength - now 350+ members - and this is due in no small measure to his untiring and dedicated work as Secretary. He keeps all of the members well informed of Brigade, Regiment and Association news with his excellent bi-annual newsletters and also using email databases, which he has constructed. His organisation of the Association Annual General Meeting and Association Dinner, which take many hours of meticulous work, are always first class and give much pleasure to those attending. His appointment as Honorary Secretary of the Regimental Association also included being a Trustee of the

Regimental Trust, an appointment to which he brings a wealth of knowledge and understanding following his long association with the Regiment and The Brigade of Gurkhas.

Lieutenant Colonel McAllister has displayed a fervent interest in both the Regiment and the Regimental Association, interest that goes back 50 years to 1962. For his excellent voluntary work as the Honorary Secretary of the Regimental Association he has been recognised with the official award of The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment Gold Medal.

Corporal Rajkumar Gurung QOGLR

Corporal Rajkumar Gurung is a Non-Commissioned Officer of the highest quality who has consistently supported the Regiment far beyond the normal call of duty. When I Transport Squadron were warned for a potential Infantry tour in Afghanistan, he was a natural choice for inclusion in the ORBAT. As this warning quickly gathered steam, I Squadron was attached to I Royal Welsh for Exercise ASKARITHUNDER in Kenya. He performed his role as a Section Commander with considerable aplomb and was singled out as being an outstanding leader by the I Royal Welsh Battle Group. Buoyed by the success of Kenya, he applied to attend the Platoon Sergeants' Battle Course at the Infantry Battle School.

Corporal Rajkumar Gurung went on to make regimental history by becoming the first ever member of the QOGLR to pass the course. It is this representation of the Regiment in an environment as competitive and challenging as Senior Brecon that demonstrates Corporal Rajkumar Gurung's outstanding contribution. He has been a vital asset to I Squadron's preparation for Operation HERRICK 16 by always putting the Regiment first, volunteering to miss leave to train to become a Compound Clearance Instructor.

Corporal Rajkumar Gurung was deployed on Operation HERRICK 16 and used his Brecon qualification in the infantry role in Nad-e-Ali as a member of a Police Advisory Team (PAT). His easy sense of humour and ability to lead his soldiers ensured that throughout Mission Specific Training his team not only enjoyed working together but performed extremely well. In Nad-E-Ali his key role within the PAT was to coordinate security while the CP visits were in progress. This was challenging and vital, given a very credible insider threat.

Corporal Rajkumar Gurung sets his standards high and is constantly driven to take his achievements to the next level. He aspires to become a Staff Sergeant Instructor at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and once again make regimental history. Fit, adaptable, and selfless, Corporal Rajkumar Gurung is an outstanding leader and a fine role model. Having trained a number of the Brigade of Gurkhas as a Catterick instructor, he continues to uphold the highest standards and set an impeccable example to those beneath him. Committed,

competent and capable, he is an outstanding NCO who deserves public recognition for his achievements.

On operational tour in the Police Mentoring and Advisory role, the ISAF Forces Main Effort, he was exceptional. Out of role and in the most testing circumstances he was every bit the consummate professional soldier. Calm under pressure, brave under fire, and patient with his Afghan mentees, no better soldier could have been selected for such an important and challenging role. The Afghan Police respected and valued his training, delivered with characteristic charisma and in a manner skilfully balanced between being hard but rewarding. His lessons were always innovative and engaging and embodied a depth of cultural understanding which became the hallmark of QOGLR Police Mentoring Teams.

Corporal Rajkumar Gurung has shown outstanding dedication to his duties, immense pride in his Regiment, and justifiable ambition to achieve in the future. He is an inspiration for those who he commands and, through hard work and loyalty, has the unswerving respect of all in the Squadron. Corporal Rajkumar Gurung epitomises the ethos of the Brigade of Gurkhas. It is for these reasons that he is awarded The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment Gold Medal.



Col Rajkumar Gurung receiving the 'Gold Medal' from Maj Gen S A Burley MBE

The Wallace-Dutton Trophy

The Wallace-Dutton Memorial Trophy is awarded annually to a Gurkha soldier, who best displays the values and professional competence of the revered and much missed Major John Wallace-Dutton. The Trophy was first presented by Mrs Jo Wallace-Dutton on 09 July 2011. The Trophy for 2012 was presented by Major General SA Burley MBE, General Officer Commanding Theatre Troops, during the parade on 01 November 2012.

Private Kailashman Limbu QOGLR

Only those who serve the Regiment with the greatest distinction are worthy of nomination for the Wallace-Dutton Trophy. Private Kailashman's service and devotion to duty is outstanding, above and beyond that expected of one so junior. Whether in barracks, conducting Mission Specific Training or deployed on operations out of role as a Police Mentor, he has been nothing short of inspirational.

A strong, fit and immensely committed individual, Private Kailashman was part of the victorious Trailwalker team that successfully won this exceptionally competitive competition, a great honour for the Regiment amongst other Brigade of Gurkhas units. Despite the most demanding of physical challenges, he constantly provided support and encouragement to his teammates throughout the race; regardless of his own personal discomfort, he was determined to win.

He leads from the front; a characteristic trait so clearly evident during a challenging period of infantry based Mission Specific Training. Trained to fight in a Police Advisory Team, Private Kailashman has measured up to each challenge with a resolve that has set the standard for his peers to follow. A selfless volunteer, he conducted all dismounted infantry training exercises with the heavy General Purpose Machine Gun. Against a punishing schedule of back-to-back exercises he remained professionally motivated, by example he enthused all those around him to follow suit.

Private Kailashman deployed on Operation HERRICK 16 as a Ridgeback driver. He quickly proved to be an exceptionally capable operator, matching his talent as a driver with the reserves of courage required for the most testing circumstances.

On 01 April 2012, whilst deployed on Operation ZMARAY IBDA 8, northeast of Lashkar Gah, with Corunna Company, 3rd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment, Private Kailashman's Ridgeback came under fire from a small arms ambush only 100m away. Through the confusion of taking incoming rounds Private Kailashman held his nerve, calmly and skilfully withdrawing his vehicle to a position of safety clear of the ambush. It was the first experience of direct combat for most of the soldiers travelling in the patrol and gave them great confidence at what was the beginning of their tour.



Pte Kailashman Limbu receiving the 'Wallace-Dutton Trophy' from Maj Gen SA Burley MBE

On 17 May 2012 the QOGLR Police Advisory Team was tasked to take part on Operation WANISHA I, a find, feel, understand and influence operation in Pupalzai Kalay, east of Lashkar Gah, partnering with the Afghan Uniformed Police and A Company King's Royal Hussars. Upon leaving the northern end of the Kalay, the Police Advisory Team came under sniper fire, followed by sustained fire from three PKM machine guns. Private Kailashman immediately returned fire with the General Purpose Machine Gun in his shoulder and then laid down accurate rapid fire to suppress the enemy position. This enabled the rest of the call signs to manoeuvre into a safe area. His quick reactions wrestled the initiative from the enemy, allowing his team to extract under the cover of fire from Apache attack helicopters and close air support F-16 jets. Throughout the engagement, Private Kailashman fired over 300 rounds and provided accurate target identifications which allowed air assets to be co-ordinated onto the insurgents. Undoubtedly, Private Kailashman's professionalism played a vital role in ensuring that QOGLR soldiers were not harmed in this incident.

Private Kailashman Limbu embodies the spirit of the Gurkha soldier; fit, loyal, selflessly committed and brave. For his enduring courage, drive and professional soldering ability, Private Kailashman is awarded the Wallace-Dutton Trophy.

Gurkha Major's Notes

By Major Khimprasad Gauchan QOGLR

It seems like yesterday when I wrote my first notes for the QOGLR journal and now, before I hand over to my successor mid next year, it gives me great pleasure to write on the events that took place during my final year of service in the Regiment.

The effective management of the Strategic Defence Review redundancy tranches has been one of the main concentrations of my time, to ensure that those unfortunate individuals have been provided with enough information on resettlement courses and second career employment opportunities for UK settlement, all aimed at providing them with a smooth transition into civilian life. I am proud to say that the majority of potential redundees were mentally prepared to face the cut. We are now preparing for the announcement of tranche 3 whilst tranche 2 is still in its transitional phase. More burden was added to the Regiment when we received a further cut of 19 Chefs and Drivers under the PR11 saving measure. Unfortunately this has bloated the excess manpower quota for the next redundancy tranches.

The restructuring of the Theatre Logistic Regiment (TLR) has brought significant changes to the overall shape of the Regiment through the merger of 1 and 28 Transport Squadrons and move of 94 Supply Squadron to Aldershot. From 16 April, 94 Squadron individuals officially started working under the Regiment whilst their families are slowly moving from Hullavington to Aldershot. It has also lowered the overall Gurkha liability by a troop level affecting mainly driver and chef trades. With effect from 01 November, 66 Fuel Squadron drifted away from the Regiment to 9 TLR after years of being an integral part of 10 Regiment. The Regiment wishes them good luck with their new establishment.

When I arrived in early August 2011, the Regiment was already in the thick of pre-deployment training for Operation HEERICK 16 early this year. The deployment itself was more challenging than in previous tours due to 1 Squadron being in a Police Mentoring and Advisory Group (PMAG) role attached to Welsh Guards in Lashkar Gah whilst other Squadrons and RHQ in a 'normal' logistic role, based at Camp Bastion. Nevertheless, I had full confidence in our officers and soldiers based on their previous deployments, experience and mainly the cultural ties that we share between the Afghan and Nepalese people. This came to reality when I visited them in Camp Bastion and Lashkar Gah. I was extremely pleased to find out how much hard work they were putting in and the praise they received from their counterparts and commanders alike. I have no hesitation to state that Gurkhas in 10 Regiment delivered one of the most successful operational effects based on their professionalism and overall outcomes of the situation and satisfaction without a single major incident. This is a true testament to our professional soldiering in whatever situation, challenges or geographical difficulties we face.

Although the majority of regimental personnel deployed, the Rear Operations Group (ROG) managed to host a huge number of ex QOGLR/QOGTR and GTR personnel during the Regiment's 54th birthday on Saturday 07 July. Perhaps, it was the first time for retired personnel to attend the birthday celebration in full since 28 Squadron moved to Roman Barracks, Colchester from Hong Kong in late 1993. The Commander, sensing the importance of the occasion, managed to fix his R&R during the very same period ensuring that he attended the celebration. The celebration was a huge success with many people appreciating how well it was organised. The Regiment



The traditional presentation of QOGLR berets and badges to Intake 2012 at Catterick assisted by Capt Ganesh Gurung

marked its 21 years of operational success since Operation GRANBY 1991 and follow up operational tours from Hong Kong. The Regiment was also privileged to welcome the Chief of Police of Helmand District, Lieutenant Colonel Kamuladin, to the celebration. Overall, it was a huge success with BFBS live broadcasting and various other activities.

The ROG was extremely busy supporting Operation OLYMPICS and PARA OLYMPICS until mid September. These operational commitments at home precluded the Regiment from taking part fully in sporting fixtures. Once again we lost the Nepal Cup in the quarter-finals against 2 RGR and TRAILWALKER was just another event for participation rather than winning, which has been so much the case in the past.

I cannot complete my notes without mentioning the Unit Welfare Officer's sterling work in providing support of all natures to the regimental families while their husbands were away on operations. I am well impressed with the amount of activities that went into the families' welfare - it was truly outstanding. I am sure every family will agree with me that the last six months or so have been full of events that benefited them tremendously. My sincere gratitude to the UWO and his tireless staff for providing unconditional help, leisure and education to families based in both Aldershot and Hullavington.

CO ROG (Major Woodley) changed the shape of the Wallace-Dutton messing hut single-handedly to a new infrastructure that will last for decades. You might wonder what the changes were. Well it now has proper wooden pagodas built with both a fire pit and cooking area that is bolstered by modern sound and lighting systems whilst, at the same time, fully preserving the natural environment. I am sure his legacy

will remain with the Regiment for many years ahead. On the other hand, we managed to improve the Temple and Monastery significantly by installing a sound system and the purchase of major Buddhist artefacts.

Despite an extremely busy schedule, we managed to organise a few massive charity events to raise a large sum of money for the Gurkha Welfare Trust and the Soldiers' Charity. First, we staged the Brigade of Gurkhas and ex-Gurkhas Charity Golf event back in June that raised £1,200. Then, in the wake of the Gurkhas greatest festival Dashain and Tihar, the Regiment sponsored the visit of a cultural troupe from Nepal by hosting them throughout their stay in the UK from 19 October to 02 December, by which time they will have given approximately 14 shows around the Nepali civilian communities in the UK.

Looking ahead to January 2013, 14 people (five British and nine Gurkhas) will take part in a regimental expedition to Everest leading up to the planned Brigade of Gurkhas 200 expedition to summit Everest.

I am proud to report to all readers that the Gurkha brand and heritage (identity) you passed on to us is still vigorously alive and well maintained. It has been another main effort where I spend the majority of my time and dedication with the help of two brilliant religious teachers (RT). Both play a vital part in preserving and keeping our tradition, culture and ethos (kaida) alive. Despite many changed factors in our current circumstances, the Gurkha identity remains one of the most critical parts of the Gurkhas' existence in the British Army and we are strongly following the road set out on by our forefathers.

Jai QOGLR!!

I (Pahilo) Transport Squadron QOGLR

The newsletter for I Transport Squadron which deployed on Op HERRICK 16, can be found in the Operations Section of the Kukri Journal.

28 Transport Squadron QOGLR

The past year has been an extremely busy and challenging one for 28 Squadron and a year in which it has certainly lived up to its nickname of 'Merudanda' Squadron: the backbone of the Regiment. This period has been dominated by operational deployments but also, sadly, the second tranche of redundancies. As we were not fully committed to operations, 28 Squadron was hit especially hard and 22 individuals were selected for redundancy. They will leave the Army in June 2013.

The year began with a reshuffling of the pack as 28 Squadron joined the 10 QOGLR Rear Operations Group (ROG) as the Operations Squadron. Lieutenant Alex Norman and 13 soldiers from the Squadron conducted mission specific training (MST) to join 4 Logistic Support Regiment in the Close Support Logistic Regiment role on Operation HERRICK 16; a further five JNCOs trained for the Police Mentoring and Advisory Group role with 1 Squadron. Furthermore, two privates deployed to Cyprus on Operation TOSCA. The remainder of 28 Squadron (with some additions from 1 and 66 Squadrons) took over the rest of the Regiment's vehicles and was the lead for all routine taskings, equipment care, support to 1 Squadron's MST and managing the Regiment's battle casualty replacements. In this period, Captain Baldeep Tamang, the Squadron Administration Officer, organised a highly successful educational visit to the Gurkha Museum where we received interesting presentations on the history of the Regiment from Colonels Paul Gilham and Tony Bridger.

In April the Regimental Headquarters deployed to Afghanistan on Operation HERRICK 16 as the Theatre Logistic Group (TLG). Some 40 personnel from 28 Squadron either deployed with them or joined them later on tour. To give a flavour of the variety of roles, Sergeant Manisundar Rai deployed as an acting Staff Sergeant to coordinate all contract road moves in theatre; Corporal Giriraj Limbu deployed with 94 Squadron VRS Troop and Corporal Abin Rai deployed as an acting Sergeant to Kandahar to work with the RAF in 904 Expeditionary Air Wing.

Back in the ROG, 28 Squadron was given the not insignificant task of organising the Royal Logistic Corps part of the Corps Operational Shooting Concentration. As expected,

most of the Corps prizes went to 10 QOGLR and the individual Corps champion was our own Private Sajjan Gurung. The Squadron was put on standby for Operation ESCALIN, the military's response to potential fuel strikes, throughout the Easter leave period and many had their leave disrupted in order to undergo training. The highly professional response to this task was impressive to see, especially from soldiers whose futures were far from certain.

The Squadron had been warned that a number of people would join the Regiment on Operation HERRICK as part of a surge task. In May the Squadron organised its own MST and deployed, in short order, on a number of exercises to ensure that we were ready. These included a live firing tactical training exercise in Lydd culminating in an enjoyable Forward Operating Base shoot at dusk (where we fired 38,000 rounds in two hours!) and a Joint Theatre Requirement exercise in Longmoor where we were based in a mock patrol base and finished the exercise with the obligatory dawn attack. Captain Baldeep was tasked with organising adventurous training for the ROG and, following our MST, took 60 personnel from the Regiment to Castle Martin in West Wales to conduct various activities, including canoeing and rock climbing.

In June the OC, Major Alex West, Captain Baldeep, and the Operations SNCO, Sergeant Dagalsing Sanwa, deployed to Afghanistan for a five-week reconnaissance in order to understand how the Reverse Support Chain (RSC) process should work in Camp BASTION. This was an interesting problem and outside any of our previous experiences. At the end of the deployment, a detailed Concept of Operations was written for each RSC facility, the proposed ORBAT for a RSC Squadron was updated and statements of requirement for infrastructure, stores and equipment were submitted. Meanwhile, the ROG had the extremely challenging job of preparing for a regimental Equipment Care Inspection. Thanks to the superhuman efforts of Staff Sergeant Tejkumar Sunuwar and the Squadron Artificer, Staff Sergeant Rogers, the Regiment was awarded a 'green'. Moreover, the ROG was tasked to assist with the security of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. 27 personnel



Sgt Giri and his team during the Gurkha Museum visit



Pte Sonic Thapa receives an individual Best Rifle Shot prize from Comdt DCLPA

from 28 Squadron deployed to Stratford and Greenwich to provide venue security from July to September. This all happened at the same time as the second tranche of redundancies was announced. Captain Ross Baker, the Second-in-Command, was left holding the fort during this incredibly demanding period (as well as having a wedding to plan). Thanks to his leadership, the Squadron somehow managed to meet all its commitments and weather the storm.

Elements of 28 Squadron deployed to Afghanistan again as part of the RSC surge in August. As well as the original three, some 20 personnel deployed, mostly from 28 Squadron, in order to establish the first RSC Squadron within the TLG and start the process of redeploying UK material and equipment back from Afghanistan. The RSC facilities in Camp BASTION were commissioned, the RSC concept proved and a fully operational process was handed over to 7 Regiment RLC. Lance Corporal Sudip Gurung led a four-man Forward Team that assisted Task Force Helmand units conduct triage in locations forward of Camp BASTION.

Mention must be also made of Corporal Ganesh Gurung who was awarded a Commander Joint Force Support (Afghanistan) commendation for his sterling work within the Task Force Helmand Logistic Rendezvous and Scrapyard, leading his team in a physically demanding and, at times, unpleasant role.

In late October, at the conclusion of Operation HERRICK 16, all the various parts of 28 Squadron were reunited and we were bolstered by a Petroleum Troop from 66 Squadron. We are now officially a Fuel and General Transport Squadron and look forward to the series of exercises after Christmas that will help us understand our new role. A number of people



OC's final confirmatory orders during Exercise KHUKURI DANCE



Exercise KHUKURI DRAGON
WO2 Dipendra and his team taking a break



28 Sqn during Exercise KHUKURI DRAW



SHQ team in the new RSC Sqn in Camp BASTION

will leave the Squadron in the New Year, including WO2 Dipendra Yakso and Staff Sergeant Tejkumar Sunuwar. They have been great servants to the Regiment and we all wish them the best of luck in the future. Although further pain is inevitable with regards to redundancy next year, we look forward to working together as a whole Squadron again and aim to find time in the programme to have some fun: the soldiers have certainly earned it. Only Gurkha logisticians could have responded to the variety of challenges faced this year with such professionalism, selfless commitment and good humour.

Jai 28 Squadron! Jai QOGLR!!

36 Headquarters' Squadron QOGLR

By Capt Ian Bartlett RLC

The Squadron's year has been predominantly operationally focused, but it has been severely marred by the untimely death of Private Samuel Howis. Samuel Howis was an incredibly jovial, yet polite character, whose outstanding physical fitness was a testament to him. He is severely missed and our deepest sympathies go out to his family. In his honour, the Officer Commanding, Major AC Punter RLC, has been busy organising a number of future events, in his name, and is continually liaising with his friends and family to show that he is gone, but definitely not forgotten.

This has been an incredibly busy year for the Squadron; it has seen the Admin Officer, Captain IK Bartlett, deployed to Afghanistan on HERRICK 15, members of Communications Troop, the Quartermaster's Department and the Adjutant General's Corp Detachment on HERRICK 16. There have also been Chefs deployed to support the decompression, in Cyprus, of returning soldiers from Afghanistan. The year has also seen yet more soldiers, from Communications Troop, deploy to Cyprus, as part of the United Nations Force on Operation TOSCA.

Back in the Rear Operations Group (ROG), commanded by Major C Woodley, Squadron personnel have been just as busy. As well as providing the bulk of Squadron personnel to Operation OLYMPICS, in order to provide security for this year's events, we have been caught up in the routine of governance inspection. Despite being down to almost skeletal manning, the Quartermaster's department headed by the ROG Quartermaster, Captain Nick Homer, has succeeded in passing every inspection with flying colours. The Catering Department, despite its vastly reduced numbers, has continually provided support of the highest standing. They have been integral in the support of the Garrison's joint dining facility and have worked incredibly hard to ensure that every function or event that they have been called upon to cater for has been of the highest quality.



Tough Guy Challenge

The Squadron has seen a number of departments excel in both military orientated and sporting events, with a few individuals testing themselves on physically demanding events, in the name of charity. The most notable of these have to be the Regimental Signals Warrant Officer, WO2 (SQMS) Scott Porter, who completed the 100 kilometre Ridgeway Challenge and Lance Corporal Hooton, who ran the Tough Guy Challenge (on left on right in above photo).

As well as acting as Commander QOGLR, while Lieutenant Colonel T R Blackmore was commanding the Theatre Logistic Group in Afghanistan, Major C Woodley also successfully built the Regimental Messing Area, a task that took him hours of hard work, both on and off duty, including weekends.

All in all, an incredibly busy period in the Squadron's life, but yet again carried out with the aplomb and grace expected of a Gurkha unit.

Jai QOGLR!!

66 Fuel Squadron RLC

By Maj Hampton-Stone RLC

This year has seen 66 Fuel Squadron complete its training and deployment on three different operational commitments, finishing the year with disbandment of the Squadron in its current form. The end of an era!

After a very busy 2011 spent focusing on hybrid foundation training, with a hint of mission specialisation thrown in, the Squadron started the year at quite a pace preparing for deployment. With the benefit of some much appreciated support and freedom of manoeuvre from the Regiment, 66 Squadron was free to complete the preparation for Operation TOSCA, and increase the integration with 29 Regiment RLC, with whom it would be deploying to Cyprus. Concurrently, the Operation HERRICK 16 Petroleum Detachment completed its own training and integration with 94 General Support Squadron, for deployment with Regimental Headquarters - more from them later. Needless to say, there have been more moving parts than a fine Swiss watch.

Firstly, there was a requirement for considerable forward thinking and planning, regarding what needed to be done to effectively 'close' the Squadron for good. With the majority of manpower deploying to an operational theatre in some guise, it was up to the key members of the Rear Operations Group to support the 'counting and sealing' of the equipment table, accommodation, vehicles and offices. Naturally, the business was quite cut throat, as the OC had the pictures taken down around him, ready to be moved on to their new home at 9 Theatre Logistic Regiment. The Squadron would form up as 66 Fuel and General Transport Squadron in its new home at Buckley Barracks, Hullavington at the end of the year, ending a rich and well-established history with QOGLR. Clearly, there was only one thing to be done; end on a high.

Under the watchful eye of Captain Simon Banks and WO2 (SQMS) 'Smudge' Smith, the 23-strong Operation HERRICK Petroleum Detachment formed in preparation for deployment as part of the Theatre Logistic Group. Blessed with one of the sharpest and most experienced minds within the petroleum fraternity (yes, Corporal Skelton), the Detachment experienced the routine of all ranks briefings, along with considerable mission specific training at the Defence Petroleum School, Westmoors. With a number of soldiers already having deployed on Operation HERRICK 11, it was a case of revision for the old and initiation for the new. From the outset, the professionalism and operational readiness of this small but key unit was fully appreciated by everyone who witnessed their training.

The story of the Petroleum Detachment doesn't end there. Whilst continuing to focus on their own pre-deployment training, the energetic and somewhat vivacious crew provided excellent support to the rest of the Squadron who were now well into pre-deployment training for Operation TOSCA. As the Mobile Force Reserve (MFR) for United Nations Forces

in Cyprus (UNFICYP), 66 Squadron had to prepare for a task that was complex in theory, yet rather more straightforward in execution. From the outset, it was only right that the Squadron should be just as enthusiastic as 29 Regiment RLC, in our integration with our friends from South Cerney. After a number of initial planning conferences, it was time to get to know each other a little better. The 29 Regiment Command Cadre provided an ideal opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the Cyprus problem, as well as provide the mandatory social sweetener for the months to follow.

After the final stages of packing up the Squadron and unpacking the deserts, it was time for our own all ranks brief, integration training and a measurement of readiness exercise (MRX). After initial briefs at South Cerney, it was time to move up to Nescliffe Training Camp, into a purpose built Buffer Zone. Whilst we were obviously deploying on the same operation as 29 Regiment, our mission specifics were very different. The MFR had to be fully prepared to deploy anywhere in the Buffer Zone as the Force Commander's reserve, and provide UNFICYP's only public order capability. The security of the United Nations Protected Area (UNPA) is the other key task of the MFR, and that which is conducted day in, day out. However as is the case with all reserves, training and preparation was key, with the ability to provide a responsive capability being regularly tested. All of this and throw in some fire alarms, honour guards and 'illegal asparagus pickers', and the MFR was ready for anything.



*Sporting Desert Combats and Blue Berets
Cpl Stephenson, LCpl Bicharsing, Cpl Dlamini, Pte Earl*



*Force Commander's Inspection
The MFR being tested on its public order capability*

On arrival in Cyprus it was certainly a case of hitting the ground running. The flights worked out at 'one in - one out' so some of the boys were literally straight onto the gate. Thankfully, the Squadron took over from a very professional unit in the form of 23 Pioneer Regiment RLC, who showed us the ropes before running off, just as quickly as we arrived. The initial challenges of integrating with the Argentineans, Hungarians and Slovaks that make up the 106-strong unit cannot be overstated. Whilst there was a clear air of energy and enthusiasm to get stuck in, the language barriers when you have a total of 15 different nationalities all up make for a colourful environment. Ironically, the poetic Scottish tones of Sergeant Rennie remained the most difficult for anyone to grasp. On a similar note, when asked by Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach at an honour guard, "How are you enjoying Cyprus?", the rather amusing response from one of the Slovakian soldiers was, "... Ummmmm two weeks!"

After grasping the requirements of the job, the priority for the MFR was to train and prepare for the Force Commander's Inspection. Major General Chao Liu had already been in position for a year and this was his third rotation of the MFR. As such, his extensive military experience combined with a deep understanding of MFR operations meant that the inspection had to be tight and well structured. Thankfully, after some extensive training and being blessed with some high quality NCOs, the MFR was confident about getting the tick in the box.



*A Bit of Messing
Maj Hampton-Stone, Ptes Praveen and Nom, LCpl Bhim
(Capt Smith is in the background doing his usual thing!)*



*UN Summer Medal Parade
WO2 (SSM) McHugh handing over the parade
to Maj Hampton-Stone*

Once proven capable of doing the job, it was time to see how this particular MFR could make a difference and achieve some real operational effect. After some 'information' analysis (UNFICYP does not do intelligence), it was decided to change the way business is conducted at UNPA. With a 19-kilometre perimeter fence which at best is porous, at worst doesn't exist, it was decided to focus on the immediate security of Blue Beret Camp (BBC). BBC is the main functional camp within UNPA, which, until that point, had three open gates with unrestricted access. With the worst case (but not most likely) scenario being a terrorist attack on the headquarters, the Chief of Staff endorsed the MFR plan to lock the redundant gates and provide a guard post on the main entrance point. With compensatory reductions being made on the local patrol matrix, the impact on the soldiers was minimal. However, everyone responsible for the security of both UNPA and BBC could rest assured that the potential threat was now mitigated.

Once the close-in threat to BBC had been dealt with, it was time to focus on the rather extensive area that is UNPA. Based on the old Nicosia Airport and with a perimeter fence of 19 kilometres, this was a significant task. A number of local farmers had access rights for hay and herding, although despite some of them having their own keys to the crash gates, this did not stop them driving straight through a fence to create their own way in. In early May, this led to an influx of hunters with large packs of dogs, sweeping through the area, culminating with an assault on a civilian member of staff. As such, the MFR combined with the UN Helicopter Flight and United Nations Police (UNPOL) for Operation HUNTER. The aim was to find, detain (where possible), and deter illegal incursion into both UNPA and the Buffer Zone. The operation, conducted over two weekends, was led by Lieutenant Nick Gommersall and Sergeant Ganesh Thapa. The operation was a great success in that the opportunity to work collectively with other force troops proved invaluable, and we have not experienced any intruders since.

Even in such a multinational environment, the maintenance of regimental kaida has been very important. Within a matter of weeks, a 'Gurkha Village' had been established on the site of the old 'Finnish Sauna', providing an ideal place out in the trees for some messing. With a natural fire pit, running water and of course a beer fridge, many a night would be enjoyed with some fantastic food prepared by our two chefs Corporal Tek and Lance Corporal Purna, along with contributions from Sergeant Ganesh and Lance Corporal Arjun. Needless to say, Captain Smith has been particularly grateful for the odd plate or two.

With the MFR being the main source of force troops within UNPA, the significant task of running the UN medal parade falls at their feet. The parade provides the opportunity to award the UN medal to representative contingents from each of the main troop contributing countries. With OC MFR being the parade commander, the responsibility for teaching, practising and conducting the drill rested with the SSM, WO2 McHugh. This is a considerable challenge when you have to get British, Argentinean, Hungarian, Slovakian and indeed Serbian drill working together, and with an RAF band! However the

greatest task was the administrative challenge which had the SQMS, Staff Sergeant Bir Balal, looking forward to retirement even more. His efforts were huge and the whole event was a huge success, earning plaudits from everyone in attendance.

It is often said that the greatest challenges provide equal rewards. Well the most relentless challenge throughout Operation TOSCA is definitely that of international integration; trying to run a unit with five main languages and 15 different nationalities makes for a colourful environment. That being said, it has been incredibly rewarding to sit back and observe the positive approach to both work and play, and the rather amiable friendships that have been formed. The professionalism of our Argentinean, Slovakian and Hungarian soldiers has made delivering the MFR very easy. However, it is on the social side of life that the MFR has reaped the benefits of international cuisine. Clearly, all soldiers within QOGLR enjoy the trappings of a good curry and food plays an important part in our culture. It appears that we are not on our own. The Argentineans like nothing more than to spend a couple of hours cooking half a cow on an Osado; a form of BBQ that is normally placed a couple of inches off the ground, is the size of a door and uses fire wood rather than charcoal. Their pride in cooking a perfect piece of steak is unmatched and we were truly blessed by their passion. Then you have the Hungarians who happily spend hours sweating over a hot stove to produce authentic goulash, complete with cheesy dumplings. Unfortunately, things usually take a turn for the worse when the traditional Hungarian spirit comes out – 'Unicum' should only be enjoyed in small measures.

The MFR has also delivered multi-national success in sporting and military competitions. With the benefit of recent double Gore Trophy winner WO2 McHugh leading the team, the MFR entry into the UN Military Skills Competition were clear favourites. With a mix of British, Gurkha and Argentinean soldiers, the Team endured a loaded march, assault course, map reading, shooting, command task, incident response and

recognition test. With a British based team having not won the competition for four years, the pressure was certainly on. A considerable effort came from 29 Regiment, who pushed the MFR all the way to the end. However the MFR held out and were declared winners. There was much mutual appreciation amongst all the British teams and everyone enjoyed the sense of achievement.

As the end of the tour drew to a close, there was a considerable amount of planning to be finished to recover to UK, take leave and then ensure everyone is in the right place for their new job. Thankfully, a large number of 66 Squadron will be remaining in 10 QOGLR to form the Petroleum Troop in the new 28 Fuel and General Transport Squadron. All of our Gurkhas will also be returning to their roots, with the remainder either helping to form the new 66 Fuel and General Transport Squadron in 9 Theatre Logistic Regiment or like the OC, posted elsewhere. The disbandment of the Squadron was formally marked at the 10 QOGLR medal parade on 01 November in Aldershot.

The Squadron has enjoyed an exceptionally busy year with soldiers deployed on operations in Afghanistan and Cyprus. Ultimately, the morale and professionalism of soldiers in this Squadron has remained exceptionally high through a variety of challenges. Having fought through the difficulty of redundancy, from which we have lost a few, and the sadness of the disbandment of the Squadron, the soldiers have proved time and again what they are all about; doing their job to the best of their ability on operations.

Finally, congratulations must be given to Private Stewart who has got his first tape, Lance Corporals Wootton, Carr, Pepper and Driscoll who push on to corporal, Corporal Skelton who joined the Sergeants' Mess on his return from Afghanistan and Sergeant Day who will remain in the Regiment as the Regimental Operations SNCO upon his selection for promotion to staff sergeant.



Crowning Glory - Winners of the Military Skills Competition
Back: 1st Lt Santiago Vicente, LCpl Moody
Middle: LCpl Vargas, WO2 (SSM) McHugh, Chief of Staff Col GAC Hughes
OBE, Chief of Mission Ms Lisa Buttenheim, Pte Jones, Cpl Tiberio
Kneeling: Sgt Rennie, Pte Mapharuma

94 Material Squadron

The past year was one of development and transition for 94 Squadron. The year was dominated by the Squadron's deployment on Operation HERRICK 16 in the role of the General Support (GS) Squadron, which allowed all ranks to develop valuable technical knowledge and experience in an operational role. In February it was confirmed that 94 Material Squadron QOGLR was to move from Hullavington to Aldershot, joining 10 QOGLR as it re-roles to a Theatre Logistic Regiment. The Squadron would also be renamed as 1 Supply Squadron QOGLR after 1 Transport Squadron's disbandment.

The year began with the Squadron holding both the QOGLR Commander's Sword and the 9 Regiment CO's Cup. Given that the Squadron left 9 Regiment in 2012, it was good to finish on a sporting high. Throughout the subsequent deployment, the boys all missed these competitions and can't wait to get back into it on return from post-tour leave.

The deployment as the GS Squadron on Operation HERRICK 16 was a huge success for the Squadron. The support to dependent units and accuracy of the accounts were both judged as first class and the external technical inspection declared the tour's supply operations as the 'best ever' in this theatre. All but the most junior had deployed on Operation HERRICK 11 and it was interesting for everyone to see the progress in the campaign. Most of the Gurkha soldiers worked in Rendezvous Troop, Transport Troop and Material Troop, but some filled posts in the ECM (Electronic Counter Measures) Stores Section, the Vehicle Replenishment Section, Petroleum Troop, and the section based in Kandahar under command of WO2 Rambahadur Gurung. Most notably and for the first time, six young Gurkhas worked at the Ammunition Supply Point, learning the intricacies of this function in preparation for the Squadron to grow an Ammunition Troop as it expands under the TLR reorganisation. The Squadron's supply operations were supervised by WO2 Pemba Sherpa – the first Gurkha supplier to hold the prestigious appointment of Squadron Technical Warrant Officer and a very significant milestone in the Squadron's development.

At the beginning of the tour the Squadron 2IC, Captain Paliyar Tamang, and his team made a Gurkha Temple inside the Regiment's welfare tent (below). He and the SSM, WO2 Dhungana Rai, organised weekly temple services that helped to maintain the Squadron's strong Gurkha ethos and spiritual health while on operations.

In the early part of the year, the RLC went ahead with the reorganisation of its supply and transport regiments into Theatre Logistic Regiments. The result for 94 Material Squadron and the Gurkhas in 91 Supply Squadron was that they have formed up, along with some retraining drivers and chefs into a single larger supply squadron re-named as 1 Supply Squadron QOGLR, following 1 Transport Squadron's disbandment, and now form part of 10 QOGLR based in Aldershot. The change will allow the Gurkha suppliers to extend their role from dealing only with material to include ammunition supply and consignment tracking, and so is a welcome step forward.

It was a huge stroke of luck that HQ 10 QOGLR was selected to deploy on the same tour as us. This gave the RHQ a perfect opportunity to see, first hand and on operations, how an outstanding supply squadron functions and this will pay dividends for its future role as a Theatre Logistic Regiment.

The next aspiration in the Squadron's development may be to find some supplier ERE posts to enhance both its corporate trade knowledge and exposure to wider regimental duty. This could include some supplier appointments in the quartermaster's department of UK based units or Brunei Garrison - under the RLC's 1st Line Optimisation initiative - and in suitable second-line supply sections that undertake all the supply trade's functions.

The year closed with the regimental parade on the 01 November. Those who deployed on Operation HERRICK 16 received their medals from GOC Theatre Troops. The Kasam Khane parade also took place with a 94 Squadron officer, Lieutenant Jen McBride, leading the recruit party. The Squadron





formally welcomed its new OC, Major Simon Townsend, the first Officer Commanding to return after an earlier tour as a troop commander.

The parade also saw the flag change and renaming of 94 Material Squadron QOGLR to I Supply Squadron QOGLR. It is the end of a fond chapter in 94 Squadron's history. It has taken a huge amount of hard work to grow the Gurkha Supply Squadron from its establishment in 2002. The officers and soldiers of 9 Regiment have been helpful and very kind throughout this time and our Gurkhas have many happy memories of Hullavington. But, as one chapter ends the next begins and the boys are very much looking forward to their future with the Regiment in Aldershot as I Supply Squadron and are utterly determined to be even more successful in the years ahead.

Gurkha Troop, Defence School of Transport

By Captain Bhimprasad Gurung QOGLR

Looking back at the calendar for Gurkha Troop in 2012 has given me a wide range of activities and achievements and here I am sharing few of these with readers. Though it is a small detachment within the Defence School of Transport (DST), Gurkha Troop has the capacity to deliver driver training to meet our Regiment's requirement. Apart from daily business, the Troop took part in a variety of activities to maximise and maintain our unique tradition, highly valued ethos and culture of the Regiment.

In early March, Commander QOGLR, GM QOGLR and the RSM, WO I K Roberts RLC, paid us a short visit. The programme was designed to meet all Gurkha permanent staff serving at DST and also to brief them on the present situation in the Regiment and on further development in the near future. It was a fantastic opportunity to hear the Commander's views on the background of SDSR redundancy tranches and the Regiment's transformation into a Theatre Logistic Regiment.



Comd, GM, RSM and Lama with DST permanent staff

Also the Commander had an opportunity to meet Commandant DST, Colonel JP Ash (late RLC) and Commander Driver Training Wing (DTW), Lieutenant Colonel KF McGowan RLC before departing for ITC Catterick. It was very nice to see them and it has been a real opportunity for the whole detachment.

The key event for us this year has been that the Troop merged into 110 Training Squadron within the DST. The Squadron is part of DTW and has been under the command of the DST since September 2008 when it moved from St Omer Barracks to Leconfield. Despite some frustrations and occasional inertia, the Troop finally moved into the Squadron in early April. All classrooms and offices are co-located with Squadron Headquarters building and are now an integral part of the Squadron. On 20 June, Gurkha Troop organised a 110 Training Squadron social evening for permanent staff and their families. It had been a hugely important day on the Gurkha Troop calendar and it provided a fantastic opportunity to mark Gurkha integration within the Squadron. Without doubt all fellow friends with their families enjoyed the day together in an informal atmosphere. The day started with golf at Cherry Burton Golf Course. It was wonderful to see some of the boys for the first time on a golf course, leaving slow moving trucks and the office behind. Taking advantage of summer weather, all participants played 18 holes. The evening started with a 'meet and greet' session together with families and friends at the Dazzlers Club. The atmosphere was beautiful, ladies in colourful dresses and children playing happily. The evening programme included a welcome to Officer Commanding 110 Squadron, Major Damian Moxon RLC and his good lady, Alison, in true Gurkha tradition.



Following the programme, a Gurkha curry supper was laid out and delicious dry-fried mutton was the favourite dish of the evening. The evening concluded with an inspiring cultural show and cocktail dance from T26 students. It was a truly memorable experience for those of us who had never been to a golf course and the evening was thoroughly enjoyed by all those who attended, particularly the families and children.

Twenty-four students from Intake 2011 completed their driver training as scheduled in July and returned to the Regiment. In the same course this year QOGLR Buddhist Religious Teacher, Lama Guru Keshang Ghale was taken on a Cat B licence acquisition training. A very keen and 'can do it' attitude helped him to progress quickly and pass his practical test as expected. During his stay at DST, the Troop had an opportunity to observe religious festivities and teachings. All permanent staff and families appreciated his time and effort.

The year also has seen difficult and uncertain times for the Troop. Redundancy hit us severely: a Sergeant (Bhakta Gurung) on tranche 1 and five JNCOs were selected for tranche 2. Sergeant Bhakta's farewell from the Troop was held on 28 July; all Gurkha families got together to present him with a final farewell on behalf of Regiment in the traditional manner. We wish him a very happy retirement and every success in civilian life.

Beginning in October, planning for Dashain and Tihar celebration began to occupy our attention. The Troop celebrated Dashain on 13 October. The Dazzlers Club in DST was fully transformed into a stunning party venue with flowers, lights, candles and Nepali traditional decor. The chief guest of the evening, Commandant DST, and all other guests were welcomed in the traditional way by our families. The evening was very much a traditional one and it was wonderful to see so many special people from the DST.

Alongside all of this, the five JNCOs selected for tranche 2 redundancy were bade farewell from DST on 13 November and the evening also included our Tihar celebration. In the presence of Commander DTW, all DTW permanent staff, including families, said goodbye to them with fond memories and best wishes for their future.

As the year draws to an end, the Gurkha Troop is rightly proud of its achievements and we look forward to the New Year and the challenges that it will bring..

Jai Gurkha Troop!

QOGLR Brunei Detachment

Captain Hari took over his job on 19 July from Captain Indra Tamang. He is managing and administrating seven serving Other Ranks, 26 locally employed staff, six school bus escorts and a fleet of 85 vehicles. Throughout this time the Detachment has been extremely busy covering all our normal day-to-day jobs and sending personnel away on summer leave.

After summer leave the Battalion organised an inter-company championship where the Detachment took part in various competitions representing the Garrison Support Troop. After the completion of the championship the Detachment prepared and hosted a pre-Equipment Care Inspection (ECI) and Logistic Support Inspection (LSI), which were very useful for the main ECI and LSI in November. Our next event was the combined Dashain celebration organized on 16 October by the QOGLR Detachment, Brunei Signal Troop (BST) and QGE Boat Section. The Dashain party went extremely well as it was well planned with delicious food, plentiful drinks and an excellent cultural show from the children, bhais and bahinis.

The Bukit Teraja Race

By Lance Corporal Tej Shrestha QOGLR

A very tough inter-company competition named Bukit Teraja was held in the jungle of Teraja on Thursday 13 September. The competition consisted of about 8.5 kilometres of steep uphill, downhill and rough terrain carrying a 35-pound load, webbing and a daysack, including weapons but excluding water. This was one of the many competitions held in Brunei Garrison to choose this year's champion company within 2 RGR. With three fire teams from each company and two from the Garrison Support Unit (GSU), altogether 17 fire teams took part.

The two fire teams for the Garrison Support Unit were found from the QOGLR Detachment, led by Captain Hari Rai OC QOGLR Det, and Brunei Signal Troop, led by Sergeant Tarjan. We went into the jungle for a route recce a week before the competition and carried out a practice and after a final briefing from Captain Hari we were ready for the race.

The race day started at 0400 hours with reveille and a good breakfast. After drawing our weapons from the armoury we departed in a minibus at 0600 hours and the remainder personnel in two big coaches. After an hour's journey we reached the bottom of Bukit Teraja. We found that an impressive preparation was done for the race. The race organiser, WO2 Ganesh, briefed us about the race, route, rules and some safety points and allocated our admin/waiting areas. The team led by Sergeant Tarjan was set to go off fifth and our team, led by Captain Hari, was set on 17th place - the last team to depart from the start point.



The race started at 0700 hours with the lowering of the Union Jack by the Garrison Commander for the first team and the sound of a bugle for the rest of the teams at four-minute intervals (right). After waiting for an hour we were called forward for kit inspection (including weight) and team registration. Finally, we were ready to go to the start point at 0804 hrs. The first half of the route was very steep uphill and there were two man-made wood ladders, as there were no steps. We kept pushing forward by encouraging our team spirit at all times. It took almost an hour to the top of Bukit Teraja and that was a great relief. The other half of the route was steep down and uphill, as well as dangerous. But we kept doubling our pace while concentrating on the route ahead. There were so many hazards, which could slow us down and stop our race. But our team spirit, courage, motivation and determination kept us going. After crossing several checkpoints, we arrived at the bottom of the Bukit Teraja for the final 400-metre sprint to the finish. As we were the last team to set off, everyone, including Garrison Commander, was at the finish to receive us. They were encouraging us to run faster as we were putting in our best effort. Finally, we crossed the finish line in two hours, beating the other GSU fire team and seven other teams from rifle companies.

After completing the race, we were all very tired. The race itself was extremely challenging. However, we completed the race in good time and avoided any injuries. I would like to thank WO2 Ganesh for his organisation of the event and Captain Hari for his experience, training/coaching and tips for the race, which we will never forget.

The 54th Regimental Birthday

By Private Bikram Limbu QOGLR

The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment celebrated its 54th regimental birthday on Saturday 7 July 2012. The Regiment's deployment on Operations HERRICK, TOSCA and OLYMPICS meant that relatively few of us were in the Rear Operations Group (ROG) but it was important that the birthday was celebrated with its customary pomp. The Commander, Lieutenant Colonel TR Blackmore, was also back in the UK on Rest and Recuperation from Operation HERRICK 16, which made it even more special.

Unlike in previous years, ex-QOGLR personnel and their families were invited to the birthday and their presence was much appreciated by all. PowerPoint presentations were prepared outlining the history of the Regiment from Far East days to Hong Kong, Colchester and Aldershot, including culture, tradition and our unique family ethos. The PRI shop was also raking in money due to the inclement weather and QOGLR umbrellas in particular sold like hot cakes. In addition, the Gurkha Chefs Manning Officer, WO2 Dalbahadur Pun, organised a cake competition amongst the QOGLR Chefs with the winner being voted for by those attending the birthday celebration. To entice our guests, free drinks were provided at the entrance where coupons could also be bought for lunch at a nominal cost. Once everyone had arrived, the main event started at 1100 hours.

The Gurkha families made a donation of £501 to the QOGLR Trust. Then Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) PAC Gilham gave a short speech about the making of the busts to commemorate the Regiment's part in Operation GRANBY and its first United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) tour in 1991/92. As usual, the Regiment's history was read in both English and Nepali for everyone to learn and understand our military origin and achievements thus far. After a short break, the Colonel of The Regiment gave a short speech. Soon after, chef extraordinaire Corporal Kedar Singajli from Gurkha Company ITC Catterick, was declared the winner of the cake competition and the cake cutting ceremony was carried out by the Colonel of The Regiment, Commander and Gurkha Major.

The BFBS team stayed totally professional throughout, giving us the opportunity to talk live on the radio. Keeping entertainment at the forefront of priorities for the day, a



Brig ASJ Fay accepts the cheque from the Gurkha Families

well-known personality within the Nepalese community, Mr Sapan Rai, was hired for entertainment and to provide musical support. A local artist himself, he sang a few Hindi and Nepalese numbers much to the delight of everyone. The temptation was too much for a few to bear and the ex-jhilkes were soon on their feet to show their talent.

Around 1300 hours, lunch was served and the Gurkha chefs once again demonstrated why they are masters of their trade. Everyone, from small children to elderly people, was left in awe by the quality and variety of the food. After lunch, a short visit was organised to the Wallace-Dutton messing area which was recently rebuilt, a task spearheaded and built personally by Commander ROG, Major CR Woodley RLC, with a budget of approximately £7,000 and a small fatigue party.

The Sagarmatha Taekwondo Dojang also performed a most entertaining Taekwondo display and, to uphold our tradition, culture and ethos, young children and QOGLR personnel performed various cultural dances and acts (below). As always, the birthday celebration culminated with a cocktail dance by the Commander and Gurkha Major Sahebs, joined by current and ex-members of the Regiment and their families.

This auspicious and remarkable day was an opportunity for everyone to meet one another and reminiscence about past and current happenings. Undoubtedly, the celebration was a huge success and everyone had an equal role in making this regimental birthday a memorable one. We hope to see you all next year!

Jai QOGLR!!



Brig Fay and the GM accept the busts from Col Underhill and Lt Cols Gilham and Gilroy



Nepali Cultural Dance

Cateran Yomp 2012

By Corporal Lok Thapa QOGLR

The Regiment represented The Brigade of Gurkhas by putting a team of four in the Cateran Yomp, which was held in the town of Blairgowrie near Dundee in Scotland. The Cateran Yomp is the soldiers' charity designed to help soldiers and their families. This event started last year and has already succeeded in gaining popularity amongst many sponsors and the local population. The main aim of including a team of Gurkhas was to advertise and publicise our existence (i.e. The Brigade of Gurkhas).

Although the Regiment was heavily committed to accomplishing different tasks, 94 Squadron (Rear), led by Captain Hari Rai, was determined to take part in the event. We went through vigorous training sessions before we set off for Scotland. We had four runners and three people in our administrative team. The four runners were Captain Hari Rai, Privates Sharan Limbu, Dipesh Pariyar and Ravi Rana and the administrative team included Corporal Bagbir Pun (minibus driver), Corporal Lok Thapa (IC Admin) and Private Navin Rai (Admin Asst).

After a ten-hour drive on Thursday 28 June, we arrived at Alyth in Scotland where our camping site was booked for three nights. It was five miles away from Blairgowrie town where the event was to be held. As soon as we arrived, we put up our tents. It was an utterly new experience for many of us, as we had never been camping before. Soon it was time to cook dinner and our cooking lesson began with Captain Hari, who is an expert and started sharing his experience with us. After dinner, everyone went to bed thinking of the next day's route reconnaissance and, of course, everyone was exhausted after the long journey.

The next day we went to find the starting point at Blairgowrie town and also had a chance to explore the town. Once we arrived at the starting point, we met the key people in the event organisation, who were eagerly waiting to see us. Having met them, we hurriedly moved to recce the route. It was not possible to walk along the trail because we did not have sufficient time so we drove from checkpoint to checkpoint. Having driven through all the checkpoints, we made our way back to the campsite and our team also received a safety brief that night.

On the day we started at 0830 hours, whereas other teams left at various times between 0700 and 0800 hours, depending on how fast they were. The intention of leaving us to the last was purely to advertise us; we were considered the fastest runners so as we went past the walkers, they would notice us. Before we started off, a lot of pictures were taken and everybody was cheering us (right). It was a wonderful reception.



A ferocious and blood-curdling send off!



34 Sqn Cross Country Team - Kluang 1969

We started off at a steady pace so that nobody would feel tired and exhausted. That was the main idea and kept the same speed throughout the route. The motive behind the participation was to complete the event easily and comfortably. The trail was 52 miles long and consisted of many breathtaking scenes. The trail was divided into four checkpoints along with several water stops in between. The event was designed for all levels of participants and, in order to encourage more people to participate, the route was broken down into three stages where people would get a bronze medal if anyone completed the first 23 miles. If they still wanted to carry on then they could go for the silver at 38 miles and finally the gold medal for completing the route.

We completed the Cateran Yomp in second place in 13 hours 45 minutes. The route was extremely challenging and tough, made worse by the boggy ground in many places. Although we didn't come in first place, we were still able to break last year's record which was 14 hours 30 minutes. We felt immensely proud of our achievement. We can not help thanking our admin team for their outstanding support. Without them, it would not have been possible to complete the run.

Jai QOGLR!!

Welfare Support

Supporting Elderly Nepalese People in Aldershot

By Mrs Kalpana Gauchan

After having worked for more than a decade for civilian employers, I decided to take a break in the hope of finding a different job that would give me less stress and more enjoyment. Whilst at home one day, I went to the newly built Aldershot Centre for Health. What I found was immense pressure and sheer frustration of GP staff affected by the ever-increasing inflow of ex-Gurkhas and their dependants, who could neither explain their problems nor understand what they had been asked. I watched for some time and wondered whether I might be able to assist those extremely needy people. In the meantime, my friend Maria Woodley had spoken about the problems faced every day by her GP. When I saw many elderly Gurkhas with communication problems, I immediately decided that I needed to help them as much as I could. Maria was a great inspiration for me to follow up my idea. My husband fully supported my idea of helping others that would provide much needed help, whilst serving our own senior Nepalese (Gurkha) citizens.

It took me almost three months to get through security vetting and follow up procedures before finally I was allowed to work twice a week as a volunteer assistant. I have already met some amazing people with a variety of circumstances and problems. I know it is not appropriate to write about personal medical related matters in the Journal. However, I would like to mention a memorable event here. I met an elderly Gurkha veteran (over the age of 83) who came to the hospital with



Mrs Kalpana (wife of Maj Khim GM QOGLR) with patients at Aldershot Hospital

his fingers wrapped in a kitchen towel. When I asked him what happened, he told me about the incident for 20 minutes. To cut the story short, he injured his finger while he was moving his household stuff to a new place. Before completing the move he felt very hungry so he started to prepare some vegetables. Unfortunately, he could not see the knife blade and cut his finger. I just wonder, had he lived in Nepal, his relatives would have looked after him instead of living on his own in UK with all these difficulties and problems.

Now, I work in this organisation as a volunteer on Tuesday and Thursday every week, where I have been able to help all those extremely needy people and I hope to continue assisting them for some time.

Jai QOGLR!!

10 QOGLR Families' Poppy Break

By Captain Tik Gurung GSPS

As part of continued welfare support to families whose loved ones were away on Operation HERRICK 16 and TOSCA, the Unit Welfare Officer, Captain Dave Stewart organised a week's free holiday from 24 - 31 August, courtesy of the Royal British Legion. Somerset Legion House, the Royal British Legion holiday centre in Weston-Super-Mare (WSM) provided accommodation and feeding for approximately 42 families. Whilst the targeted beneficiaries were spouses of deployed personnel, the Rear Operations Group (ROG) personnel also took up a number of places, as they could not be filled.

On 24 August, two coaches were booked to take families to WSM. Readers may be aware that WSM is a tourist destination, located on the Bristol Channel coast, South West of Bristol. The name Weston is made up of two old English or Saxon words meaning the "west tun" or "settlement" and super (with small s) means "on" or "above" and "mare" is Latin for "sea".



Once the families arrived at the Poppy Break Centre (PBC) (right), they were allocated rooms. The centre itself is situated on the sea front and offers spacious accommodation with views directly over the beach lawns to the Bristol Channel. It is a fantastic venue, extremely well maintained and has amenities such as a hairdressing salon, games room, cinema, library, spa bath, activities room, guest laundry. The town is only a few minutes' walk from the PBC.

Right in the heart of Weston and its beach lies Weston's Grand Pier which is a world-class amusement centre. The beach is naturally formed and stretches for miles. With the second highest tidal range in the world, Weston beach really is a natural wonder. It is also suitable for many activities such as walking, swimming, running and sports. Other tourist attractions, such as the sea aquarium, helicopter museum, the famous donkey ride and an 18-hole golf course, are all near the town centre. It may be worth highlighting that the late Jill Dando (BBC presenter) was born in WSM - a memorial garden, named "Jill's Garden" can also be found there as a permanent tribute to her.

Every day, different activities were organised ranging from visits to theme parks, museums, evening entertainment (cinema, magicians etc). On the second day, the Gurkha Major took the families out for a hill walk. It started from the PBC, along the sandy coastal beach, passing the town, up a few hills and back into the town centre. All in all, it took approximately three hours. On the final night, a Western theme party was held to bid farewell to the families and they were taught the art of line dancing. It turned out to be a hugely entertaining night. On 30 August, sadly, it was time to leave and head back home. Prior to returning home, all the families got together to show their appreciation. GM Saheb gave a thank you speech to the Manageress of the centre (above) and presented a regimental plaque on behalf of those attending. Those who wished to donate money towards the RBL did so voluntarily.

The PBC is a fantastic facility for Forces families. It allows them to get away from their home, unwind and spend some idyllic time with other families. In my opinion, it was a brilliant opportunity, well organised and would recommend all units to seize the opportunity while it lasts. On behalf of all the families who benefited, a big thank you to Captain Dave Stewart for arranging such a wonderful 'freebie' holiday.



Gurkha Company (Mandalay) Infantry Battle School Brecon Wales

Staff List (as at Jan 2013)

Maj	Khusiman Gurung MVO	RGR	Officer Commanding
Capt	Sherbahadur Gurung	1 RGR	Second in Command
Capt	Kushalkumar Gurung	1 RGR	OC 1 Platoon
Capt	Jogendrasing Limbu	2 RGR	OC 2 Platoon
WO2	Dilbahadur Gurung	1 RGR	OC 3 Platoon
WO2	Minprasad Pajja Pun	1 RGR	CSM
CSgt	Nunbahadur Thapa	1 RGR	CQMS
Sgt	Lokendraraj Shrestha	GSPS	Chief Clerk

Newsletter

The Gurkha Coy (Mandalay) mission is to provide general training and duties support to HQ Infantry Battle School (IBS) and the Training Divisions as coordinated by the Courses Resource Cell (CRC), in order to ensure the delivery of quality training in accordance with Operational Performance Statement (OPS). As a secondary task, it continues to represent the Army, the Infantry, IBS and GC (M) to the highest standards within Wales and the local Brecon/Powys community.

The year 2012 has passed quickly for all the Gurkha Coy (Mandalay) while also seeing the company personnel being very busy and committed to provide training and administrative support to the IBS. No 1 Platoon has provided the training support to Junior Division to run Section Commander Battle Tac Course, No 2 Platoon was involved with Senior Div to run Platoon Sergeant Battle Tac Course, and No 3 Platoon had been busy providing manpower support to Platoon Commanders' Division for Platoon Commander Battle Course (PCBC). As usual No 3 Platoon continued to be deployed to Cyprus to support PCBC, Battle Camps 1103 in March 2012, 1201 in June 2012 and 1202 in October 2012. This has been very long but very eventful as a company got up to many different activities like Inter Platoon Shooting, Swimming, Volleyball, Cross country, Orienteering competition and the last event ended up with Basketball competition on 7 December 2012.

The Company HQ was busy dealing with more GI matter as Army Compulsory Redundancy Tranche 2 announcement was inbound. The biggest challenges were to uphold the morale of soldiers as 40% of our Coy members were within the bracket for Tranche 2 Army Compulsory Redundancy. Few soldiers were successful in transferring to other British Units. 21 Members of the Gurkha Coy (Mandalay) were selected for the Army Compulsory Redundancy Tranche 2 which was announced on 12 June 2012. The Company has been overstretched for the last few months as Tranche 2 Army Compulsory Redundancy and normal RD personnel spent their time in Resettlement Courses before their transition to civilian life. However, we have been working really hard to fulfill the School's mission

and the credit goes to every single member of the Coy who never slowed down for their tasking.

During the year 2012 a number of key personalities have been changed. New Company 2IC Capt Sherbahadur Gurung 1 RGR arrived to the Company as Capt Manikumar Limbu proceeded on pension in March 2012. WO2 Dilbahadur Gurung took over the role of No 3 Platoon Comd from Capt Pitamber Gurung. Sgt Lokendra Shrestha GSPS arrive from Brunei and took over the Coy Chief Clerk's role from Sgt Lokbahadur Jirel who was posted to 2 RGR in Brunei.

Despite the busy commitment, Gurkha Coy (Mandalay) has been continuing with the various Coy and family activities. On 20 March 2012, all members of the Company, less essential duties and available families were assembled to observe the Mandalay Day. The ceremony began with the Battle Honour citation being read by Capt Sherbahadur Gurung (2IC GCM) and two minutes' silence was observed by all. The Officer Commanding of the Gurkha Company (Mandalay) Maj Khusiman Gurung MVO laid the wreath in the memory of those who were killed or injured on 20 March 1945.

The Commanding Officer of Infantry Battle School Brecon Lt Col AH Ward RIFLES and Officer Commanding of GC (M) Maj Khusiman Gurung MVO conducted two weeks duty to Nepal in May 2012. They visited both East and West parts of Nepal and met some of the parents and relatives of soldiers currently serving in GC(M). It had been a very useful and memorable trek especially for the Commanding Officer as he learnt more about the background of the soldiers and where they were from.

The Gurkha Coy (Mandalay) Wives Committee had been very active and had organised a number of family activities over the past few months to maintain the morale and to educate the families in various issues. Family coffee morning had been held once a month to foster relationships between them and share views on various family issues. One of the key events

that the GC (M) ladies held was the 70s Theme Ladies Night in Dering Lines on 30 June 2012. It was a successful and enjoyable event for the families.

The Gurkha Coy (Mandalay) had been busy with Public and Community Relation activities throughout the period. One of the biggest Public Relation events of our calendar was the Queen's visit to Wales which took place on 26 and 27 April 2012. During the Diamond Jubilee celebration tour, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had a two days visit in Wales. Her Majesty the Queen visited the county fair of Glanusk Park near Brecon on 27 April 2012 (Second day). During this auspicious occasion, Her Majesty the Queen was accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh Prince Philip where Gurkha Coy (Mandalay) solders presented a Kukri dance and Kukri pattern display in the main arena and the Gurkha ladies and children performed beautiful Kauda and Sorathi dance respectively on the main stage. It was a great privilege for the GC (M) to have such an honour opportunity. There were thousands of people from all over Wales on this auspicious day.

Another key PR event of the year was the Brecon Town Freedom parade on Sunday 22 July 2012 to mark the celebration of 27 years since the Gurkhas came to serve in Brecon in 1974. GC(M) of Brecon has been stationed at Dering Lines since 1974 and in 1985 was conferred as Honorary Citizens of Brecon for the recognition of their service to the community for the first time ever. This honour bestows the right to march through the streets of the town bearing arms and with Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas each year. The Brecon

town was brought back to life with this year's Brecon freedom parade, which is a colourful and memorable historical occasion.

On Sunday 11 November 2012, Gurkha Company (Mandalay) along with 160 Bde and Brecon local community took part in the remembrance parade in the town of Brecon to commemorate those who have fallen and given their lives for our futures. The parade was led by Capt Kushalkumar Gurung 1 Platoon Commander, the parade which made it emotional and heart-warming as they were part of the Company's most respected event. Even though it is an annual parade, it is a special time for the company, not only to remember those who have passed, but to see the old veterans on parade. The atmosphere was sensational and the memories which once were in the past were brought to the surface.

Conclusion

Following a full and eventful 2012 the Coy is now fully charged and gearing up for the New Year of 2013. The new challenges are coming into era and the Company would have to accept the pain. Be frantically it would be busier then in the past but will hopefully be as successful and productive as it has been in previous years. The families and local community both inside and outside of camp have played an equal part in supporting the Gurkha Company (Mandalay) throughout the year.

Jai Gurkha Coy (Mandalay)

Gurkha Company (Sittang) Royal Military Sandhurst

Staff List

Maj	Yambahadur Rana MVO	RGR	Officer Commanding
Capt	Maniram Rai	2 RGR	Second-in-Command
Capt	Dilip Gurung	1 RGR	Operations Training Officer
Capt	Dillikumar Rai	2 RGR	1 Platoon Commander
Capt	Mahendra Phagami	1 RGR	2 Platoon Commander
Capt	Mukunda Gurung	1 RGR	3 Platoon Commander
WO2	Lokprasad Limbu	2 RGR	Company Sergeant Major
CSgt	Bishnukumar Thapa Magar	1 RGR	Company Quartermaster Sergeant
SSgt	Deepak Gurung	QG Sigs	Resettlement/Welfare SNCO
Sgt	Khusiram Gurung	GSPS	Chief Clerk
Sgt	Devprasad Rana	1 RGR	Training Sergeant
Sgt	Khobindra Gurung	1 RGR	1 Platoon Sergeant
Sgt	Kumar Rai	2 RGR	2 Platoon Sergeant
CSgt	Tekbahadur Mabo	2 RGR	3 Platoon Sergeant

Newsletter

The early 2012 has brought change of almost all the command appointments from Officer Commanding to number of SNCOs' appointments. In January 2012, Officer Commanding Maj Yambahadur Rana MVO took over from Maj Shivakumar Limbu MBE MVO, Capt Dillikumar Rai took over from Capt Sachinhang Limbu as Platoon Commander 1 Platoon, Capt Mahendra Phagami took over from Capt Kishor Roka as 2 Platoon Commander and Sgt Khusiram Gurung took over from Sgt Padambahadur Gurung as Chief Clerk. In May 2012, Capt Maniram Rai took over from Capt Trilochan Gurung as Company Second-in-Command and Capt Mukunda Gurung took over from Capt Dilip Gurung as 3 Platoon Commander. Capt Dilip Gurung took over as GCS Operations Training Officer Maj Manoj Mohara in June 12.

Commandant RMAS Visit to Gurkha Coy (SITTANG)

GC(S) has always been fortunate to have blessing hands of the Commandants of the RMAS. The new Commandant RMAS Major General T P Evans DSO MBE and Lady Evans paid a precious visit to the company on 18 May 2012. They were welcomed with traditional RGR garland (Mala) and a brief presentation regarding the role and responsibilities of GCS was given by the OC GC(S).

Gurkha COY (SITTANG) Routine Support

GC(S) had another two busiest Terms in RMAS. The members of the company have been involved in almost every single training support requirement to the Academy ranging from Range safety, miscellaneous standing tasks, demonstration to a number of large field Exercises as well as Duty and Fatigues. Apart from training support GCS also represented RMAS to CENTSAM by GCS Shooting Team, Nepal Cup and Public Relation (PR) events.

Despite the busy commitment supporting the Academy, we were also able to conduct inter-platoon competition (i.e. Football, X-Country, Basketball, Volleyball, Swimming and Shooting Competition) to decide the Champion Platoon. After six inter-platoon competitions 2 Platoon was the overall champion Platoon for the training year 2011/12.

Army Operational Shooting Competition

GC(S) Army Operational Shooting Competition (AOSC) team achieved a historical success in the competition becoming the only minor unit team to be the fourth in the competition and all shooters were within Army hundred. The success of the team was due to the charismatic and strong leadership by Capt Dilip Gurung and the team was represented by 69377 Sgt Devprasad Rana, 70494 LCpl Rajiv Tamang, 70176 Rfn Dambarbahadur Pun, 71842 Rfn Santosh Gurung and

30048335 Spr Hemraj Gurung. Their success and achievement have been acknowledged by the Commandant RMAS and the Commanding Officer Sandhurst Support unit (SSU).

Brigade Week and Nepal Cup 2012

GC(S) was given the honour to host the Brigade of Gurkhas (BG) Management Board and Nepal Cup 2012 at RMAS from 25 - 28 June 2012. Despite the busy commitment the team headed by Capt Mukunda Gurung ensured that all the ground work, preparation, security and sport pitches for the Nepal Cup were in place for the event. Special praise should go to WO2(CSM) Lokprasad Limbu for assembling and training the GC(S) Nepal Cup team and became the Plate Runner-up Nepal Cup 2012. GC(S) team was the only team to reach the final against the 1st Battalion Royal Gurkha Rifles (1 RGR) as minor unit which is another grand success for the company. The week long event was very successful and more than 1,000 serving and retired members and their families attended the event. Once again the success has been acknowledged by the Commandant RMAS and the CO SSU. Well Done to Nepal Cup team and WO2(CSM) Lokprasad Limbu!

RMAS 200 and Heritage Day

This year RMAS celebrated its 200 years due to which RMAS Heritage Day 2012, an annual Commandant's charity event, was an important event to let the public enjoy and at the same time raise money for Charity. GC(S) actively participated and ran a number of stands, but most notable stands were Jungle Lane, Gurkha Curry, Falkland War and Gurkha traditional and cultural Stand. Jungle Lane was mainly about survival in the jungle and it was visited by more than 700 visitors. Gurkha curry Stand was very popular and all the food was sold within 2 hours. Our sympathy goes to all those who were not fortunate to test the flavour of the delicious Gurkha Curry. One of the main attractions of the Heritage Day was the Falkland War Stand. The stand consisted of the history of the war and 7th Gurkha Rifles involvement in the war. We were also fortunate to have Brigadier D P Morgan OBE (CO 7 GR during the war) as guest speaker which added massively to the value of the stand. Finally, the most highlighted stand was the Gurkha traditional and cultural stand where the children and soldiers from GC(S) performed traditional Nepalese dance, Gurkha Kukuri dance and the Kukri Patterns. The spectators were all delighted with the colour and diversity of Nepalese culture and tradition and long it may continue.

Public Relation (PR) and Community Relation (CR) Events

Public Relation (PR) and Community Relation (CR) in the wider community remain a vital function of the company. The

highlight of these events has been the visit by ten members of GC(S) led by Capt Mahendra Phagami to Guernsey Island along with the pensioners from the Royal Hospital Chelsea to mark the independence of Guernsey Island from the Germans on 9 May 1945. Capt Mahendra Phagami's team and The Chelsea Pensioners were welcomed and hosted by the people of Guernsey with respect for a week. The final day of the visit concluded with the freedom parade in the centre of the town where it was inspected by the Governor of Guernsey Island. During the visit bonds between the Chelsea Pensioners and the Gurkhas have strengthened and 11 Gurkhas from GC(S) were invited to Formation Parade at the Royal Hospital Chelsea in London.

Capt Dillikumar Rai ran Herrick kit and equipment and Jungle stands during Armed Force Day celebration at Winchester organised by the Gurkha Museum in June 2012. We are also very proud to say that our boys have been involved to raise money for ABF and GWT throughout the year.

Dashain 2012 Celebration

On 20 October 2012, all members of Gurkha Company (Sittang) and their families celebrated the most auspicious Hindu festival, Dashain in a traditional and unique style. For ten days the various religious ceremonies including fasting, prayers, and offerings were carried out by the Pujari team under the supervision of Company Second in command Capt Maniram Rai.

On the night of Kalaratri, all Officers, SNCOs and their families gathered outside the New College to greet the guests with Khata and Nepali topi. Among the main guests were the Commandant RMAS Maj General T P Evans DSO MBE and Lady Evans, Brigadier and Mrs A J P Bourne OBE. Dashain 'Bada Khana' was held in the New College Dining Hall (Officer's Mess). The food and layout were impeccable and all the credit goes to Cpl Pasang Sherpa Gurkha Chef IC and his team; LCpl Ramchandra Limbu, Pte Mukesh Rai & Teny Gurung. After enjoying the delicious meal, all personnel made way to Woolwich Hall for the entertainment.

The Officer Commanding Maj Yambahadur Rana MVO welcomed all the distinguished guests and highlighted the significance of the Dashain and how it is celebrated. The cultural programme started approx at 1045 hrs, it was beautifully choreographed and presented. The show was fantastically presented with mixed flavour of new and old customs suitable for both old and new generations. It was all possible due to the supervision and direction of Capt Mukunda Gurung. The programme concluded with the cocktail dances by all including all our guests.

On the tenth day, the final day of the festival, all ranks from GC (S) gathered at the temple to receive the Tika from the most senior Gurkha Officer, Officer Commanding Maj Yambahadur Rana MVO. All in all, the festival was a grand success, marking one of the main religious festivals but also celebrating our heritage and culture.

Conclusion

Despite being hardest hit by redundancy on Tranche 2 and the uncertainty of the future of the GC(S), we have kept up with the ever increasing pace of the battle rhythm of the Academy in a professional manner. Our hard work, and our belief in the ethos of the Gurkhas will always take us to the destination.

Jai Gurkha COY (SITTANG)



Comdt RMAS being welcomed by OC GC (S) and Kanyas



OC GC (S) Offering Tika in the temple



Children from GC(S) and MPGS performing on Kalaratri



The winner 1 platoon inter platoon Basketball competition

Gurkha Company (Catterick)

History

Until 1948, recruits for the Brigade of Gurkhas were trained at Regimental Centres in India. After Indian independence and the division of the Brigade between the Indian and British Armies, British Gurkha recruit training was reformed and renamed the Training Depot Brigade of Gurkhas at Sungei Patani, North Malaya on 15 August 1951.

On 11 June 1971, the Depot was moved to Malaya Lines in Hong Kong and in December 1994 renamed the Gurkha Training Wing (GTW) and moved to the Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Church Crookham. In December 1999, GTW moved to 3rd Battalion, the Infantry Training Centre (ITC) Catterick and renamed Gurkha Company. Gurkha Company is currently part of the 2nd Infantry Training Battalion (2ITB) based in Helles Barracks.

Gurkha Company in 2012

Gurkha Company in 2012 consisted of 80 Permanent Staff of all ranks and 176 Gurkha recruits ORBAT'd into 6 platoons. It is here that Gurkha recruits are trained to be part of the modern British Army whilst retaining their proud Gurkha

heritage and Nepalese identity. Gurkha Company delivers the 37 week Combat Infantrymen's Course (Gurkha) (CIC(G)). In 2012 the training objective of Close Quarter Combat using the kukri was formally re-introduced into the CIC(G). For future Gurkha intakes this training will remain along with the new CIC (Extended). CIC (Extended) is an additional 2 weeks and includes GMPG weapon handling, HMNVS training / live firing and finally Close Quarter Marksmanship with live firing.

Gurkha Company Mission

To deliver trained Gurkha soldiers in order to meet the operational requirements of the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Gurkha Company Role

To mould a Nepalese youth into a Gurkha soldier, train to the requirements of the British Army, and who retains his Nepalese identity and will live up to the values and standards of the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Gurkha Company Staff List

Major R T Anderson	RGR	Officer Commanding Gurkha Company
Captain Rambahadur Malla	RGR	Second in Command Gurkha Company
Captain Ashokkumar Gurung	QGE	Training Officer Gurkha Company (until November 2012)
Captain B E Norfield	RGR	Training Officer Gurkha Company (wef November 2012)
Captain Jitbahadur Chungbang	RGR	1 Platoon Commander
Captain Milanchandra Rai	RGR	2 Platoon Commander
Captain Dhalindrabadur Khatri Chhetri	RGR	3 Platoon Commander
Captain Nimbahadur Garbuja Pun	QGS	4 Platoon Commander
Captain B E Norfield	RGR	5 Platoon Commander (until November 2012)
Captain Kamal Khapung Limbu	QGE	5 Platoon Commander (wef November 2012)
Captain Ganeshbahadur Gurung	QOGLR	6 Platoon Commander
Warrant Officer 2 Basudev Rai	RGR	Company Sergeant Major
Warrant Officer 2 Jangabahadur Singjali	QGE	Training Coord Warrant Officer
Colour Sergeant Sangam Rai	RGR	Company Quartermaster Sergeant
Staff Sergeant Kritiman Baraili	GSPS	Chief Clerk Gurkha Company (until November 2012)
Staff Sergeant Surendra Limbu	GSPS	Chief Clerk Gurkha Company (wef November 2012)

Presentation of Awards - Intake 2012

Champion Section

1 Section, 5 Platoon, commanded by
21170652 Cpl Jayandra Garbuja QGE

Champion Recruit for 1RGR

30166239 T/Rfn Sameer Gurung

Overall Champion Recruit

30166239 T/Rfn Sameer Gurung

Champion Recruit for 2RGR

30166793 T/Rfn Sushil Limbu

Champion Recruit for QGE

30166243 T/Rfn Mohan Gurung

Champion Recruit for QGS

30166779 T/Rfn Radin Rai

Champion Recruit for QOGLR

30166272 T/Rfn Sandeep Gurung

Champion Recruit for GSPS

30166234 T/Rfn Nabaraj Rana

Champion Shot

30166293 T/Rfn Manoj Rana

Trainee Rifleman with the most improved English

30166865 T/Rfn Arshu Gurung

The Fittest Trainee Rifleman

30166252 T/Rfn Sunil Gurung

Commandant's Trophy

The Commandant's Trophy is presented annually to the member of Permanent Staff (below the rank of Sgt) that most upholds the reputation of this establishment. In 2012 the Commandant's Trophy was awarded to 21169709 Cpl Kedar Singjali QOGLR

Champion Platoon

No 5 Platoon. The Platoon Training Team:
Capt B E Norfield RGR - Platoon Commander
Sgt Durga Jimée (1RGR) - Platoon Sergeant
Cpl Anil Rai (2RGR) - Remedial Section Commander (until August 2012)
Cpl Dilkumar Subba (2RGR) - Remedial Section Commander (wef August 2012)
Cpl Jayandra Garbuja (QGE) - Section Commander
Cpl Prasanta Limbu (2RGR) - Section Commander
Cpl Prakash Gurung (1RGR) - Section Commander

Intake 2012 - Statistics

Total Enlisted - 176
Total Passing Out - 169 (a 96% First Time Pass Rate)
Held back on medical ground - 7
(all those held back subsequently completed training)
Gurkha Company Wastage Rate - 0%

Fitness Assessment - (Individual Assessment)

Personal Fitness Assessment (1.5 mile run) fastest time: - 7mins 43secs
Percentage of Trainee Riflemen to Attempt and pass AFT (8 miler) at the 1st opportunity - 100%

Language Assessment

ESOL Level 1 - 60
ESOL Entry Level 3 (Level 1 Speaking and Listening) - 53
ESOL Entry Level 3 (Basic Skills) - 63

100% of recruits passed the Trade Selection Test. 77% scored above the grade needed to undertake RLC Ammo Tech training.

2012 Newsletter

Gurkha Company is often described as a unique establishment, the place where Gurkhas are made. Here the Gurkha recruits conduct an infantry course not too dissimilar to their British counterparts but CIC(G) retains many of the key events and competitions that ensure it is a Gurkha soldier produced at the end. Recruit Intake 2012 (RI12) can be proud of achieving, participating in and witnessing more than just what is laid down within the CIC(G). It would be appropriate to highlight a few examples of just how RI12 became a unique intake during a busy and very productive nine months in Catterick.

Religion plays an important role in Gurkha Company and the wider Brigade. RI12 were proud to host two very special guests during their training. In April 2012 Gurkha Company hosted His Holiness Dharmaratna Swami Shree Gopal Sharan Devacharya (Hindu of the Year 2009) and were very grateful for

his donation of a Shiva Linga statue for the Gurkha temple. In June 2012 His Holiness the Dalai Lama granted Gurkha Company a private audience with him in Manchester, an opportunity that does not happen every day and an invitation we could not refuse! Both these spiritual leaders provided sound and useful words of wisdom. The Dalai Lama confessed to being most inexperienced at the art of firing a rifle, hinting that these lessons would best be left to the Gurkha instructors to deliver. Both the Dalai Lama and Dharmaratna Swami Shree Gopal Sharan Devacharya provided RI12 with useful advice about the moral component and how religion supports recruits in striving for perfection, an area all appreciated as being the key to success.

In July Gurkha Company were invited to participate in, and be the starting group, at the 2012 BUPA Great North 10k road race in Gateshead. All 176 Gurkha recruits competed, along

with Permanent Staff and Lt Col JNB Birch RGR (Commanding Officer 2nd Infantry Training Battalion). The elite athletes for this international race started three minutes ahead of us and many of them were shocked to be overtaken by the Gurkha Company group. Swiftly social media groups were full of praise for the Gurkhas from Catterick, including this quote which sums up the day for all concerned, 'an inspirational group of young men (the Gurkhas), they made me smile all the way round!' You will not be surprised to hear that the finishing times were impressive and left many wondering just what we feed the boys in Gurkha Company...a credit to our QOGLR chefs and Gurkha PTIs.

Returning to Gurkha Company and the delivery of RII2's CIC(G). This intake are the first Gurkha recruits for a number of years to complete the Close Quarter Combat (CQC) using the kukri training objective. This, as you can imagine, has been a welcome return to the CIC(G) and has now been formally re-introduced. The training uses Tae-Kwon-Do as the foundation on which 20 hours of CQC and kukri fighting pattern is based. The final assessment is conducted using a series of individual and group demonstrations, during which the recruits must show agility, core strength, discipline, controlled aggression, initiative and teamwork. The progressive CQC training programme is mandatory for every recruit but RII2 took this one stage further by all volunteering to achieve an upgrade of at least one Tae-Kwon-Do belt. RII2 subsequently used their new skills during community engagement opportunities in the local area and Brigade units should be able to rely on more of the same from all future Gurkha recruits. Thanks must go to Master Rastra Kumar Rai (ex-QGE) and PTI Cpl Raju Tamang (IRGR) for their support in reviving this training objective. Master Rastra Kumar Rai, the author of the original CQC and kukri pattern PAM, was instrumental in delivering refresher training for the Permanent Staff, all of whom are required to support the lessons. Cpl Raju has been the lead for all the CQC and kukri lessons now integral to the CIC(G). CQC training is an example of just how important it is to maintain standards and traditions within establishments such as Gurkha Company. Gurkha Company is the gateway through which all Gurkhas must pass on their way to the Brigade units. We must never compromise or allow our standards to be forgotten, once lost they are incredibly hard

to revive. A revised CQC using the kukri PAM is soon to be released and will be available to all Brigade units.

Gurkha Company would like to thank GOC Support Command for his support to both RII2 and Recruit Intake 2013 (RII3). He was the Reviewing Officer at the RII2 Passing Out Parade in September 2012 and subsequently the Inspecting Officer for RII3's Attestation Parade in Pokhara. Gurkha Company has now switched focus to delivering the CIC(G) for RII3 and along with the continuation of CQC using the kukri training it is important to inform the Brigade that future generations of Gurkha recruits will now receive CIC (Extended). This two week extension to the CIC enables us to provide GPMG weapon handling, HMNVs training and live firing and Close Quarter Marksmanship training and live firing. All in all continuous improvements are being made to a course which delivers the standards demanded by the Brigade units.

In last year's Kukri Journal a request was made for all Brigade personnel to continue providing constructive criticism of the standards of Gurkha soldiers that enter the units. Subsequent feedback, along with statistical evidence, proved vital in reversing a decision taken by a higher authority to reduce the number of swimming lessons for Gurkha recruits. The Military Swim Test is currently not an output test of the CIC but it was clear that cultural differences along with the clear increase in risk that had been placed on Brigade units was too great and swimming lessons are back up to nine for each CIC(G). Please continue to provide your views as they are to some extent the ultimate validation - Catterick military (94731) 3742.

Gurkha Company remains a unique and special unit, the only place where British Army Gurkhas are moulded and the hourglass through which they must all pass. In order to keep you informed of the progress of our Gurkha recruits and your personnel posted here to Gurkha Company we have launched a monthly electronic newsletter. We hope that you will find this an easy read. Gurkha Company is a Brigade unit and as such all members of the Brigade are encouraged to visit. I thank the Commanding Officers, Gurkha Majors and RSMs who were able to visit Gurkha Company in 2012. We appreciate you and your units are incredibly busy. We look forward to hosting you again in 2013.



Gurkha Company recruits start the BUPA Great North 10k road race in Gateshead with CO 2ITB leading the charge



Cpl Suresh Sherma (QGE) delivers a debrief to Gurkha recruits following a pairs fire and movement battle exercise

Commander in Gurkha Company Catterick - A British Officer's Perspective

Capt B E Norfield RGR

Editor's Note: Capt Bruce Norfield is the first Direct Entry Officer to have been posted to Gurkha Company as a PI Comd / Training Officer.

Since 1999 the Phase 1 and Phase 2 Infantry training for the Brigade of Gurkhas has been conducted in the Infantry Training Centre (ITC) Catterick. The Brigade holds a unique place within the British Army, because all of our soldiers, regardless of cap badge, complete the long and challenging Combat Infanymans' Course (Gurkha) (CIC(G)). As a result we deliver an agile edge for whatever their trade. A Gurkha soldier is, first and foremost, an Infanteer.

Gurkha Company is a phase in the creation of a Gurkha soldier of which few Direct Entry (DE) Gurkha Officers are aware or have the opportunity to experience. DE Officers are involved in the recruit selection process in Nepal as interviewing officers and all complete the doko race during their Survival Nepali Language Course in order to understand what their soldiers have to go through to get selected. On arrival in Battalion they witness the Kasam Khane Parade and see the keen young Riflemen arrive in their Platoons. However, generally DE Officers have very little understanding of the process in between that moulds a young Nepali man into a Gurkha soldier.

For most Officers from British infantry units, moving to an Army Recruiting and Training Division establishment (the ITC or Harrogate) is the natural progression after completing a tour as a Platoon Commander in Battalion. However, for DE Officers within the Brigade of Gurkhas and more specifically the RGR, the opportunity to work within the training environment has not always been possible, leading to DE Gurkha Officers having a somewhat different career progression to many of their contemporaries. RGR Officers traditionally have used this opportunity to do something unique, such as the British Gurkhas Pokhara Ops Coord / SO3 Recruiting job or an attachment to an affiliated unit.

In the past the reasons for this were undoubtedly sound. Many of the Nepalese boys who were joining the Brigade aged between 17½ and 21 years old had a limited grasp of English and were being thrust into a very different culture for the first time. The rigour of adjusting to military life, with its Army jargon and harsh routine, as well as being far from family and friends was enough to cope with, let alone having to do it in a foreign language. As a result all Permanent Staff within Gurkha Company are Gurkhas, in various ranks and from all the Brigade units. This ensures that a well rounded Gurkha recruit, with a thorough understanding of all the Brigade units, trades and traditions, is moulded by the end of training.

If we accept that communication and cultural understanding are key facets of instruction then having a DE RGR Officer in

such an environment would have been an unmitigated failure. However, it is widely acknowledged that we have reached a stage in the selection of Gurkha recruits where the emphasis on a good education combined with the demographic shift of young Nepalese men to the cities, means that the archetypical 'hill boy' joining the British Army may soon be a thing of the past. The British Army requires a more educated, 'thinking soldier', who is able to adapt quickly to changing situations, operate complex equipment and communicate effectively within a mixed cap badge environment. As a result the education standard is higher and the recruits arriving in Gurkha Company often have +2 or have even started a degree. Therefore, given this change, is the time right for DE RGR Officers to have a greater role within the training of Gurkha recruits?

What follows is based on personal experience over the last six months as the Platoon Commander of 5 Platoon in Gurkha Company. It should be noted that I arrived when the Trainee Riflemen (T/Rfn) were four months into their training and their Recruit English Package was coming to an end. I aim to give an outline of what I think is required of a DE Officer working in Catterick, both professionally and personally, and detail pros and cons of having a British Officer in what has traditionally been a Gurkha only environment.

Firstly, there are a number of criteria that I think an individual requires if they are to be successful (i.e. able to train recruits and work effectively as part of a Training Team) within Gurkha Company. Some of these points may be relevant to the wider training environment, in which Values Based Leadership is expected throughout, but others are more Gurkha Company specific.

An obvious but pertinent point, for Officers and NCOs, is that the individual must be at the correct point in their career. British infantry units routinely send people to training establishments as their second tour in rank. This means that they will generally have had operational experience, had time to immerse themselves in the ethos of their Regiment and have a good working knowledge of discipline and welfare issues. The same principles are relevant for DE RGR Officers and being a Captain undoubtedly helps, as it puts the individual on a par with the Late Entry (LE) Gurkha Platoon Commanders. This equality in rank helps the DE Officer work on a level playing field within Gurkha Company and also gives the British Officer standing in the eyes of the T/Rfn and Permanent Staff. Another Gurkha specific addition to these requirements is the need to have done the Nepali long language course, and done well. There is no requirement to be fluent, however, a working knowledge, desire to learn and an acceptance that you will make mistakes are all vital.

The cultural awareness that is assimilated from having been to Nepal is also crucial as the purest form of kaida,

discipline and Brigade ethos is found and installed within all the training that occurs in Gurkha Company. Religious festivals, Regimental celebrations, Brigade discipline and the Army's Values and Standards are integral to every day living in Gurkha Company. It is here that Gurkha soldiers are moulded into the individual that will carry forward the Brigade's traditions whilst maintaining Nepalese identity. All Permanent Staff, but particularly the Platoon Commander, must have an awareness of the background, education and culture from which the young Gurkha recruit has sprung, in order to help each T/Rfn settle into the military environment as effectively as possible. Without this understanding the DE Officer would only be able to approach welfare or discipline issues from a western viewpoint, which at this stage of training would not be as effective. There is of course support and experience throughout the chain of command for a Platoon Commander to turn to when necessary and thankfully major welfare issues are relatively rare. It is also helpful if the DE RGR Officer has seen the Gurkha selection process and has been on another Duty Trek in addition to the one following their language course. Such experiences of Nepal give the DE Officer a wealth of cultural understanding of where the recruits come from and what they have done to get to Catterick, which all helps to build rapport.

Although Gurkha Company works within the wider context of the 2nd Infantry Training Battalion and the ITC, being the only British member of a Training Team can at times be quite isolated. Whilst there are many contemporaries in the ITC Officers' Mess to socialise with or turn to for advice, the Gurkha specific nature of training means an individual must be comfortable in a predominantly Gurkha environment. Similar to being in an RGR Battalion, immersion into the culture and kaida is key to success and a willingness to get involved with all aspects of life within the Company helps build trust within the Training Team and enables the Platoon Commander to see a side to his recruits that he would not do otherwise. Although a DE RGR Platoon Commander can still operate without this I would argue that an unwillingness to be immersed in the culture would make the Platoon Commander far less effective.

The ability to remain calm and be realistic about what can be achieved when instructing are universally necessary within the training establishment; however, for DE Officers there are also quite specific obstacles to overcome, most notably when instructing the Platoon. Often, new and complicated ideas, expressed in English, can be lost in translation, rendering a lesson ineffective. In such cases a change of approach is often required. Powerpoint is a useful tool, giving T/Rfn the opportunity to have a visual prompt as well as an auditory explanation. It is also important to utilise the Permanent Staff effectively and get them to help in the translation of new or difficult ideas, particularly during the 'Any Questions?' phase of a presentation when a sea of blank faces is staring back at you. As with most Gurkha soldiers a recruit would much rather sit in silence than admit ignorance, especially in front of an Officer. Therefore having a JNCO who sits at the back of the lesson and is able to act as a conduit between the instructor and recruits confirms and increases assimilation of new and important information.

It is sometimes easy to forget that the Gurkha recruits are not the highly trained soldiers with years of experience that you are used to working with on Operations. Although basic skills may seem like common sense it is important to remember that the recruits are learning them for the first time in a very alien environment. Basic commands such as "peel left" are guaranteed to cause confusion and it is easy to get frustrated. However, the sense of satisfaction when the same T/Rfn who struggled to cook a ration pack during Intro Exercise 1 leads a live firing platoon attack as a grenadier during Final Exercise is immense. It is also easy to believe that you can come to Catterick, get given a Platoon and mould them into a lean, mean fighting machine of your own design. In fact everything within the training establishment is very prescribed and there are guidelines and training objectives set out for every training serial. However, that does not stop an individual using their imagination and adding elements that enhance the training for the recruits. The ITC trains recruits to join their units at infantry section level, a fact that is not often realised by the wider Brigade or ambitious members of the Permanent Staff. It is often said that CIC(G) is not a course for the Permanent Staff and whilst this is of course true, it is our Platoon or our Section being tested and therefore leadership is the foundation to success here in Gurkha Company.

The Orders Process on exercise can also be problematical, with slavish adherence to the TAM being misguided and unhelpful. It is necessary to stick to the main headings but it should be expected that over half of what is being said will be lost on the audience. By posing questions throughout the orders to confirm, as well as the use of a guruji to explain key points the Platoon Commander can effectively get across the plan within the guideline of the orders headings. However, as much time should be spent on noisy and silent rehearsals, walk through talk throughs and ROC drills than the actual delivery of orders. These methods are the most useful means of getting ideas across and can be used in the field or the classroom. Despite the fact that in the ITC most lessons are standardised, imagination is required to deliver these lessons in a way that suits the learning styles of the audience as well as the Nepali mindset.

Although in some people's minds having a DE RGR Officer instructing Gurkha recruits should not work, there are definite benefits. The Gurkha recruits in 5 Platoon said that their English understanding had improved simply from having to listen to and speak more English outside of their education classes. They were also able to ask questions about English language as well as the history and culture of the UK, which they would not have been able to otherwise. This was of particular benefit during the cultural visit to London, Ex TESRO KADAM, and during a trip to Hadrian's Wall, where a basic knowledge of what they were seeing and an ability to add some context was enough to bring it to life.

I also believe that having worked with a British Officer before joining Brigade units is of real professional benefit to a young Gurkha soldier. Half of all Gurkha recruits will join

a Brigade Corps unit and will immediately work with British counterparts, and many who join the RGR will have British DE Platoon Commanders. During Op HERRICK 14 a couple of BCRs joined my Multiple who were fresh out of training and who had never worked with a DE Officer before. They consequently did not know how to react to having a British Platoon Commander and took a bit of time to adjust and relax around me despite the austere environment in which we were in. Having early exposure to a DE RGR Platoon Commander and the knowledge of where we come from and how we came to join the Gurkhas will undoubtedly break down the barriers from the beginning and make these junior Riflemen more confident and effective on arrival in Battalion.

There are also benefits for the Permanent Staff within the Training Teams. A Training Team is generally made up of the Platoon Commander, Platoon Sergeant, three Section Commanders responsible for ten T/Rfn each and a Remedial Section Commander for cover and to help with additional training requirements. All of the Permanent Staff are experienced individuals who have worked with DE Officers before, meaning that the relationships are similar to those in Battalion. As part of the Training Team the focus is naturally on the recruits and getting them to the required standard. However, it is vital that Platoon Commanders do not overlook the professional development and well-being of the Permanent Staff within their Training Team. The programme and structured nature of life within the ITC will take care of the recruits' personal and professional development but extra care is necessary to enhance the Permanent Staff. For example the Corps unit personnel deliver Brigade ethos whilst taking on the role of an infantry commander. It is a challenge that all relish and one that returns a far more 'agile' Officer, NCO and trained soldier back to the Brigade. The combination of pan-Brigade instructors along with the Remedial Instructor within Training Teams enables Gurkha Company to invest in the Permanent Staff. This makes Gurkha Company a posting in which all can genuinely expect to develop on a professional and personal level, including the DE Platoon Commander who has this unique exposure to the personal and professional requirements of high quality personnel from throughout the Brigade.

In some instances having a DE RGR Platoon Commander can put more responsibility onto the shoulders of the Training Team, especially the Platoon Sergeant, who becomes the main point of contact for the recruits for all Gurkha matters. Members of the Training Team can pick up key information that a British Officer may easily miss, meaning that good communication and regular consultation amongst the Training Team is vital. The Section Commanders see everything and are experts on each of their recruits' strengths and weaknesses, all of which must be incorporated when the Platoon Commander is writing the final reports, which signpost these strengths and weaknesses to their future commanders.

For many young RGR Officers in Battalion a posting to Gurkha Company is not high on their list of priorities nor has it previously been an option routinely available to them. However,

there are considerable personal and professional benefits that should be considered before the opportunity is dismissed out of hand. Professionally it gives the individual a chance to influence a new generation of Gurkha soldiers, taking Nepali boys directly from the selection process and developing them into members of the British Army, which is a hugely rewarding experience. It also gives a young Officer exposure to the wider Brigade of Gurkhas through interaction with Officers, SNCOs and JNCOs from Corps units and other battalions. It is very easy to become insular within the confines of Regimental Duty so such exposure is hugely beneficial in the context of a wider military career and in order to develop understanding of all things Gurkha. As a Platoon Commander in Gurkha Company you also have the opportunity to play a key role in events that you would not do in Battalion. Learning light drill and parading your Platoon in the drill competition and during the Passing Out Parade as well as being involved in Close Quarter Combat using the kukri training are the obvious ones.

It is also a posting in the UK, which some people in Brunei long for and, as well as the social benefits, there are also opportunities to get on courses and be involved with training that may not be possible when on Regimental Duty. The nature of the training establishment is very structured, with a set programme, meaning that leave can be planned well in advance. The nature of the ITC Officers' Mess also means that you live amongst your contemporaries, many of whom you will not have seen since Sandhurst / Brecon, and there is an active mess life.

In summary I have had a unique opportunity to experience first hand the training of Gurkha soldiers and hopefully influenced a generation of them positively. To my mind there are clear benefits for the recruits, Training Teams and the individuals themselves by having a DE RGR Platoon Commander in Gurkha Company. The personality of the individual must be right for the role and not all DE RGR Officers would be suitable or would even enjoy being a Platoon Commander within Gurkha Company. Naturally there are obstacles to overcome but they are no means insurmountable. All it needs is the willingness to get involved, think creatively and not be afraid of making mistakes. I am now of the opinion that the time is right for a permanent DE RGR post as Platoon Commander or Training Officer to be established within Gurkha Company and that it would be of real benefit to Gurkha Company and the Brigade. Having completed a 6 month stint in Platoon Command I have proudly moved into the Gurkha Company Training Officer appointment, which comes with its own set of challenges. However, I will look back with fondness on the unique opportunity that has been afforded to me. Jai Gurkha Company!

Summary

- The current generations of Gurkha recruits are fundamentally different from those in the past but the mission, role and training process for Gurkha Company remains unchanged.

- All instructors within Gurkha Company need to be the right man in the right job at the right time. Not everyone is suited to being an instructor.
- A DE RGR Officer posted to Gurkha Company should have an increased cultural understanding of Nepal and the recruits arriving in Gurkha Company. A strong pass on the Survival Nepali Language Course, an additional Duty Trek in Nepal and firsthand experience of the Gurkha selection process are vital.
- Gurkha Company is a posting in which all Brigade personnel that are posted here can expect to develop significantly on both a professional and personal level.
- Any DE RGR Officer aiming to fill the Gurkha Company Training Officer appointment must do time as a Platoon Commander first. Decisions made by the Training Officer have a significant impact of the Training Teams which needs to be understood first hand.
- Gurkha Company is a place that all Brigade of Gurkhas Officers should visit at least once. If a posting here is not possible then a simple visit will fill a gap in their understanding of the Gurkha pipeline between Nepal and the Brigade units which is as educational and culturally important as DE Officers attending a Nepali language course or Duty Trek.
- Enter a Regimental Association Team into Trailwalker 2015; To raise funds but also to increase awareness and demonstrate to all that we all remain determined to help our old and bold.

QOGLR Support to Gurkha Company Catterick

Captain Ganeshbahadur Gurung QOGLR

In my article for the Journal last year I focused on the roles and responsibilities that exist here in Gurkha Company for QOGLR personnel. In this article I want to highlight the achievements by some of the QOGLR personnel currently serving in Gurkha Company. It would also be appropriate for me to advertise the re-introduced Close Quarter Combat (CQC) using the kukri training objective, for which I was the chief instructor (below). The past year has been challenging and successful in Gurkha Company. It is an honour for all instructors here to be in a position to maintain and uphold the high standards of professionalism that are the foundations on which our regimental kaida and reputation have been and will continue to be built. The role of Gurkha Company remains, "To mould a Nepalese youth into a Gurkha soldier trained to the standards of the British Army, who retains his Nepalese identity and will live up to the traditions of The Brigade of Gurkhas."



Kukri Training

The mission of Gurkha Company is "To deliver trained Gurkha soldiers in order to meet the operational requirements of The Brigade of Gurkhas." My main role and responsibilities have continued to be as the platoon commander of 6 Platoon. For Recruit Intake 2012 (RI12) a new training objective was added, a package that proved popular and really focused on the very roots of our traditions and reputation. CQC using the kukri consisted of 20 hours of training which combined taekwondo and kukri pattern. With a focus on core strength, agility, discipline, and controlled aggression, this supplements the Combat Infantryman Course (CIC) bayonet fighting, as individual fighting skill as well as the physical training programme. RI12 all volunteered to be upgraded in taekwondo, the majority to yellow belt but some already had qualifications from previous training in Nepal.

The CQC using the kukri training went well and the lead on daily delivery was Corporal Raju Tamang (IRGR). He was ably assisted by Corporal Timothy Limbu QOGLR who utilised his black belt qualifications to the full. The assessment for this new training objective was individual and group demonstrations and, with Corporal Raju away in Nepal for regional selection duties, it fell to Corporal Timothy to lead on the final demonstrations. These went extremely well with all recruits passing and the black belt wallahs putting on additional demonstrations of skill for the gathered guests.

Gurkha Company cannot achieve its mission and role without support from the 24 QOGLR soldiers and NCOs that are posted here. As I highlighted in my article last year, the



Pte Mukesh Rai during CQC upgrading

functions delivered by QOGLR for Gurkha Company cover the whole spectrum of support to training. The catering department has been doing remarkably well, providing catering support to Gurkha recruits and permanent staff in the field and in barracks. Outside the kitchen, they often support training by playing enemy on exercise. The department has seen a significant amount of change in personalities. Staff Sergeant Dewanuri Sherpa gave way to Staff Sergeant Manbahadur Rana and he has recently handed over to Staff Sergeant Safin Magar. These Unit Catering Managers have successfully steered the department over the last 12 months. Focussing on the professional development of all the chefs under their command remains the key aim and objective of this position. The chefs have served Gurkha Company with distinction throughout this year and this was exemplified by the award of the Commandant's Trophy to Corporal Kedar Singjali. The Commandant's Trophy is awarded to the JNCO or below who has contributed the most to upholding the reputation of Gurkha Company.

RII2's training went extremely well and 169 Gurkha recruits completed training on 21 September. As I write, the seven Gurkha recruits who were unable to complete their training, due to injury, are now fit and have been inserted back into training with Guards Company, due to finish in December 2012. From RII2, 30 trainee riflemen (T/Rfn) were selected to join the QOGLR. Congratulations to T/Rfn Sandeep Gurung who was the QOGLR Champion Recruit from his intake. Both Corporal Kedar and T/Rfn Sandeep received their prizes from the reviewing officer for the Passing Out Parade, Maj Gen C J Boag



*Intake 2012 Passing out Parade
Eyes right by 6 PI led by Capt Ganesh Gurung QOGLR*

CBE (GOC Support Command). I personally want to say well done again to Corporal Kedar; his achievements during the last training year are something of which to be genuinely proud of and highlight the importance of the QOGLR support elements (catering and driver) here in Gurkha Company.

Maintaining the famous infantry traditions and standards of The Brigade of Gurkhas is the responsibility of the instructors in the platoon training teams. They deliver the day-to-day training during the 37-week CIC (Gurkha). Sergeant Dhanraj Chongbang, Corporal Timothy Limbu, Corporal Lokbahadur Sunuwar and I are the QOGLR members of the platoon training teams and therefore deliver lessons on subjects which include Skill at Arms (SA80 A2 and LMG), shooting (incorporating Rifle ACMT, TFFT and LFFT up to platoon level), fitness (up to PFA and ACFT), field craft skills (up to platoon level including company attacks), drill, and all MATTs. In addition to the military training, there are various inter-section and platoon competitions, a seven-week Recruit English Package and two weeks of cultural orientation. I wish formally to welcome the new QOGLR instructors, Sergeant Rambahadur Rai, Corporal Ganeshbahadur Gurung and Corporal Chakra Rai. In addition to the CIC (Gurkha) course, they will be responsible for delivering the new Combat Infantryman Course (Extended) for Intake 2013 which includes GPMG training (up to WHT), HMNVS training, and Close Quarter Marksmanship training.

In summary, we QOGLR personnel are proud to be here in Gurkha Company, representing our cap badge as chefs, drivers and instructors. This is a unique and highly rewarding posting. Anyone wishing to take up the challenge should contact the RCMO QOGLR or me. Be prepared to be pushed to your limits as an individual, instructor and role model for the next generation of Gurkha soldiers.

Jai Gurkha Company and Jai QOGLR!



Ambush patrol orders Capt Ganeshbahadur Gurung during the final exercise



The Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas

Staff List

Director of Music	Maj V L Yates
Assistant Director of Music	Capt Sewanta Purja Pun
Band Sergeant Major	WO2 Rajkumar Tamang
Band Secretary	Mrs Christine Heath

Newsletter

Likewise 2011, the year 2012 was also a challenging and very successful year for The Band of The Brigade of Gurkhas.

January and February are always quieter months - the opportunity where the band engages in full-time training sessions to be prepared for the rest of the year. It also includes various courses, ie; Education, Driving and Continued Professional Development (CPD) etc. The life on the road slowly began after completion of MATTs training in March. It started with POPs and OP Herrick Medal Parades etc.

The Gurkha Festival of Music 2012

The Gurkha Festival of Music, an annual charity event, was held at Nye Hall, Duke of York Military School Dover on 26, 27 and 28 April. The concert was presented by The Band of The Brigade of Gurkhas with the Fanfare Team from Light Cavalry Band and Pipers from the 1st Royal Gurkha Rifles. It was a tremendous performance and even more fascinating programmes were added with the Nepalese traditional dances. It was a huge success raising £5,023 for Gurkha Welfare Trust.

Diamond Jubilee

The band travelled to Preston for the commemoration of Her Majesty The Queen's 60th (Diamond Jubilee) celebration on 15 May. The VVIP visit was held at Burnley and Accrington on 16 May. The band had a golden opportunity to perform in front of Her Majesty The Queen; we felt so proud to be present at the ceremony.

Another momentous occasion was the presentation of Diamond Jubilee Medal which was awaited till the end of July due to band commitments. LSGC Medals were also presented to Mighty Five of Intake 97 for their loyal and dedicated 15

years of outstanding service. It was an honour to receive the medals from Col BG.

Tattoos

The Dover Military Tattoo was another significant event for the year 2012 which was held at Connaught Bks Dover on 01 and 02 June. The show which comprised a variety of world class performances including marching displays by various bands, The Royal Signal White Helmet Motorcycle Display Team, The Flying Tigers Parachute Display Team and a fighting demonstration by the 3rd Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (3 PWRR). This spectacular tattoo was re-introduced for the first time since 1986. The show concluded with a firework display to music performed by massed bands led by the Brigade band.

Similarly, the Brigade band performed in the North East Lincolnshire Military Tattoo at Meridian Park Arena Cleethorpes on 24 June.

Preston Military Tattoo was another important event for 2012. The band took a leading role in the Tattoo as the central band and performed extremely well. Unfortunately, due to heavy rain during the finale sequence it did not go as it was expected - the bands were left alone playing without audiences!

Dedication to Gurkha Units

The band supported the combined Brigade of Gurkhas (BG) and Gurkha Brigade Association (GBA) farewell function to Gen Sir David Richards on leaving the Colonel Commandant The Brigade of Gurkhas appointment, which took place at Officers' Mess Sir John Moore Barracks in May. Beating Retreat at the Brigade week in Sandhurst was also another notable

performance given by the Band of The Brigade of Gurkhas and Pipes & Drums of the 1st Royal Gurkha Rifles.

IRGR being the band's resident battalion, the band has supported on many occasions ie; the RGR Birthday celebration, Mess functions and Dashain Kalaratri etc.

Ex Trail Walker, an annual event organized by the Queen's Gurkha Signal at Petersfield to raise funds for Oxfam and Gurkha Welfare Trust (GWT), was also a highlighted event for the band. The band has supported this event for many years and the band did a superb Beating Retreat performance.

Another annual event was the Brecon Freedom Parade where the band has provided musical support to Gurkha Company (Mandalay) Brecon regularly since 1986 when the Gurkha Company (Mandalay) was conferred as Honorary Citizens of the Town of Brecon. The band also presented a short musical performance after the parade which was greatly appreciated by the town's Mayor and the public.

The band travelled to Catterick for a week to support Gurkha Coy for Intake 2012 POP on 17 September. On 19

September, after a week of hard work rehearsals the Intake 2012 POP went exceptionally well. It has always been a great pleasure to support POP Gurkha Coy. The band was also delighted to receive two new trainee musicians who started their musical journey shortly afterwards.

The Brigade band also supported QOGLR for Kasam Khane Pde & Op Herrick Medal Pde in November. Similarly, the Brigade band supported QGE on its Birthday Pde in September and PNCO POP in November.

Support to Charity Organisations

In addition to musical support to the services, the Army bands have supported various charity organisations across the country. The Brigade band has supported GWT, ABF, SSAFA, Help for Heroes etc. by performing Beating Retreat and concert performances. Meanwhile, the band has successfully maintained its role in keeping a healthy relation between the Army and the public.



Gurkha Staff and Personnel Support Company (GSPS)

By Maj B Sherchan - OC GSPS

Staff List

Colonel of the Regiment

Brigadier (Retired) N P Moffat CBE

Officers

Major	Bijayant	Sherchan	DCOS HQBG/OC GSPS
Major	Samundra	Gurung	OC PRU HQ 145 Bde
Captain	Pimbahadur	Gurung	SO3 G1/MS HQBGN
Captain	Manbahadur	Gurung	Det Comd 1 RGR
Captain	Ashwin	Rana	Det Comd 2 RGR (des)
Captain	Kamansing	Rana	Det Comd 2 RGR
Captain	Tikbahadur	Gurung	Det Comd 10 QOGLR
Captain	Suryakumar	Rai	RAO 1 Med Regt
Captain	Narendrakumar	Gurung	RAO 1 MWD Regt
Captain	Jitbahadur	Hamal	SO Admin Def Sect Nepal

Warrant Officers Class I

WO1	Ashokkumar	Gurung	SME SPSTS
WO1	Bikram	Ghale	RSM HQBGN

Newsletter

This is the first time that Gurkha Staff and Personnel Support (GSPS) has featured in the Kukri in its own right and as OC GSPS, it is a great privilege that the onus for writing the inaugural Newsletter has fallen to me. However, before writing the GSPS newsletter, it would seem appropriate to mention a little bit of its young history for those who are new and strangers to the GSPS world.

In February 2005, the Secretary of State directed that a wide-ranging review should be conducted to consider all aspects of Gurkha Terms and Conditions of Service (GTACOS) with a view to ensuring that the future military output of the Brigade of Gurkhas (BG) remained legally and morally sustainable and manageable. A key tenet of the GTACOS Review was the requirement to ensure that the BG was able to continue to deliver its military capability whilst providing an opportunity for Gurkha soldiers to meet their full career aspirations in the Army.

In July 2009, the Executive Committee of the Army Board (ECAB) endorsed the broad principles on the future management of Gurkha military clerks. The BG Clerks would form into a GSPS Coy as a constituent unit of the BG, federated for employment to Directorate Staff and Personnel Support (Army) (DPS(A)). Specifically, ECAB recommended:

- a. The formation of a Gurkha SPS (GSPS) Coy as a constituent unit within the BG, with no increase in liability, and the corresponding creation of a GSPS cap badge, Tactical Recognition Flash (TRF) and accoutrements.
- b. The utilisation of excess Gurkha clerical manpower and the widening of career opportunities by employing Gurkha clerks in posts outside the BG, specially the employment of Gurkha clerks in Adjutant General's Corps (Staff and Personnel Support) (AGC (SPS)) UKTAP posts.
- c. The alignment of Gurkha clerk commissioning policy with that of the AGC (SPS).

d. The alignment of Gurkha clerical training with that of the AGC (SPS) from the start of Phase 2 training.

e. The transfer of career management responsibilities for Gurkha LE clerical officers and other ranks from MS Soldiers Combat (Gurkha) to the respective AGC MS Officers and Soldiers Desks at the APC.

f. The alignment of all Gurkha clerical nomenclature with that of the AGC (SPS).

The formation of a GSPS Coy was formally approved through an Implementation Order issued by Headquarters Land Forces (HQLF) in June 2011. This was marked by a GSPS Formation Day Ceremony on 30 June 2011 at Sir John Moore Barracks. The then Director Staff and Personnel Support (Army), Brigadier Nicky Moffat Late AGC (SPS) assumed the inaugural appointment of Colonel GSPS and continues to represent GSPS personnel at the bi-annual BG Council of Colonels forum. An extract of Brigadier Nicky Moffat's message to all ranks of the GSPS Coy reads:

"I am delighted at the formation of a GSPS Company within the Brigade of Gurkhas which places you as Clerks on a similar footing to fellow Gurkhas serving with Queen's Gurkha Engineer, Signals and Logistic units and rightly recognises the valuable contribution you make as Combat HR Specialists. From my perspective this is a 'win-win' situation. I am particularly honoured to be invited to be your Colonel GSPS - which will enable our combined professional interests to be properly represented at the appropriate level. I very much look forward to meeting more of you during the coming year as I continue my round of visits to formations and units throughout Land Forces".

When we glance back at the paths that we have endured over the last two years and the varied hurdles and achievements, we have managed to succeed in many issues. We now have a unique identity which properly and accurately reflects and advertises our role and our affiliation to AGC (SPS), in the same manner as that of the other Corps personnel within the BG. This arrangement allows Gurkha specific issues to continue to be managed by HQBG, whilst ensuring the employment of GSPS personnel is professionally focused and directed by DPS(A).

We have been working together closely with DPS(A) over the last year to ensure that appropriate employment opportunities have been offered to BG Clerks - read Gurkha Combat HR Specialists - as part of a better career progression. During this period, GSPS personnel have filled, for the first time, the core AGC (SPS) appointments of Regimental Administrative Officers (RAOs), System Coordinators (Sys Coord), Regimental Accountants and Finance and System Administrators (FSAs). These are but the first steps down the road towards our Gurkha Combat HR Specialists having a full and satisfying career within the constraints of existing engagements.



Capt Suryakumar Rai receiving GSPS Cap badge from Col Comdt

We still have a long way to go and as we step forward to new challenges and an unpredictable future. Whilst we have been relatively unaffected by the Army Redundancy Programme we still have one more tranche of redundancy to complete concurrent with the need to reduce our GSPS liability to achieve the new Army 2020 structures. However, we will

continue to do our best to provide our Gurkha Combat HR Specialists with a wider career and employment opportunity thereby enabling individuals to meet their full potential while retaining their values and status as full members of the Brigade of Gurkhas.



GSPS formation parade photograph with Col Comdt, President GBA, Col GSPS and Col BG photography by sean dunlop 2011

Shooting Experience during the Operational Shooting Competition

The British Army Operational Combat Shooting Competition (AOSC) is the annual premiere event for marksmanship and the cycle starts from early April each year. It has been a great privilege and pride to lead AGC (SPS) Shooting team and most importantly to earn the Army 100 badge for perpetuity. Service Competition Shooting emphasises the importance of accuracy and proficiency with service small arms. It is one of the best ways to stimulate interest, hone skills and to get soldiers to have a pride and confidence in their ability to handle their personal weapon to best effect. It also provides the soldier with an element of excitement and an incentive to achieve success in conditions of tension. All Service Rifle, LSW and Pistol competitions are designed and then continually modified to have direct operational shooting training relevance and value, and they require a high level of individual fitness. In line with current operational requirements, all shoots are conducted in Enhanced Combat Body Armour (ECBA), Helmet and full PLCE.

The first stage of the competition starts from CORPSOSC (Corps Shooting Competition), which is normally held at Pirbright and Ash Ranges in Surrey during April each year. Each Corps runs its own Skill at Arms Meeting (SAAM) within the framework of CORPSOSC, thus sharing the burden of organisation, administration and execution for over 900 competitors.

After the completion of CORPSOSC, selected personnel will be able to compete in The Army Operational Shooting Competition (AOSC) during June/Jul. It is fiercely contested and all Corps and Inf Divs enter a team as well as the RAF, Navy and some international teams. This is a combination of a number of different operational shooting matches that takes place over the duration of the competition. Units enter a four man team and just to give you a hint, 52 teams (208 top

firers from each unit) competed on 2012. All of the individual scores throughout the week are added up and each firer placed into an order of merit. Those that are placed in the Top 100 are entitled to wear crossed rifles with '100' annotated; this is a true badge of honour in the shooting fraternity.

It has been a unique and rewarding experience for me as a member of GSPS, especially to represent our cap badge in the wider Army. There is no doubt that the shooting training/competition provides an ideal opportunity for individuals to improve their shooting skills but also provides the pride of being a 'soldier first'. I hope this success will inspire others to take up the challenge, partake in the AOSC and gain the Army 100 badge.

Jai GSPS



SSgt Dugendra proudly showing his Army 100 medal with his AGC (SPS) Shooting team during AOSC 2012

Gurkha Orderlies' Reunion at Clarence House

By Sgt Bijay Limbu GSPS

"The Prince of Wales supports Her Majesty The Queen in her role as the focal point for national pride, unity and allegiance, bringing people together across all sections of society, representing stability and continuity, highlighting achievement, and emphasising the importance of service and the voluntary sector by encouragement and example."

Clarence House

As I take a sip of my brew and gaze out of the window towards the Caledonian hills, far across the horizon from Glasgow city centre, perhaps waiting for some inspiration before picking up my pen to write this article, my eye unwittingly catches the beautiful panoramic formation of the clouds forming above the Caledonians.

At this moment, I am vividly reminded of the days I spent at Birkhall, the official Scottish residence of The Prince of Wales. I would travel to Scotland frequently from my base at Clarence House in London, as part of HRH's staff to assist with the running of the Estate and other day to day activities. These cloud formations I see before me today are very similar to the ones I witnessed many times above Beinn Chiochan at Birkhall, also known as Lochnagar. My mind wanders further, and I remember the treacherous walks up Lochnagar with ferocious winds hindering progress and the angry rain with mist trying to blind my view of the tracks.

I am suddenly brought back to the present day by a rush of cold wind through the window. Now, realising my empty mug, I stroll along the corridor of the APC towards the tea bay for a refill. Previously, I would walk along the corridors of Clarence House to recharge my cup of tea. The ancient sculptures, tapestry, furniture, porcelain and historical artefacts filling the corridors would give a feeling of travelling in a time capsule through history.

It is late Friday evening, after the hustle and bustle of the day's business; the corridors of the APC are quiet. At Clarence House Friday evening would be the busiest of the week. We would pack hurriedly and rush to Highgrove in Gloucestershire.

'Time and Tide wait for no man' and neither did mine. Two years passed as quick as a breath. Indeed, I had been extremely lucky and privileged to be seconded as the Gurkha Orderly to Their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall.

Before my secondment, I recall HRH visiting the Brigade of Gurkhas on numerous occasions and during my secondment further visits were undertaken to 2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles in January 2009 when they were stationed at Sir John Moore Barracks, Folkestone. In July 2009, HRH bade farewell to the outgoing Colonel of the Royal Gurkha Rifles, Lt General PTC Pearson CBE and welcomed Brigadier JC Lawrence MBE as his successor at Clarence House. In February 2010, HRH visited 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles on Salisbury Plain before their deployment to Afghanistan and on return presented the Battalion with the medals in January 2011 at Sir John Moore Barracks, Folkestone.

To sum up HRH's role, I evoke leafing through a book lying astray in the butler's pantry of Clarence House, 'The English Constitution', published in 1867, written by a Victorian



Sgt Bijay and Cpl Prem chatting with HRH The Prince of Wales



SSgt Sumit, Sgt Kripal & Cpl Hom sharing a joke with HRH The Prince of Wales

economist and writer, Walter Bagehot (1826-77). The particular line regarding the constitutional monarchy “the right to be consulted, the right to encourage, the right to warn” is a fitting ethos of the work of HRH, the heir apparent to our reigning sovereign today.

HRH The Prince of Wales likes to maintain very close links with his former Gurkha Orderlies. On Wednesday 20 February 2013, HRH The Prince of Wales invited all his former Gurkha Orderlies and Colonel James Robinson (Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas) for luncheon at Clarence House.

My previous experiences of the London traffic are not yet a distant memory. Better to be safe than sorry, I took a bus an hour early. The gamble paid off, I arrived at the Cleveland Row Entrance opposite Clarence House on time. Mohandas Gandhi once said ‘There is more to life than increasing its speed’, but I wonder what Gandhi would think today, if he was stuck on a stalled bus in Central London trying to get somewhere important!

By 1230 hrs, all the invitees had gathered at the Cleveland Row Entrance. As customary, the Equerry to TRH The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall Maj Pete Flynn PARA accompanied us to the Morning Room of Clarence House. All of HRH Staff were gathered there to greet us and I would not be wrong to admit that Clarence House came to a stand still

for once. Being in the Morning Room as a guest this time and being looked after felt surreal and instantly brought floods of memories of days when I stood in this very room looking after HRH guests.

HRH Prince of Wales joined us at 1300 hrs. On arrival, HRH welcomed Colonel James Robinson, the newly appointed Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas, after which, Colonel Robinson briefed HRH with the BG updates and commitments. HRH then took turns to meet us.

Meeting with HRH brought vivid memories of my days of Royal duties and how much I missed it. HRH was keen to know about our days after Royal duties, families and current work. Truly a gentleman at heart, the world’s leading charity entrepreneur and tailor-made for his role; to me he is a finished article of a modern Royal. After a group photograph in the Library Room commemorating the first Gurkha Orderlies’ reunion, the event concluded at 1400 hrs.

On behalf of all the former Orderlies, I wish to express our sincere gratitude to Their Royal Highnesses for a wonderful and memorable visit. The food was exquisite and enjoyed by us all but of course it’s the sentiment behind the gathering that meant so much to us. We greatly look forward to meeting again in the near future.



Gurkha Orderlies’ reunion at Clarence House



British Gurkhas Nepal

Staff List

Headquarters British Gurkhas Nepal

Col A M Mills Late RE	Comd/DA/Dir GWS
Lt Col EA Davis QG SIGNALS	D Comd/COS
Maj J H Thompson AGC (SPS)	DCOS
Maj Hitman Gurung MVO QG SIGNALS	GM
Capt Pimbahadur Gurung GSPS	SO3 G1/MS
Capt N G Berry RLC	SO3 G4 Log Sp/Est
Capt D B M Fry RLC	SO3 Tpt & Mov
Capt Kedar Rai QG SIGNALS	OC NST
WO1 (RSM) Bikram Ghale GSPS	RSM
Mrs M Childs	Civ Sec
Hon Maj Hitman Gurung Ex RGR	CLO
Dr M M Kitson	CMP
Ms M McFayden	CNP

Defence Section British Embassy Kathmandu

Maj A D Vick RAC	AMA/MLO
Capt Jitbahadur Hamal GSPS	SO Admin

British Gurkhas Kathmandu

Maj D J Hendry PARA	OC
Maj L R McCulloch AGC (SPS)	RAO
Capt Diwan Limbu QOGLR	2IC/MTO
Hon Maj Krishnabhadur Gurung Ex QG SIGNALS	BUWO

British Gurkhas Pokhara

Capt Rabindrprakash Tulachan RGR	A/OC
Capt G EA Norton RGR	Ops/Co-ord Offr
Capt Meenjung Gurung QGE	QM/MTO/CAO
Capt (QGO) (Retd) Gangabhadur Gurung Ex RGR	Records Offr
Capt (QGO) (Retd) Bhojraj Gurung Ex 2 RGR	SARO
Capt (QGO) (Retd) Gajendra Dewan Ex 10 RGR	ARO (E)
Capt (Retd) Rembahadur Ghale Ex 1 RGR	ARO (W)

Defence Infrastructure Overseas (Nepal)

Capt R H Gale RE	Head of Delivery
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British Gurkhas Dharan

Mr Chandrakamal Rasaily	OC
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Headquarters Gurkha Welfare Scheme

Lt Col G R Blewitt R Welsh	Fd Dir
Maj (Retd) Lalitbahadur Gurung Ex RGR	Dep Fd Dir
Capt E C Brown RE	Proj Engr
Capt (QGO) (Retd) Bhaktabhadur Rai Ex QGE	Prog Dir RWSP
Capt (QGO) (Retd) Hikmatbahadur Gurung Ex 1 RGR	SO Coord
Maj (Retd) Govinde Gurung MVO MBE Ex QG SIGNALS	SO Med
Maj (Retd) Chandrabhadur Gurung MVO Ex 1 RGR	SO IA

Lt (QGO) (Retd) Purnabahadur Gurung Ex 1 RGR
Hon Lt (QGO) Punendraprasad Limbu Ex 2 RGR
Capt (QGO) (Retd) Rukumbahadur Rana Ex 1 RGR

SO Log
OIC RH Kaski
LO GSO

Area Welfare Centres

Hon Lt (QGO) Tirthabahadur Thapa Ex 2 RGR
Hon Lt (QGO) Deobahadur Rana Ex QOGLR
Maj (Retd) Krishna Gurung BEM Ex QG SIGNALS
WO2 (Retd) Shriprasad Tamang Ex 1 RGR
Lt (QGO) (Retd) Senbahadur Gurung Ex 6 GR
Capt (Retd) Surendra Gurung Ex 1 RGR
Hon Lt (QGO) Haribahadur Rana Ex 1 RGR
Maj (Retd) Hemchandra Rai BEM MBE Ex GSPS
Capt (QGO) (Retd) Jitbahadur Thapa Ex 1 RGR
Hon Maj Dalbahadur Limbu MVO Ex QGE
Hon Lt (QGO) Chhatrabahadur Rai Ex QG SIGNALS
Insp (Retd) Shyamkumar Rai
WO2 (Retd) Barhajit Rai Ex 7 GR
Capt (Retd) Purnaprasad Limbu Ex 2 RGR
Hon Lt (QGO) Premkumar Tamang Ex QG Signals
Insp II (Retd) Subharaj Thamsuhang Ex GCSPF
Hon Lt (QGO) Tikaram Rai Ex 10 GR
Hon Maj Chandraprasad Limbu MBE Ex 3 RGR
Maj (Retd) Gyanbahadur Limbu MVO Ex QOGLR
Capt (QGO) (Retd) Damberkumar Pradhan Ex 6 GR

AWO Bheri
AWO Gulmi
SAWO Kaski
AWO Lamjung
AWO Gorkha
AWO Syangja
AWO Tanahun
AWO Chitwan
SAWO Butwal
SAWO Bagmati
AWO Rumjatar
AWO Diktel
AWO Bhojpur
AWO Khandbari
AWO Tehrathum
AWO Taplejung
AWO Phidim
SAWO Dharan
AWO Damak
AWO Darjeeling

Area Welfare Officers (Medical)

Lt (QGO) (Retd) Mahendrakumar Gurung Ex QG SIGNALS
Hon Lt (QGO) Thakursing Gurung Ex 2 RGR

AWO (Med) Bagmati
AWO (Med) Dharan

Honorary Area Welfare Officer

WO2 (Retd) Satyasagar Ghale Ex 6 GR

HAWO Dehradun/ Dharamsala

Commander's Foreword

By Col A M Mills RE (Late QGE), Commander BGN

Greetings to all our readers from the Brigade's home base, Nepal. 2012 was an exciting year with a great deal of activity on all fronts. I'm happy to report that all is well in Defence Section, British Gurkhas and the Gurkha Welfare Scheme ably supported by Kadoorie. I will leave each of the units to describe their own activities and close by wishing one and all a happy and successful 2013 and dherai suvakamana.

British Gurkhas Nepal

Visit by General Sir Peter Wall KCB CBE ADC Gen to Nepal

On the invitation of Nepal Army (NA) the Chief of the General Staff (CGS), General Sir Peter Wall KCB CBE ADC Gen paid an official visit to Nepal from Fri 16 November to Wed 21 November 2012. On arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport

he was met by Lieutenant General Nepal Bhushan Chand, CGS to NA and Colonel Andrew Mills DA/ComdBGN/Director GWS. General Sir Peter Wall is also the Colonel Commandant Brigade of Gurkhas and Chairman of the Gurkha Welfare Trust.



CGS inspecting the Guard of honour



CGS, Comd, COS, GM and RSM with medal recipients



Photograph with member of BGN and some ladies



His Excellency British Ambassador and The CGS with the RAN members at The British Embassy

In his capacity as the Colonel Commandant the Brigade of Gurkhas, the CGS visited British Gurkhas Nepal (BGN) on Saturday 17 November 2012. After inspecting the Guard of honour he was briefed about BGN including the work that is carried out by Gurkha Settlement Office (GSO) for the support to retired Gurkhas and their families. He also presented Long Service and Good Conduct (LSGC) medals to SSgt Laxmanbabu Rana, Cpl Lila Rai and Cpl Satbahadur Ghale. After a curry lunch and group photograph, he left for Area Welfare Centre (AWC) Bagmati.

In Kathmandu on 18 November 2012, he called on the President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, Dr Ram Baran Yadav, the Prime Minister who is also the Defence Minister Dr Baburam Bhattarai and Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) NA General Gaurav SJB Rana. The interesting tale about these two Generals is that they were in the same platoon at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) in 1973 whilst on their commissioning course and they are now the head of the Army in their respective countries. More interestingly, the Chief of the Army Staff in Malasia is also from the same course.

On 19 November 2012 at British Gurkhas Pokhara (BGP), he presented an Elizabeth Cross to Mr Relbahadur Gurung the brother of late LCpl Dalbahadur Gurung 2GR and met the family of the late LCpl Siddhanta Kunwar 1 RGR who was killed in Afghanistan on 30 October 2012 and repatriated back to Nepal on 18 November 2012. As Chairman of the Gurkha Welfare Trust, he visited the Area Welfare Centre (AWC) Kaski and received a briefing from the GWS Field Director, Lt Col Garry Blewitt and visited the residential home for ex-Gurkhas and widows. He then travelled to Gorkha and Dhading to see some of the significant welfare projects that Gurkha Welfare Scheme (GWS), its partner DFID and Kadoorie Agriculture Aid Association (KAAA) are carrying out in this region.

On 20 November 2012, the CGS visited the Nepal Army's Panchkal Birendra Peace Operations Technical College and the Staff College and briefed the students. In the evening, a Banquet was hosted at the Nepal Army Officers' Club by the CoAS in honour of the CGS.

Before he departed for the UK on 21 November 2012, he also met the representatives of the Regimental Association in Nepal (RAN) at the British Embassy and updated them on the British Army and Brigade of Gurkhas. It was a short, busy but extremely useful and productive visit for the bilateral relations between the UK and Nepal, and undoubtedly for the Brigade of Gurkhas.

BGN Management Supper

British Gurkhas Nepal (BGN) is a unique organisation; unique by not only its location and formation, but also by its mission which is to recruit the renowned Gurkha soldiers into the Brigade of Gurkhas - the only establishment of its kind in the British Army. In addition, it provides welfare support not



CGS handing over Union Jack flag to the Brother of late LCpl Siddhanta Kunwar



CGS being briefed by KAAA staff in Gorkha District



CGS & Comd BGN with the village user committee of KAAA GWS projects at Lingjo



CGS being welcomed at Lingjo, Dhading For the projects carried out by KAAA, GWS

only to the serving members of the Brigade of Gurkhas and their families, but also (perhaps more importantly) to those needy ex-servicemen, their dependants and local communities through pension payments and other welfare support.

To deliver its core outputs effectively and efficiently it is vital that the organisation has a very good working relationship with the local communities as well as various organisations and governmental departments. In this context, the BGN used to hold a function in the form of a Management Lunch in the past. However this year the format was changed to an evening function in order to make it more successful. It carries a significant importance in the annual BGN calendar because an event like this not only helps to promote goodwill amongst various agencies that provide support to the BGN activities, but also provides the BGN personnel with an opportunity to socialise and get to know various key personalities.

This year, the Management Supper was organised on 09 March 2012 at British Gurkhas Kathmandu (BGK) Combined Mess, led by GM BGN. Amongst the guests, there were high

ranking bureaucrats, custom officers, Nepal Police Officers, Armed Police Officers, Nepal Army, doctors, engineers, technicians, suppliers and our own ex-servicemen from Regimental Association Nepal (RAN).

The bagpipe, during the dinner, added more colour to the event. After the dinner, COS/DComd BGN, Lt Col EA Davis QG Signals, made a short speech on behalf of commander BGN, thanking the guests for their continued help and support throughout the year and wished for the same level of support in the coming years. In short, the event was meticulously organised and was a great success.

This type of event has become paramount to strengthen our bonds and foster a good working relationship with various authorities and organisations that play a vital role in support of BGN's mission. Undoubtedly, it was another great event and a huge success.

Jai BGN!!



GM BGN Maj Hitman Gurung MVO welcoming Chief District Officer (CDO) and Superintendent (SP) Armed Forces Police Lalitpur District



COS BGN Lt Col E A Davis thanking everyone for their help and support

Recruit Intake 2013 (RI 13) Selection

By Capt G Norton RGR, SO3 Recruiting

At the end of July 2011 I arrived as Ops-Coord officer at British Gurkhas Pokhara (BGP) for what I feared would be only a six-month tour with British Gurkhas Nepal. In March 2012 and in the absence of a replacement for Maj Rick Beven, OC BGP/SO2 Recruiting for the previous four years, I took on the responsibility, as SO3 Recruiting, of running Gurkha recruiting in Pokhara and Dharan for Recruit Intake 2013. The following is an account of the last 12 months in the recruiting calendar, which culminated in the selection of 126 high-quality recruits for the Brigade of Gurkhas in December 2012.

The first significant phase of the recruiting calendar, having selected and trained Senior Recruit Assistants (SRAs, or the infamous and much-loved ex-servicemen 'Gallah-wallahs'), is Recruit Advertising. Prior to the Maoist insurgency, this would have been 'Hill Selection', where the Gallahs and Area Recruiting Officers (AROs) went up into the hills and put potential recruits (PRs) through their paces in their villages. Recruiting was centralised to BGN locations to lower the British Army's recruiting profile in Nepal and for reasons of security. A second unfortunate effect of the Insurgency (this being a specific tenet of Maoist philosophy) was to drive many from the hills to the cities and bazaars. Naturally this had a significant impact on demographics in the hills. The necessity for a good education up to Class 12 level - largely only to be found in urban areas - has, more so in recent years than in the past, also encouraged migration. Thirdly, the dramatic increase in the number of Nepalese seeking work abroad - primarily in Malaysia and the Middle East - has likewise had an enormous effect on the nature and extent of communities in many a tradition recruiting heartland.

Of course, this has had an effect on recruit advertising and the sort of young men our Gallahs are finding in the hills. Essentially, the target audience is, to a large extent and certainly by April and May, no longer in the hills. Either they have migrated to district capitals or to the nearest city to improve their education in time for our education tests at Regional and Central Selection, or the training academies, the number and sophistication of which has multiplied exponentially in the last decade, have got there first. These are often unscrupulous profit-driven organisations that care little for the financial circumstances or suitability of their students. They exist in large quantities in every city in Nepal and sadly potential recruits now see them as a pre-requisite to success. I estimate with confidence that every recruit enlisted into the British Army last year had at some point invested in an academy. This figure speaks for itself, ensuring the next generation of potential recruits will do the same.

Nevertheless, recruit advertising still plays an important part in our process. The message is still being passed, but our focus has shifted to a new key target audience: the parents, key community leaders and the young men who we hope to attract

in one, two or three years' time. The necessity to continue to maintain a low recruiting profile in Nepal ensures the more obvious means of advertising - all forms of media, even social networking - are unavailable to us. The best we can do is present a friendly, informative and official face to audiences in as many district across Nepal as possible; the Gallahs and GWS Area Welfare Centre staff do an admirable job.

Last June, 7,198 potential recruits registered for selection for both the British Army and Gurkha Contingent Singapore Police Force (GCSPF). For RI 13, the British Army recruit requirement was lowered from 176 for RI 12 to 126, still enabling an East/West balance of 63 recruits each. The GCSPF requirement remained unchanged at 60 recruits, 30 both from the East and West. Registration numbers had declined quite significantly for RI 12, when the requirement for a Nepalese passport was introduced at registration, but during RI 13 figures were more consistent, and it is believed that, for the current recruit requirement and standards, a future steady state has been reached. Some basic tests are held during the Registration phase, including height, weight, chest measurements and heaves. Burros from 7 and 10 GR will no doubt be delighted to know that far fewer eastern PRs failed the requisite 8 heaves than in the west!

Following Registration, the Rect Cell, consisting of SO3 Rect; the Senior Area Recruiting Officer (SARO), Capt Bhojraj Gurung; ARO East, Captain Gajendra Dewan; ARO West, Captain Rembahadur Ghale; and ARO Coord, Capt Pradip Limbu, orchestrated the two-phase Regional Selection, supported by all elements of BGN. In August, Regional Selection (West) was conducted over a 15-day period at British Gurkhas Pokhara. Regional Selection (East), after a short break, was held at an intensely hot and very wet British Gurkhas Dharan in September. The aim of Regional selection is to identify those PRs who have the potential to pass the more rigorous and intensive Central Selection. PRs are called forward by district for a full day of assessment. Following rigid documentation checks to weed out fraudulent or overage candidates, English and Maths tests to confirm PRs have achieved School Leaving Certificate (SLC) standard, basic medical screening, an 800m run, sit-ups and heaves, remaining PRs are interviewed jointly by a British officer and a Gurkha ARO, to confirm their background and assess suitability of character for the Brigade. In this task, the Recruiting team was aided by a variety of officers from units across the Brigade. My thanks must go to Maj Imran Ahsan (BGN), Capt Nick Berry (BGN), Lt Andy Chambers (ETS), Capt Ryan Davies, Capt Charlie Russell, and 2Lt Will Plumley (all RGR) for their good work. Lt Ed Drummond-Baxter RGR, tragically killed in Afghanistan in November last year, was also on the team for RS (East) in September. Much has been said of what a gentleman 'D-B sahib' was and I had the honour of seeing it first hand. It was a privilege to work alongside him and a pleasure to see the care and attention with which he approached his responsibilities. One of his many legacies will be the 11 PRs that he interviewed in Dharan, who are now in Catterick and on their way to becoming soldiers in the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Regional Selection produced the best 200 PRs from both the East and the West from the several thousand that applied. These final 400 were called forward to attend Central Selection at BGP, for a three-week period in November - December 2012, soon after the festivities of Dashain and Tihar had subsided. Amongst other rigorous assessments, RI 13 Central Selection included extensive education tests, the scourge of many a poor hill boy; a 1.5 mile run; the now mythical 'Doko' Race involving 25kgs in a doko basket and a route that winds into the hills above BGP over 5 kms; and a final interview in Nepali before a panel of five retired and serving Brigade officers. 245 of the 396 PRs who turned up at the front gate at BGP passed all tests and attended this final interview. Along the way, many had fallen at what we thought were the less likely obstacles, the physical tests. Many unfortunate PRs were clearly not getting a good enough return on their investment in training academies, of which I wrote earlier. The education tests proved not to be of such great difficulty as in previous years, with a failure rate of just 20%. A lingering perception amongst would-be applicants is that British Army education tests are too hard; this is often what encourages Nepalese boys, particularly from more humble backgrounds, not to apply, or to apply instead for GCSPF.



During RI 13 I am sure we got it right, but it is true that these tests - unintentionally, but unavoidably (and some would argue necessarily) - discriminate against those who have been unable to receive the necessary education. One such PR's performance will not appear in any recruiting statistics, so must be reported here for posterity. On his second attempt, having failed education tests at CS in 2011, he broke the British Army Doko Race record, with an astonishing time of 35 minutes and 57 seconds. Compare this to the Brigade's British Officer record: in 2011 Lt (now Capt) Rorie Evans (1 RGR) ran it in 39 minutes and 26 seconds. The poor PR, as honest and Joshi as they come, failed his education tests the next day. It was heartbreaking to witness.

At British Gurkhas Pokhara on 10 December 2012 63 eastern PRs, following a quick handshake and a 'shybash' from SO3 Rect, were enlisted into the British Army. On 18 December, 63 western PRs joined them. They were handed straight on to Gurkha Company from ITC Catterick, who would take them through basic induction training to prepare them for their Attestation Parade (or 'Kasam Khane') and their subsequent journey to the UK. There is a brief postscript to be added at this point. A week after final eastern selection, a blanket was found over the barbed wire mounted on top of the perimeter wall at BGP. Performing a hurried roll call, the duty NCO found that one of the 63 had absconded during the night. One man's loss is another's gain, and a day later, T/Rfn Rabin Chongbang, a hill boy from the east Nepal and the PR selected as a replacement, found himself sitting on a night bus to Pokhara, the happiest man in Nepal. He arrived at Camp shortly after dawn, with a wide smile on his face, to have his hand shaken vigorously (and not without a little relief) by SO3 Rect and SARO.

On 03 January 2013, in the shadow of the iconic Machhapuchhare and under blue skies, 126 beaming recruits - well ironed, well polished, and with very short haircuts - paraded in front of GOC Sp Comd and a crowd of hundreds of family members, and swore an oath of allegiance to the Queen. They were now Gurkhas.

I must thank my recruiting team - from the Gallah wallahs, to all BGN serving personnel, Gurkha and British Recruit Assistants including the Education team, Medical Officers and any number of BGN LECs - be they leaf-sweepers or clerks, drivers or cooks - for their hard work. The success of recruiting RI 13 is their success. To SARO and the AROs, my mentors and companions over the last year, must go particular thanks. It has been an honour.

British Gurkhas Kathmandu

The main focus has been on the procedures for Disaster Relief with Kathmandu, which has been a real education for some and probably a boost of confidence for others. As we sit in one of those most volatile areas for an earthquake, it has been vitally important to ensure we are able to meet every scenario and that our people, military and civilian, are aware of their own responsibilities and are looked after. We focused on a monthly training period which has seen a variety of subjects covered from the use of power tools and building props by DIO to the produce of food from ORP in a temporary kitchen by the Master Chef. That was particularly well attended by the Staff and everyone seemed to enjoy the operational ration packs - clearly they have not had to eat them for 6 months in Afghanistan where the novelty soon wears off. The Disaster Relief Training has highlighted lots of lessons for us both as a HQ BGK and a G4 Team.

We celebrated the traditional Nepali festivals, sometimes mixing with other charity events in support of agencies such as SSAFA to which the BGN donated £2,900 after the Big Brew Up come Cultural Evening in BGK and a similar event in BGP. The personal contribution both in terms of money and support and participation was very generous. The physical training regime and sporting abilities play an important part of life in Kathmandu and we have a renewed vigour and enthusiasm for getting into the hills on PT and exploring a great countryside. We have had BGK personnel take part in many activities from the Kathmandu Valley Rim Walk to the Kathmandu Marathon.

This year BGK saw some changeovers of personnel, including the arrival of OC (Maj D J Hendry PARA) and 2IC/ MTO (Capt Diwan Limbu QOGLR). We also bade final farewell to Lt (Retd) Ravindra Sahi from the Transit Office after nearly 37 years of service with the British Army and BGN.



COSIDCOM Lt Col EA Davis presenting a memento to Lt (Retd) Ravindra Shahi after his departure from Transit Office



BGN families taking part in SSAFA Big Brew

Kathmandu Marathon 2012

By CSgt Ganeshsingh Limbu RGR, CQMS BGK

Kathmandu Marathon 2012 was held on 13 October 2012, starting and finishing at Dashrath National Stadium. The event was open to all and had various categories of competitions; full-marathon, half-marathon, 5 km open, 5 km under-age and 5 km wheel-chair. Amongst the participants, the professional runners were competing for the prestigious winners' medals and prizes, whilst many others were participating on individual interests and some were representing various firms, organizations, schools and charities.

CSgt Ganesh Limbu and Cpl Kumar Thapa actively led the BGN team at the event. The team BGN's intention was to participate and subsequently raise money for a charity in support of Mr Deshman Rai (LEC porter) and Nepal Army rehabilitation. A team of 18, comprised of serving and LEC personnel, participated, in which, ten males did the half marathon



BGN team at the finishing point of Kathmandu Marathon 2012

and 3 males and 5 females went for the 5km run. The BGN team consisted of serving and LEC personals. All the participants successfully completed the run, with the half-marathon team completing between 2 hours to 2 hours 30 minutes.

Ex PASCHIM SIGNAL KUKRI 2012

By Cpl Kumar Thapa, NST

Nepal Signal Troop (NST) is responsible for carrying out an annual mandatory inspection on all radios and Communication Information System (CIS) equipments deployed at all Area Welfare Centres (AWC) throughout Nepal on behalf of Gurkha Welfare Scheme (GWS). The main aim of this exercise is to test and inspect all the CIS/radio equipment, diagnose and resolve any existing faults as well as provide refresher training to the AWC Staff once in a year.

An element of Forward repair team under the name of Ex Pashchim Signal Kukuri 12 Phase 2 (PSK 12/2) led by Capt Kedar Rai, OC NST, deployed to AWCs Chitwan, Butwal, Bheri and Gulmi over the period 24 September - 02 October 2012. Although it had just been three months into my assignment to NST, I got the opportunity to participate in this exercise, consecutively after completing Ex Purba Signal Kukri 12 Phase 1 in the East.

The team set off on the journey in earnest on 24 September 2012, starting from AWC Chitwan. We then visited the other AWCs in turn and after a very long and tiresome journey through numerous undulating terrains, narrow bends and some dangerous driving conditions, we returned home on 02 October 2012 via BG Pokhara on a successful completion of the exercise. Finally, the team would like to thank all the AWCs for their wonderful assistance and great hospitality. I felt that every penny we generate from doing a volunteer job, organising a charity event or taking part in other activities like Trailwalker, is being well spent on our ex-servicemen, their families and communities.

Brigade and Unit Welfare Office (BUWO)

The British Army takes very seriously the welfare of its soldiers and their families and offers a wide range of support. As such, the Brigade and Unit Welfare Office (BUWO) based at Headquarters British Gurkhas Nepal (BGN), Kathmandu provides the welfare support to the serving members and families of the Brigade of Gurkhas, including those who have transferred to the wider army or joined as the British National Overseas (BNO).

From December 2012, the Transit Office has also merged with the BUWO, adding more responsibilities. The fundamental role of the BUWO is to provide necessary welfare support on various issues, such as NOTICAS, DILFOR, repatriation, marital harmony, call forward of unaccompanied family in UK and Brunei, Brigade Marriage Registration and compassionate cases for serving soldiers and dependants.

As in the previous years, the BUWO has been busy this year. The statistics of welfare cases over the period 01 January - 31 December 2012 are as follows:

Issues	Total
Comp Cat A	16
Comp Cat B	144
Comp Cat C	29
Marital Dispute	38
Welfare Cases	95
Leave extension	95
DILFOR Cases	1
NOTICAS	7
Repatriation	3 (Late Rfn Sachin Limbu 1 RGR, Late Rfn Aman Gurung 2 RGR and Late LCpl Siddhanta Kunwar 1 RGR)
Attended Repatriation Ceremony in the UK	2 (Late LCpl Gajbahadur Gurung 2 RGR, Late Siddhanta Kunwar 1 RGR)
Marriage Registration	120



Repatriation Ceremony of Late Rfn Sachin Limbu 1 RGR



CGS General Sir Peter Wall KCB CBE ADC Gen with the family of Late LCpl Siddhanta Kunwar 1 RGR

British Gurkhas Pokhara

By Capt Rabindraprakash Tulachan, A/OC BGP

British Gurkhas Pokhara (BGP) has successfully continued to deliver the British Gurkhas Nepal's main outputs over the year. Foremost of these has been the selection of Recruit Intake 2013 who have now left Nepal for the UK to start their Combat Infantryman's Course (Gurkha) in ITC Catterick. In addition, BGP continues activities such as, paying of pensions to the Service pensioners from West Nepal, maintaining the Brigade Records Office, supporting the activities of the Gurkha Welfare Scheme and Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Association, facilitating Nepali language training for British officers and supporting Gurkha Contingent Singapore Police Force (GCSPF) recruitment.

This year saw the changeover of some key personnel at BGP. In March 2012, Maj Rick Beven left on retirement after four years with BGP and Capt(Retd) Rembahadur Ghale RGR joined the Recruiting Cell as the ARO (West). In November 2012, we bade farewell to Lt Col Johnny Fenn QOGLR, Field Director GWS who went on retirement and was replaced by Lt Col Gary Blewitt RWelsh. In December 2012, the new QM/MTO BGP, Capt Meenjung Gurung and Project Engineer GWS, Capt Ed Brown have arrived replacing Capt Buddhi Bhandari and Capt Doug Brain respectively, who left on assignment.

Over the last year, two Survival Nepali Language Courses (SNLC I) have been run by Language Development Wing (former Gurkha Language Wing) at BGP and a total of ten students have completed the language course.

BGP is also responsible for paying pensions to retired servicemen in the western part of Nepal. In 2012, the BGP Pensions Office paid out a total of NCR 3,149,461,934.58 to a total of 8,142 ex-servicemen, many of whom still visit the PPO at BGP to collect their pension in person.

The Records office houses the records of some 38,070 personnel. It has been particularly busy since the immigration rules were changed in 2009 to allow pre 1997 Gurkhas to settle in the UK. The Records Office is often the first port of call in the process of an ex-Gurkha serviceman moving to the UK or Hong Kong. In 2012, the Records Office dealt with a total of 3,766 cases.

Op SETI

A flash flood in Pokhara Seti River on Saturday 05 May 2012, damaged civil mains water supply pipes which reduced the capacity from approximately 33,500,000 litres to 18,500,000 litres per day. BGP was tasked to supply drinking water on the ground. At the time there was substantially need for drinking water in certain areas of Pokhara. Therefore Op SETI kicked off, on the authority of HQ Sp Comd, to use spare capacity of water at BGP to supply to the general public and assist in alleviating the water shortage in Pokhara. We offered the drinking water

department in Pokhara 350,000 litres per day. We also opened our two public water taps (to the North and South of the camp) for a long period. The Op ended at the end of July 2012. The general public, including the ex-servicemen community and Pokhara water supply department, were very grateful for Op SETI, which helped us to enhance our relationship with the local community and the local government. The local media covered the Op with huge appreciation for our efforts.



Water tanker distributing water to public

Ex BHUICHALO AAYO

As part of disaster relief and contingency training, a test exercise, EX BUINCHALO AYO 2012 was held on 02 November 2012 at BGP for serving personnel, dependants, LECs and GWS staff. The aim of the Ex was to conduct practical, multi-faceted training for BGP and HQ GWS staff to improve the community's resilience and response to a major earthquake and test their application of BGNSI and BGP Contingency Orders. A small team from HQ BGN led by Lt Col E Davis D Comd/COS conducted the exercise. This gave an opportunity to all LECs to practice their first aid skills, evacuation drills and search and rescue. Serving personnel practiced, under exercise conditions, the activation of the Ops and Alternative Ops Rooms, dealing with entitled and non-entitled persons at the front gate requesting assistance, and sending reports and returns to HQ BGN. The Ex proved to be very effective and useful to all BGP and GWS personnel involved.



Exercising troops practising/revising first aid skills

Visitors

BGP Continues to host a large number of visitors and duty trekkers. In 2012, a total of 312 visitors, including numerous VVIP/VIPs passed through BGP gates. January 2012 started with a superb hunt breakfast under the blue Himalayan skies on the ridge above Lamachaur to say thank you/farewell to Gen Sir David Richards GCB CBE DSO ADC Gen, CDS and Lady Caroline from BGP/GWS. He was also the inspecting officer for the Rect Intake 2012 Attestation Parade. In April, Field Marshall Sir John Chapple GCB CBE visited BGP and had the opportunity to meet with ex-serviceman including his personal orderly from his old days at the pension compound at BGP. In the same month, Mrs Jacky Davis, the FCO Desk officer, visited BGP to understand about Gurkha recruiting and the support provided to ex-serviceman and local community by GWS and KAAA. Ms Joanna Lumley OBE also visited BGP Camp and had a dinner at Kali Khola Mess in April 13. In June, Brig D S Short CBE, COS Sp Comd and Sqn Ldr Black from PJHQ visited BGP. In November, Maj Gen NAW Pope CBE stopped by the Kali Khola Mess whilst he was on duty trek with Comd/GM QG Signals. In mid November, BGP were privileged to have been visited by Gen Sir Peter Wall KCB CBE ADC Gen, CGS/Col Comdt Bde of Gurkhas. At the time of writing, Col J G Robinson Col BG is due to visit in the near future.

Summary

As I come to the last year of my service, it has been an absolute privilege to have served as 2IC and A/OC BGP (during the latter stage) of my final tour duty in Nepal. I finish my tour with BGP in mid April 13 and my time spent here in BGP has been full of fun and adventures, and filled with fond memories including for my family. I hope to return (and I will) to this beautiful camp with my family and rekindle the past memories with delight over a cup of tea looking at the astonishing view of Mt Machhapuchre.

British Gurkhas Dharan

British Gurkhas Dharan (BGD) is a small unit located inside the B P Koirala Institute of Health and Science Hospital (Old British Camp), with a total of 19 staff. Its mission is to provide support to the Gurkha recruiting process, pension paying, and trekking and movement assistance for visitors in order to maintain BGN's footprint and good reputation in the eastern part of Nepal.

Official duty treks take place between September and April. Normally, the trekkers observe the Area Welfare Centre's (AWC) ongoing projects and visit the Welfare Pensioners. Every year, hundreds of potential recruits turn up here for registration to fulfill their dream of joining the British Army. The Pension Paying Office (PPO) here looks after some 7,041 pensioners (British Gurkhas and GCSPF) residing in eastern part of Nepal, of whom, approximately 45% collect



their pension from the PPO in person whilst most receive into their bank accounts. Besides this, the PPO staff visit AWC on a quarterly basis and also some pensioners at their homes who are unable to travel up to PPO for pension payments.

Amidst the busy official events throughout the year, we did not forget to enjoy social activities, including BGD Dashain Party.

The Gurkha Welfare Scheme (GWS)

By Lt(Retd) Purnabhadur Gurung, Staff Officer Logistics HQ GWS

Introduction and Core Activities

The Gurkha Welfare Scheme (GWS) Nepal is a charity field arm of the Gurkha Welfare Trust (UK) and operates in support of the British Gurkha ex-servicemen and their communities. It has 19 branch offices in Nepal and one in Darjeeling, India as well as 12 patrol bases (sub-branches). Its headquarters are co-located within British Gurkhas Pokhara (BGP) and are regarded as an integral part of British Gurkhas Nepal (BGN) commanded by Commander British Gurkhas Nepal (currently Colonel Andrew Mills) in his capacity as Director GWS.

The GWS serves approximately 8,000 welfare pensioners and 20,000 service pensioners including ex Gurkha Contingent Singapore Police Force (GCSPF) and provides the following services to them and their communities:

- Welfare Pension
- Disability Support Grant
- Medical
- Residential Home
- Education Grants (being phased out)
- Hardship Grants
- Community Aid
 - Water projects including promotion of health and hygiene
 - Schools - new builds, roofing, furniture, etc.

- Public Relations Aid i.e., Community sports complex, aid to Community hall, side-roads, etc.
- Support MOD (serving soldiers and service pensioners) in:
 - Investigation of Compassionate and Welfare Cases
 - Distribution of MOD Service Pensions
 - Medical Aid
 - Disaster Relief
 - Personal Records Updating

In order to fulfil the above core services efficiently, the GWS invests approximately 12 million pound sterling per year, which equals about Nepalese Rupees 150 Crores, one third of which goes to welfare pension awarded to those destitute ex-servicemen discharged prematurely. All those monies come mainly from the numerous generous people of the UK and elsewhere as well as a part of it coming from MOD, DFID (UK Aid) and through One Day Pay Scheme (ODPS) of serving Gurkha soldiers and GC SPF, which is a fitting tribute to all those involved for their generous contribution in support of the ageing and underprivileged people living in the hills.

High Profile Visits

2012 witnessed quite a few notable visits in the calendar of the Gurkha Welfare Scheme (GWS). To start with, General Sir David Richards GCB, CBE, DSO, ADC Gen Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS)/Colonel Commandant Brigade of Gurkhas, in his capacity as Chairman GWT and Lady Caroline paid their farewell visit to Nepal in January 2012 which coincided with Recruit Kasam Khane Parade at BGP. Then they did a two days trek in inner Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) that ended in a "Gurung Village" at Tanchowk, Kaski. This village replicates a typical Gurung culture, managed by Mr Duncan Baker ex. 2/2 GR where the VVIPs spent a joyful night in the company of the HQ GWS senior staff. In his farewell speech held at AWC Kaski amid a curry lunch, the chairman said that he thoroughly enjoyed his five years tenure as Chairman GWT due to the huge support to GWT, mainly by the generous British people and other well wishers worldwide, coupled with undying dedication of the trustees and the entire GWS staffs.

Another milestone visit was of the famous British actress and daughter of a WWII veteran, Ms Joanna Lumley OBE, a vice patron of GWT, also known as "Gurkhaliko Chhori" in March to inaugurate a school building at Tiplyang, Myagdi built in memory of late Hon Lt(QGO) Tulbahadur Pun VC, who died in April 2011 through the fund collected by her own fundraising campaign in UK. Also in the company were Elizabeth and Ann, nieces of late Capt Michael Allmand VC, who fought alongside Maj James Lumley, father of Joanna and Tulbahadur Pun VC. Joanna and the Allmands were very touched by the warm reception offered by the late Tulbahadur VC's family and their community. Then in April, the parents and family of late Lieutenant Neal Turkington RGR flew in all the way from UK to inaugurate and hand over a school building to the local community at Neta, Lamjung built

in memory of their late son, who had visited the school during an AWC attachment programme as part of his SLP Nepali course in Nepal and was later killed during operation Herick on 13 July 2010 in Afghanistan. The school was built from the money collected through fundraising activities by his parents and colleagues. Then towards the end of the year, the new Chairman GWT and Chief of the General Staff, General Sir Peter Wall KCB CBE ADC Gen paid his visit to GWS.

TACOS - A New Look

During the middle of the year, the GWS new Terms and Conditions of Service (TACOS) was implemented which was briefed to all staffs by Dir GWT Col(Retd) W F Shuttlewood OBE and Dir GWS Col A M Mills. One of the highlights of the new TACOS is the abolition of contracted service (less those working at RSWP owing to the availability of separate fund) and retirement age which has now been raised to 60 years, provided one is physically and mentally fit and there is a vacancy for his/her service.

Changes to Senior Personalities

On the manning side, Lt Col Garry Blewitt, Royal Welsh, took over the appointment of Field Director from Lt Col J D Fenn Ex QOGLR who left the army on voluntary retirement. Colonel Garry was previously QM 2 RGR in Brunei and Mrs Wendy Blewitt, a nurse by profession, has settled well here at Pokhara having been in the self acclaimed luxury between chilly Brecon and humid Brunei and has already lent her helping hands in support of Medical camps. Maj(Retd) Lalitbahadur Gurung ex RGR, himself a son of an ex Gurkha Major, relieved Maj(Retd) Krishnabahadur Gurung MVO MBE ex QOGTR who retired after ten successful years as the Deputy Field Director.

Meanwhile we said goodbye to the following officers this year who contributed so much for this organisation. They were:

Hon Capt Narbahadur Gurung MVO BEM - OIC RH Kaski
Capt (Retd) Mekbahadur Gurung - Snr AWO Butwal
Capt (Retd) Khembahadur Thapa - LO GSO

Natural Disaster Relief

Readers might recall that an earthquake measuring 6.8 on the Richter Scales struck in the north eastern border of the country on 18 September 2011 causing extensive damages to the public and private properties, of which 153 households belonging to Gurkha ex-servicemen were partly or badly damaged. A disaster relief team including some from the unaffected AWCs were sent out to the affected hills of AWC Taplejung and Phidim to assist respective AWOs to assess the situation and recommend for the special grant aid. Approximately seven million rupees was awarded for the reconstruction and repair of the houses.

Community Aid Projects

Community aid is one of the major focuses of our charity work and a huge number of communities have benefited from our work in the remote villages both in the hills and Tarai. Last year, GWS invested approximately ten crores rupees under the following headings.

- 1 x Major school
- 9 x Minor school Extensions
- 99 x Refurbishments
- 68 x Water Projects

Conclusion

Despite the global economic crunch over the past few years, the financial support to the GWT and therefore GWS has been quite encouraging, purely due to the continued support of our generous corporate and individual donors and on behalf of the ex-service communities here in Nepal, I would like to say thank you for all your compassion.

Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Association (GBN)

By Hon Maj Jud Bahadur Gurung, Coordinating Officer

Whilst in Hong Kong, the British Army was helping rural communities to construct roads, bridges and other projects. It was therefore not surprising that Horace Kadoorie met the Gurkhas in their joint efforts to help the poor farmers in Hong Kong. Horace was a close friend of the then Commander of 48 Gurkha Infantry Brigade, the Late Brigadier (later Major General) 'Bunny' Burnett and readily agreed to his request for agricultural training to be given to the Gurkhas on the Kadoorie Farm in Hong Kong prior to their retirement to Nepal. Since then, hundreds of Gurkhas attended this training, prior to returning to Nepal and have benefited in some way or other from the KAAA's generosity. Now, the benefits of the work and projects of KAAA have reached far beyond the Gurkha remit to many local communities, both in the East and West of Nepal.

Applications for projects can be made through the Area Welfare Centres by any Nepalese citizen although the ex-servicemen from the British Gurkhas are given preference. Priority is given to community projects, such as providing drinking water (gravity, solar, wind and electric pumping) to villages, trail bridges (suspended, suspension, truss, short span bridges and tar pul) across fast flowing rivers and mountain torrents as well as Micro Hydro Electricity (15-100 KW), Mills (Huller, Grinder, Oil Expeller), Gravity Ropeways, funds for Cliff Track Constructions (when journeys are reduced by four hours to even to a whole day), Solar Home Lighting System (where Micro Hydro Electricity is not feasible). Of note, KAAA is responsible for building eight per cent of the Trail Bridges

in Nepal which speaks volumes for the Kadoorie Family's substantial contribution to the people of Nepal.

Individual Aid includes income generating skill development training both short and long term for the unemployed and disadvantaged youths (both boys and girls) aged 18 to 25 to provide them with qualifications to enhance their employment opportunities. Some 230 individuals are trained through the KAAA Network each year. KAAA BGN also funds eight medical camps a year, which are administered by the Gurkha Welfare Scheme (GWS). These camps last for 3three days and provide free medical treatment irrespective of whether they are Ex British Gurkhas or not. The treatments include cataract operations, GP services, gynecological clinics and dental treatment.

KAAA has made it clear that as long as there is requirement, and the Gurkha Welfare Scheme is operating in Nepal, Kadoorie Aid will continue its help.



KAAA built Bhalaundi Khola Suspended Bridge, 47m, Machhapuchhre VDC, Kaski



Rumchet Micro Hydro Electricity Project, 100 KW, Kerauja VDC, Gorkha - this is the largest Micro Hydro Electricity Project ever built by KAAA

Op SETI - The Bridge Link for the Drinking Water Supply to Pokhara Town

On 05 May 2012, rumours and panic started in Pokhara that a huge flood like a tsunami from the Seti River would wash away the whole of Pokhara Town. People were even preparing to leave the town. Others decided to stay put and 'ride away' the floods by heading for the roofs of their houses. In fact the start of the flooding was noted by a pilot of an ultra light aircraft who contacted the local radio station and hence the distorted news. The flooding did occur and the hot water spring at Kharpani was completely obliterated and all 16 houses were totally buried.

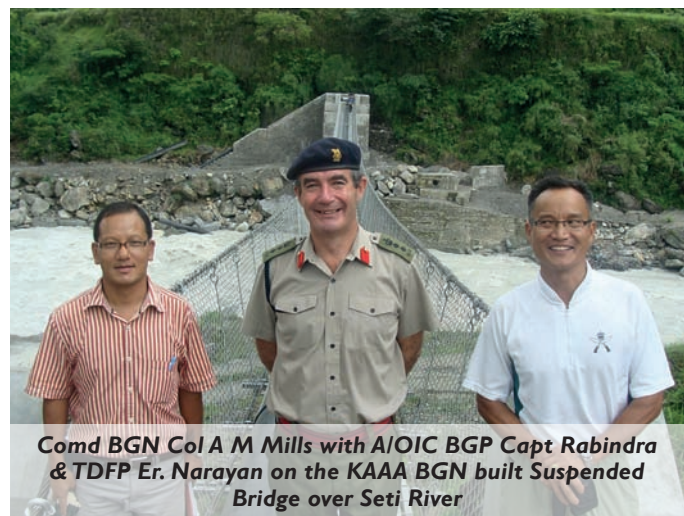
A request was made from the Nepal Water Supply Corporation (NWSC) Pokhara to build a crossing over Seti river in order to facilitate the reinstatement of the supply water pipeline. This opportunity for KAAA BGN to build a Trail Bridge for the crossing of the main water supply pipe to the town people of Pokhara was a great challenge. This was to replace the 42 metres long steel truss bridge carrying the main water distribution pipe for the city after it was totally destroyed, resulting in the reduction of water supply to Pokhara Town by approximately 60 per cent of its normal capacity. In essence, the project was still a community aid, but on a large scale.

KAAA BGN with approval from KCF Hong Kong and in liaison with the Commander BGN and Chief District Officer (CDO) Kaski, decided to build a suspended bridge some 85.6 metres long at the same location as the previously washed away bridge but some 3 metres higher. The estimated total cost was NCRs 92 Lakhs (NCRs 80 Lakhs for the bridge and NCRs 12 Lakhs for HDPE pipes and accessories). It was aptly named "Operation Seti" as it was an emergency task. It was also starting at the onset of the monsoon season and had to be completed within two months. Doubts and eyebrows were raised from both the NWSC and the CDO's Office when this was mentioned. After facing many challenges like a series of public strikes (bandhs) both in Pokhara and the whole of Nepal by various political parties due to the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly and the inclement weather, KAAA still managed to complete as scheduled on 17 July 2012, within the stipulated time frame.

Unfortunately, KAAA BGN's intention to resume water supply to Pokhara Town at the earliest has yet to be fulfilled. The main 20 inches diameter Ductile Iron main water pipe was damaged and washed away at different locations along the Seti River by subsequent floods. Officials of the NWSC Pokhara say that they are doing their best to fix the damaged pipeline but the work on the ground has yet to start. After a lapse of nine months the Tendering process has started and it is expected that actual work will start towards the end of February 2013 and according to NWSC it will take up to three months to complete the work. However, the platform has been laid by the KAAA BGN built bridge and the HDPE pipe laid on the top of it to give NWSC to consolidate and re-build the other pipelines, as the most time consuming and the main obstacle



Previous Truss Bridge: 42 m long steel Truss Bridge before 5 May 2012



Comd BGN Col A M Mills with A/OIC BGP Capt Rabindra & TDFP Er. Narayan on the KAAA BGN built Suspended Bridge over Seti River

for crossing the pipeline has been completed. For now, it does seem that it will take some months for the bridge to come into full use when NWSC will fix the damaged and washed out pipeline at other locations. KAAA sincerely hopes that the rapid action by the NWSC & the Nepal Government will help to quench the parched city of Pokhara thus benefiting 60 per cent of the population of city i.e. about 180,000 people.



Recently built 85.6 m long Suspended Bridge and laid HDPE Pipe on top of the bridge



THE GURKHA WELFARE TRUST

“Gurkhas Living Out Their Lives with Dignity”

Director’s Report 2012

By William Shuttlewood

Despite the economic gloom the Trust has presented a reasonably healthy set of accounts for FY 2011/12 with a forecast budget deficit of £1.2m being replaced by an actual surplus of £750,000. There are a number of reasons for this change in Trust fortunes: legacy income at £3.4m has surged, reflecting the age of our donors; we enjoyed a very favourable rate of exchange that at one stage was as high as NPR 140/£1 against a budget rate of NPR 110/£1; and a number of cost-saving measures have begun to make themselves felt.

Notwithstanding these encouraging returns, there is need for caution: income from all sources was actually down by 3% over the year; significantly, donations from individuals, companies, trusts and organisations was down by 19%, reflecting the national economic climate and, in part at least, the increased competition amongst Service charities for funds; the unpredictable nature of the rate of exchange can have a considerable effect on Trust fortunes; and of course the recruitment of new donors remains a continuing challenge.

The consequence is that the level of financial uncertainty remains uncomfortably high and the Trust still needs to raise funds if we are to maintain our current activities and be able to meet new and emerging needs. It is against this financial uncertainty that Trustees endorsed the key Recommendation of the Strategy Review 2011:

“Immediate and non-reversible decisions to draw down expenditure are not necessary at this stage. However, given uncertainty over future income streams, Trustees should identify appropriate control mechanisms on all areas of expenditure in order to ensure projected expenditure remains manageable.”

The Strategy Review essentially confirmed that the Trust’s direction of travel was right for the time being and that there was no need to consider, at this stage at least, any shift away from being a relief organisation to one that focused on development. Trustees remain unequivocal in their assertion that individual aid remains the bedrock of Trust activities, with

the support to our welfare pensioners remaining centre stage for the foreseeable future.

The Review also confirmed the Trust’s priorities for our welfare activities:

- Priority 1 - The provision of a Welfare Pension.
- Priority 2 - Welfare Grants.
- Priority 3 - The provision of Residential Homes.
- Priority 4 - Medical Support.
- Priority 5 - The provision of water and sanitation projects in support of Gurkha communities.
- Priority 6 - The provision of education (facilities and grants).

The Review did however identify some shortcomings which need to be addressed:

a. Support Costs. The effectiveness of a charity is often judged on the amount of charitable expenditure against funds expended on administration. There were signs that our support costs, especially in Nepal, were rising at a level greater than our expenditure on welfare. This is a difficult area because the Trust is dependent on a comprehensive infrastructure and high quality staff for the effective and efficient delivery of welfare support. A number of reviews have been set in train to ensure our support costs are fully justified:

(1) GWS Staff Terms and Conditions of Service (TACOS). GWS Staff TACOS have been thoroughly reviewed and overhauled: to ensure that they are appropriate for what we expect of our staff (especially those who work in the field); that the Trust is able to recruit and retain staff of the right quality; that employment contracts conform to Nepal’s emerging employment legislation.

(2) GWS Infrastructure Review. The Trust’s infrastructure in Nepal has remained largely unchanged since the mid 1970s. At the same time Nepal’s road network has

developed considerably. GWS are currently undertaking a review to ensure our current network of AWCs meets our requirement. The Review will look at our “footprint” to ensure our AWC network is able to deliver in the Twenty First Century.

(3) Medical Review. The Trust remains concerned at the rising costs of the Medical Scheme in Nepal. The review is intended to ensure that the treatment and support we provide at both primary and secondary levels of care is both appropriate and affordable and represents good value for money.

b. Salisbury Office - Fundraising Staff Re-Structuring. The Trust has had to turn to meet the increasing challenges of fund-raising in UK. As a result the Fund-raising staff in the Salisbury office have been re-structured and new staff have been recruited, specifically a new Director of Fund-raising and Communications to oversee fund-raising strategy to drive forward the trust’s information campaign; a new Head of Fund-raising (Direct Mail) to develop further our marketing programme; and a new Head of Fund-raising (Major Donors) to ensure that we get the most out of our very wealthy supporters and to maximise our return from trusts and companies.

c. Support for the Welfare Pensioner. Trustees are increasingly concerned at the plight of our welfare pensioners. Their numbers are in rapid decline, especially those in their late 80s and early 90s. On the one hand all WPs receive a welfare pension that ensures their financial security, on the other and for those who live in extreme circumstances of distress, there are only a limited number of places in residential care. Yet the average age of our welfare pensioners is over 80 years and many clearly need intensive nursing and other care. Trustees are therefore considering ways of ensuring that the very elderly who are not able to access residential care are looked after as well as possible.

In UK, the Gurkha Welfare Centre (GWC) has been fully engaged in fulfilling its four key tasks:

- a. To act as a focus for all retired Gurkhas in the UK who seek welfare support - and to provide a ready and immediate source of authoritative Government and/or Trust subject matter expert advice and counsel.
- b. To ensure individuals arriving in UK under the new settlement arrangements are able to claim their statutory entitlements.
- c. To complement and support the Service charities in the delivery of welfare support and, when necessary, to assist in the coordination of their work.

d. To provide the capacity to reach out nationally to Gurkha communities and to those agencies and organisations supporting Gurkhas in need.

The Trust remains grateful to ABF The Soldiers’ Charity for the work they do with SSAFA on the Trust’s behalf. We recognise this work by paying an annual grant to ABF that now stands at £200,000 for the current year. There is no sign of the rate of influx of ex-Gurkhas seeking settlement abating. The situation in Aldershot/Farnborough is a particular concern, not least because it has drawn some unwelcome political and media attention and as a consequence threatens the Gurkha brand. As an enhancement to the support provided by the GWC, the Trust is developing a partnership with Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) in Aldershot to increase the quality and quantity of advice available to those needing support as the basis for a wider, national arrangement. In addition, GWC Staff have begun to implement an outreach programme to support Gurkha communities across the UK. The settlement issue has not gone away but with these initiatives the Trust is better placed to provide the support required.

Finally, the Trust and the Brigade have agreed that the activities to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Gurkha service in 2015 should be used as an opportunity to raise further funds for the Trust. This is a welcome development and Trustees have recently agreed in principle to fund a major fund-raising event at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, in June 2015.

The Trust is in good heart but there are clearly some difficult times ahead. Trustees remain extremely grateful for the way in which the Brigade and all Regimental Associations have supported us corporately in the past. The Trust hopes it is a tradition which will be maintained in the future. In that context members may find the following comments helpful:

- a. The Trust will continue to need the support of the Brigade and Regimental Associations to sustain its activities in Nepal and increasingly in UK. Any funds, both corporate and individual, in support of our general expenditure will be extremely welcome.
- b. The Trust’s Regional Branch network needs new recruits. Any support you can provide at a local level would be hugely appreciated.

On behalf of Trustees and the 8,000 or so welfare pensioners in the care of the Trust, I thank you for your continued support.



Gurkha Welfare Advisor, Mrs Beepana Pun helping an ex-Gurkha couple fill in the forms



Soldiers from QG Signals supporting the Irish Guards Singers at a fund-raising event in Liverpool in aid of the Trust



Dir GWT presenting a cheque for £200,000 to the CEO ABF The Soldiers' Charity

Welfare for Retired Gurkhas in the UK

Overview

Indefinite leave to Remain in the UK

Since the change in immigration rules in May 2009, there was a substantial surge in Gurkha immigration, bringing the welfare problems associated when elderly, non-English speaking Gurkhas are confronted by daily life in the UK. The determined drive by government departments and local authorities, coordinated by the MOD Land Forces Secretariat and the Cabinet Office, has had a very positive impact. In particular, the arrangements for fast-tracking National Insurance Numbers and State Benefits have worked very well.

Charitable Support

There is no doubt that the very considerable government and charitable effort to support retired Gurkhas in the UK has been vital. Without it, settlement would have been a miserable ordeal for many more than it has. Two problem areas are highlighted; firstly in the Aldershot and Farnborough area the elderly Gurkhas without family or friends, continue to struggle, and who without the active support given by the GWAC, many would be destitute; secondly, there is an increasing need for Gurkhas to be 'qualified caseworkers' in support of the service charities, and for pools of translators who are readily available to support the local community, particularly in schools, NHS facilities and ultimately the local CABs who will eventually be the focal point for advice to the Gurkha Communities on UK welfare support.

Local Government Initiative

In April 2012 the Communities and Local Government Secretary announced £1.5m of additional Government funding to support the successful integration of retired Gurkha soldiers and their dependants. The Secretary of State agreed for the first £500k to be paid to Rushmoor Borough Council to address the immediate pressures there. The remainder would be given to three 'clusters' of local authorities London, Kent and North Hampshire/Berkshire/Surrey. The funding would be used for:

- a. New infrastructure provision.
- b. Support integration.
- c. English language tuition.

Welfare Support

Gurkha Settlement Project - Inter-Departmental Action

The MOD Land Forces Secretariat (Foreign and Commonwealth) and Cabinet Office, continue to coordinate very effective work by the government departments involved to assist Gurkhas settling into the UK. In particular:

- a. The UK Border Agency. For visa applications.
- b. The Department for Work and Pensions. For the fast-track arrangements to obtain National Insurance Numbers and statutory State Benefits for those entitled.
- c. The Department for Communities and Local Government. For housing and liaison with local authorities. Two extremely useful pamphlets, 'Life in the UK' and 'Cost of Living in the UK' have been produced, but for the elderly, the detail is complex and beyond their individual experience to be comprehensible. For the younger generation these booklets provide a wealth of information, and should be readily available through the local Gurkha Communities.

Gurkha Settlement Office (GSO), Nepal

The GSO is doing vital work, briefing retired Gurkhas on the practicalities of life in UK and assisting with visa applications. It is based in Headquarters British Gurkhas Nepal, but deploying staff to Pokhara and Dharan periodically and liaising closely with the Gurkha Welfare Scheme and the Area Welfare Centres. This programme has been reinforced by briefings for regimental associations and ex-servicemen's organisations carried out by teams from UK, including the Assistant Head Land Forces Secretariat, Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas and UK Border Agency staff. As at 14 September 2012, the GSO has handled 32,528 visits from Gurkhas and their dependants (including repeat visitors), registered 11,200 applicants and completed 5,207 visa application forms, of which NINO has fast-tracked 4,078 applications. Trend lines would indicate that after a peak in March 11, there is a gradual decline in the number of visits to the early 2010 levels, with a slight fall in the numbers applying for visas, whereas the level of visa completions remain at a flat level.

Applications for Settlement

Statistics on visa applications are the province of UKBA, but in broad terms some 10,000 visas have so far been issued or approved for retired Gurkhas and their dependants (about 3,700 being for Gurkhas themselves).

Joint GWT/HQBG Gurkha Welfare Centre (GWC)

- a. Gurkha Welfare Centre (GWC). The GWC became operational in January 2010 and is now fully established with five GWT funded staff and is co-located with the GWT in Salisbury. Its main responsibilities are to; handle telephone enquiries from the Gurkha Communities UK wide less Hampshire, Berkshire and Surrey; and direct dealing with the GSO in Kathmandu.

b. Gurkha Welfare Advice Centre' (GWAC). The GWAS formerly known as GWC has now moved into its new premises in Aldershot and is co-located with Aldershot Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). It is currently manned by two staff who are funded by the MOD. This presages Phase 2 of the integration of the GWAC functions to be taken over by the CAB. In outline:

(1) Phase 1. Joint working (October 2012 - October 2013). Regular meetings, joint case working between CAB and GWAC staff, GWAC staff to attend CAB Courses, exchange of staff.

(2) Phase 2. Integration (October 2013 - March 2014). Assessment of Gurkha settlement in Rushmoor, possible transfer of GWAC responsibilities to CAB, leading to withdrawal of GWAC staff.

c. Gurkha Settlement Project (GSP) Welfare Cases. The flow of GSP related welfare cases which began in July 2009 with 02 cases now totals 2,176 (as at 31 August 2012) and continues to rise. The most intractable GSP cases involve Gurkhas who have not passed through the GSO but instead have paid money to unofficial organizations and have been given completely false expectations. They are elderly; some are infirm, speak no English, have no close relatives in this country to help them and are utterly bewildered by even the simplest aspects of day-to-day life in Britain. GWAC is working closely with DWP, the service charities and other agencies to assist them. With an average of 84 new GSPs arriving monthly, the remaining staff of the GWAC will struggle to keep pace with the case load. Greater use of voluntary staff is being considered.

d. Outreach Programme. The GWC has started a limited outreach programme to help reduce the backlog of cases. As GWC resources are limited the intention is not to start a permanent presence in outreach locations but to target areas where there is a particular need:

(1) Ashford Gateway. Tuesdays and Fridays. Alternatively manned by GWC and SSAFA Caseworkers.

(2) Reading & Hounslow. Due to start in September/October 2012.

Service Charities and other Agencies

The work of the charities in support of Gurkhas in the UK has been beyond praise from the outset. The ABF-The Soldiers' Charity, SSAFA-Forces Help and The Royal British Legion continue to be deeply involved, and Haig Homes and Veterans Aid, among others, have provided vital support. The Veterans Agency, the Career Transition Partnership/Regular Forces Employment Association and the Citizens Advice Bureau are also giving invaluable assistance. The current influx has imposed a strain on the caseworkers within the main areas of Gurkha settlement.

GWT Funding to Service Charities

In recognition of the growing need for funds for Gurkha cases in this country, the Gurkha Welfare Trust makes grants to the ABF The Soldiers' Charity. The Trust reviews the grant annually in the light of demand which has increased year on year. This grant has increased significantly from £50,000 in 2006/07 to £200,000 for 2012/13. It is indicative that while the ABF made only 35 grants totalling some £45,800 in 2006/07, for 2010/11 they provided a total of 718 grants totalling £390,238. As at 01 September 12 there have been 335 ABF grants amounting to £188,905. We anticipate that the level of grants will remain flat this year with a decrease next year. This starkly reveals the extent to which the ABF are providing emergency grants for Gurkhas who have brought insufficient funds with them to cover the period before their state benefits come through.

The GBA and Regimental Associations

The Gurkha Brigade Association and Regimental Associations continue to play an important part in providing 'informal support' and comradeship for retired Gurkhas in this country, not least through the annual Brigade All Ranks Reunion, (see paper 2/12), and numerous well-attended Regimental gatherings. The 'Cadre of Volunteers', the members of Regimental Associations and Gurkha community groups who have offered their services as interpreters and advisors to SSAFA and TRBL caseworkers is expanding. Several retired Gurkha Officers, Senior NCOs and children are still providing voluntary support to GWAC (Aldershot) in its new offices. However, there remains an urgent need to recruit more 'Gurkha Volunteer Caseworkers' as qualified 'SSAFA or ABF caseworkers' and 'community translators' to assist their local authorities in supporting the Gurkha Communities throughout the UK.

Widows and Wounded

The network of government and service charity contacts developed by the GWAC put it in a good position to advise and assist widows and the wounded, after their discharge. A link has been established with the Veterans Welfare Service (VWS) on transitional arrangements for seriously injured service leavers. The VWS will inform the GWAC when a wounded Gurkha is 'handed over' to them by the Army Welfare Service after discharge. With units doing the same, and with the involvement of DCOS HQBG and (in the case of RGR widows and casualties) Regimental Secretary RGR, it should be possible to ensure that Brigade support is available, as necessary, to complement the work of the range of official and charitable organisations concerned with rehabilitation and resettlement.

TRAILWALKER 2012

By 'Gurkha Bhuros' team-leader John Anderson

If you get the feeling of déjà-vu reading this title - relax, it is simply the third time that I have rather foolishly done this charity 'event' (if such a word is even vaguely appropriate). The Queen's Gurkha Signals-run Trailwalker is now the major long-distance walking challenge in the UK, and a vital aspect of GWT fund-raising for GWT. Quite simply, teams must cover 100kms (62.5 Miles) over the South Downs in under 30 hours: that the ups-and-downs equate to climbing and descending Ben Nevis twice, that some 2,500 (young!) people are foolish enough do it, and that it always seems to rain to add to the fun. This year, our team was made up of Bob Couldrey, Ian Gordon (both 7GR) and Ian Rigden (2GR/RGR and Col BG), with myself to add a touch of maturity. We dedicated our walk to the memory of Adrian Griffith, our friend and a man who accomplished so much for the GWT.

We did it - just. The mud built up by weeks of heavy rain turned much of the Trailwalker course into a quagmire - sufficient to ensure that three of the mandatory checkpoints were flooded and impassable to vehicles. This meant that, while we still had to wade through them, we could not meet up with our support team to get dry kit and food. We were making very good time until we hit the mud, which cut our speed and took a huge toll on our strength. A mere seven miles from the end Ian Gordon, our strongest walker, had to be casevaced when he suddenly lost most of his vision and his pulse dropped dramatically - he was bitterly upset and wanted to continue, but we were not prepared to take any risks: we are delighted to report that Ian, a real stalwart, has fully recovered.

We finished in 28 hours 28 minutes. We were brilliantly supported by a team drawn from the Gurkha Welfare Centres - Nirmal, Mahendra, Humbahadur and Beepana - and without them we would not have made it. We met many great people from all walks of life on the trail: members of our Brigade should feel humble that many, who know so little about us, are prepared to do so much for us and our old soldiers.

Your support had been vital to our fund-raising, and we - and the Gurkha Welfare Trust - are incredibly grateful for the magnificent contributions. Our team raised over £5,000 - and GWT benefited by over £549,000! And yes, we will do it again next year.



'Gurkha Bhuros' at the start



Approaching the finishing line



'Finished'



THE GURKHA MUSEUM

Curator's Report 2012

The past 12 months has seen a mixed bag of lower trading prospects (down 44% on 2011) due to the national economy and decline in the public's spending on Museums and Arts, but an increase in Military visitors and attendance at Museum lectures. In addition were the Olympics and the worst summer weather for 100 years! The trading figures were not helped by a major building refurbishment to the roof and windows. This saw the site clad in scaffolding from the end of January until July 2012 which deterred potential visitors. I hope the second half of the year will claw back some more new trading to bolster our fund-raising. Colonel Bruce Niven (ex 10 GR and GCSPF) has most generously produced at his own expense 2,000 copies of his latest publication *Mountain Kingdom, Volume 3*. (Price £20.00 excl (£3.00) P&P in UK) This will be the last of his series of outstanding photographs of Nepal and its people with all sale profit going to GWT/GM Charities. Another new book donated by its author, John Casson free of charge for sale to both GWT and GM is titled *Afghan Faces*. (Price £20.00 excl (£9.50) P&P in UK).

The McDonald Gallery has hosted numerous lectures and two successful exhibitions. An art exhibition titled "Nepal Awakening" by Gordon Davidson, an international Scottish artist was staged in April displaying 55 paintings of Nepal scenes he had painted for the Nepalese Ambassador in London to promote Nepalese tourism. The summer temporary exhibition "Brunei: A Look Back; A Look Forward - Fifty Years of Partnership" was opened by the Bruneian High Commissioner to London in August. It proved successful with the public and received a good review in the *Times*.

Due to the MOD Review of Military Museums in 2011, our Museum will be taking a 50% Civil Service Staff cut, with the first post going in October 2012 and the last in March 2014. It will leave the Museum with a Curator and one MOD paid Receptionist. Other staff will have to be paid by the Museum. The serving Brigade is now also finding it harder to sustain our Museum ERE postings. The result of these staff cuts will mean a curtailment of some Museum activities, including Sunday opening, Gallery functions and some lectures. The future for Military Museums will result in more austerity with less financial support from MOD. We may possibly soon be looking to a time in the foreseeable future when Military Museums will have to be entirely self funding!

In the past year it has been heartening to host a series of Training Days for all the Major Units of the Brigade as well as a number of Recruits. This trend is to be encouraged as one

has to learn from the past to understand the future. Enquiries to the Museum by Gurkha servicemen in respect of their ancestors' previous service in the Brigade have increased significantly. Also, there has been a surge in visits by ex-Gurkha servicemen and their families. This is a very welcome trend, I hope will be sustained.

The Chairman of Trustees made 2012 a year to push both serving and retired members of the GBA to become Friends of the Gurkha Museum. One would wish that all serving and retired members would join and become a Friend (as an annual £15 or life member £150). It is crucial to our core funding and sustainability to maintain as many Friends as possible. The Museum is the shop window to the public on the past 200 years of service to the Crown. Friends' membership helps sustain our corporate identity by providing the funding to purchase, maintain and improve our permanent collection. Membership is available through the Museum website www.thegurkhamuseum.co.uk

This year, the Friends have been most generous with funding to enable the Museum to purchase two paintings by the artist Gordon Davidson of scenes in Nepal, a 2 GR Mess Waiters headdress badge, and a book titled *East India Register*. A new project has now begun which will run for at least two years to display the 'Contemporary Brigade of Gurkhas' and to bring the Museum story up-to-date with the recent Small Wars in the Balkans, East Timor, Sierra Leone and Iraq, as well as 11 Years in Afghanistan and 50 Years of Gurkhas being in Brunei.

Looking ahead, I would like to remind readers of some dates for your 2013 diary which includes: The Gurkha Brigade Lecture and Curry Lunch on Friday 12 April 2013, titled "Tamandu - A Battle of Wills, Strength and Courage" by Brigadier Ian Rigden, Photographic Exhibition "They Served The Crown" by Xi Chen 29 April - 06 May 2013, The Friends Lecture and Curry Lunch on "The Gurkhas - Special Force" by Professor Chris Bellamy on Friday 07 June 2013. The Summer Exhibition for 2013 will be titled "The Contemporary Brigade of Gurkhas - Planning for the New 2020 Army" and will run from 03 August - 01 September 2013. The Annual Theme Lecture and Curry Lunch by the author, Peter Caddick-Adams titled "Monte Cassino Ten Armies in Hell" will be staged on 11 October 2013, followed by the Friends AGM and Tea on Saturday 12 October 2013. Booking details are on the Museum website (www.thegurkhamuseum.co.uk). Seating capacity for lectures is limited, so early booking is recommended.

I hope our readers will come to visit the Museum and support our activities and events during 2013.

ALLIED AND AFFILIATED REGIMENTS

The Rifles

Battalion Activities

The 07 February 2012 marked the fifth anniversary of the formation of The Rifles and five years of almost continuous engagement on operations in Afghanistan and Iraq by one or more of our battalions at a time. 2012 was also the 200th Anniversary of The Battle of Salamanca, the common battle honour of the forming regiments of The Rifles. As a result it has been a busy 18 months since our last newsletter made more so by the demands of the Jubilee year and the Olympics.

Following a welcome ten month pause during the summer and winter of 2010, we entered another period in which the Regiment was fully committed to operations in Afghanistan. The 1 RIFLES Battle Group deployed on Op HERRICK 14 to Helmand Province as part of 3 Commando Brigade at the beginning of April 2011; taking with them approximately 60 volunteer Riflemen from 6 RIFLES. Throughout their tour they were in the thick of it as the Taliban gradually increased the tempo of their insurgency following an extended winter and harvest period.



1 RIFLES Deployment on Omid Haft

Notable, amongst the operations mounted, was Op Omid Haft which helped clear the Alikozai area in the Kopak region of Narh-e-Saraj. A Company took the lead on this operation, which focused on taking into account the needs and desires of the local nationals and expanding the security bubble so persuading the local population to reject the insurgency.

In autumn 2011, 1 RIFLES handed over this area of operations to 5 RIFLES, under the Command of Lt Col Tom Copinger-Symes. During their tour they were the only battalion to deploy the extremely capable WARRIOR Infantry Fighting Vehicles on operations in the province. Typical of 5 RIFLES operations was Operation Kapcha Zhrandagaray, during which around 100 British troops from 5 RIFLES teamed up with 200 warriors from the 2nd Kandak of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and patrolmen from the Afghan National Police (ANP) to drive the insurgency from Kopak, in the Nahr-e Saraj district. The operation targeted a 16km² area that had seen



1 RIFLES Omid Haft - Expanding the security bubble



5 RIFLES Clearance of Kopak

little influence from the authorities so far and which had been heavily fought-over during the preceding summer.

The clearance operation saw Afghan bomb disposal experts discover and destroy ten Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and allowed engineers to build five new checkpoints for Afghan police to hold the territory.

At the same time, 2 RIFLES deployed in the role of Brigade Advisory group working alongside and developing the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). Under the command of Lt Col Bill Wright, they were responsible for training, advising and mentoring indigenous Afghan National Security Forces. This is a very important and challenging task, designed to deliver the Afghans their own inherent military and police capability by 2015. CO 2 RIFLES and his team were closely involved in formulating the doctrinal base and shaping the British Army's approach to this role.

In between conducting operations and training with the Afghan National Army 2 RIFLES found time to train the Afghan Army's first bugle platoon.

2 and 5 RIFLES were both part 20 Armoured Brigade commanded by a Rifleman Brigadier Patrick Sanders. Like their predecessors, they were reinforced by volunteer Riflemen though in this case from 7 RIFLES.



3 RIFLES on mentoring operations

In spring of 2012, 3 RIFLES took over from 2 RIFLES as the Brigade Advisory Group. During their tour they faced the developing challenge of the "green on blue" threat with an equanimity and steadfastness that won them the best unit award at the Sun Military awards in December 2012. They returned in November 2012, to the singular honour, for an English regiment, of being granted the Freedom of Edinburgh which they exercised as part of their homecoming parade on 3 November 2012.



3 RIFLES Freedom of Edinburgh parade

After a particularly arduous and protracted deployment on both Op HERRICK 10 and 11, 4 RIFLES have enjoyed a quieter year or two under the command of Lt Col Nick Thornton. However in the Field Army this is a relative concept

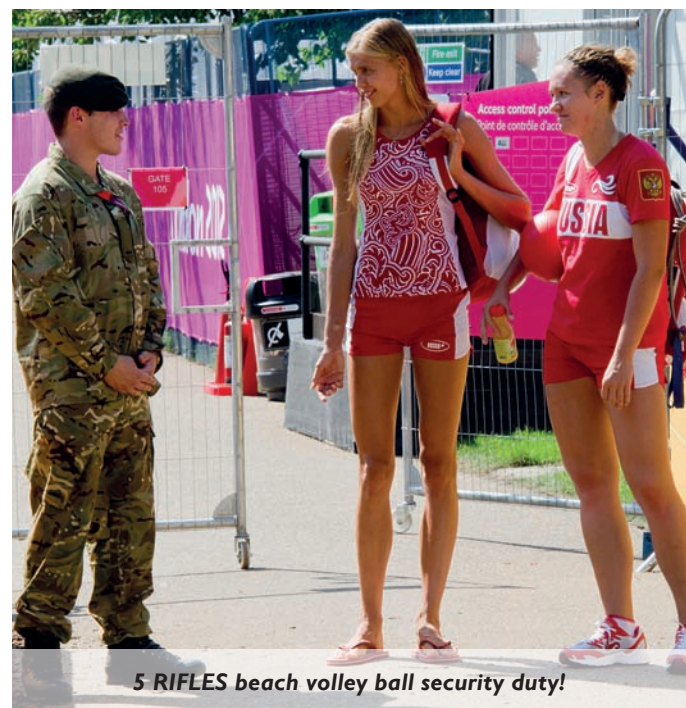
as they have still deployed consecutive Company Groups as the Falkland Islands Reinforcement Company and have also conducted Exercise ASKARITHUNDER in Kenya. 4 RIFLES then took over as Spearhead lead element and acted as the Army's lead experimental organisation for the Future Infantry Systems Trial developing new equipment for the Riflemen. They started Mission Specific Training (MST) in 2012 ahead of deployment on Op HERRICK 18 in April 2013. Under the command of Lt-Col Tom Bewick, who took over in November 2012, they are, at the time of writing, in the final phases of their training for their role mentoring and training the Afghan Army

The Queens Diamond Jubilee Olympics and Paralympics May - September 2012

It has been a summer of ceremonial and security support to an amazing season of events in the UK. All Rifles battalions, apart from 3 RIFLES deployed in Afghanistan, participated in the Olympic security operations, some at exceedingly short notice. The public have been most complimentary about the bearing, turn out and cheerful good manners of the Riflemen who achieved ringside seats at some notable events. The luckiest amongst them were 5 RIFLES who drew duties at the ladies beach volleyball event on Horse Guards Parade.

200th Anniversary of the Battle of Salamanca

A battlefield tour numbering some 130 serving and retired Riflemen visited Salamanca and the surrounding battle sites to mark the 200th anniversary of the Battle, which is a shared battle honour of our forming regiments.



5 RIFLES beach volleyball security duty!

The tour and celebrations culminated in a ceremony granting the Freedom of the City of Salamanca to The Rifles. Some idea of the importance of this distinction is the fact that the previous recipient was Pope John Paul II in 1982.

Swift and Bold at the Royal Albert Hall

The celebrations of the various anniversaries continued and on 28 October 2012 the massed Bands and Bugles of The Rifles, supported by guest artists Wynne Evans, The Gurkha Pipes and our Fijian choir took over the Royal Albert Hall for an outstanding evening of entertainment which was attended by Prince Phillip, five of our Royal colonels and about 4,000 members of the regimental family.

Remembrance Sunday

For the first time since our formation in 2007, The Rifles had their own marching contingent at the Cenotaph parade in Whitehall on Remembrance Sunday. The contingent consisted of 45 Riflemen, who were joined by the mother and sister of Rfn Martin Kinggett (KIA 25 February 2010 in Afghanistan) and the two sisters of Lt Andrew Chesterman (KIA 8 August 2012 in Afghanistan). It was a glorious autumn day in the middle of London where the two minute silence was only broken by gentle birdsong.

The Rifles Casualty Capability

Mercifully we have suffered fewer casualties on our 2011/12 HERRICK tours, however recent fatalities still take the total number of those KIA in the five years since formation to 62. Eight of those fell in Iraq but the remaining 54 have died either in Afghanistan or subsequently as a result of wounds. The total number of NOTICAS has been well over 300; of these 30 are amputees, two are permanently blinded and approximately 20 more have incurred life changing injuries. Although the latent problems of PTSD have yet to reveal themselves in quantity, we are alert to this longer term demand on our regimental care and are planning accordingly.

The Rifles Casualty Capability (RCC) aims to ensure that all wounded Riflemen are given every opportunity to realise their full potential whether within the Army or in civilian life and if the latter, are given assistance towards their transition out of the Army and beyond. As part of a Land Forces trial, Lt Col (Retd) Mike Smith, the Rifles Casualty Officer, co-ordinates the RCC and has been in post since January 2010. He has been working closely with the emerging Army Recovery Capability to ensure the Regiment is able to influence Army thinking on casualty care. Part of his remit also covers the enduring requirement to provide support to the families of the wounded and to the families of the fallen. He is doing an outstanding job and we are looking to incorporate his role into the core capability of the central RHQ hub.

As part of this regimental support, the Care for Casualties Appeal has now raised in excess of £2,500,000 in just over two years and our thanks go to all who have so generously supported us.



The Gurkha Pipes play with the Massed Bands and Bugles of The Rifles

The Royal Australian Regiment

1RAR July 2011 - July 2012

CO: Lt Col Eamon Lenaghan, CSC

RSM: WO1 John Stonebridge, BM

Location: Townsville

The second half of 2011 remained a high tempo training environment with the 1RAR Battle Group participating in Ex TALISMAN SABRE 2011. This exercise formed the 3rd Brigade Certification Exercise for the Battle Group in order to assume the Ready Battle Group (RBG) role in September 2011. This activity provided another good opportunity to exercise in a high tempo environment with a large number of unknowns that the Combat Training Centre provided for us. While it was a highly demanding, and at times frustrating activity, it provided a good learning environment within a realistic setting for commanders at all levels.

The completion of this exercise saw the Battle Group return to Lavarack Barracks from Shoalwater Bay Training Area for a remediation period and to finalise all outstanding administrative requirements. This also saw the commencement of the 1RAR courses period. This period gave all personnel a good opportunity to develop in the profession of arms and to enhance the professional knowledge of the battalion.

From September 2011, 1RAR assumed responsibility for the RBG. While this period reinforced the readiness culture amongst the newer members of the battalion, it also brought with it the benefit of additional training and operational opportunities. In this period, a number of expressions of interest were made to have personnel deploy with the 3RAR Battle Group on OP SLIPPER. With two years since our last deployment, there were many eager volunteers to deploy, however, only a handful of members were selected and commenced their pre-deployment training in early 2012.

The 2012 training year has not seen the tempo slow. While we did not have a cyclone to clean up after, 1RAR was called upon to assist the Townsville community clean up after a tornado created a pathway through the centre of Townsville. The clean up effort resulted in the deployment of the Ready Combat Team based on C Coy to provide the assistance required.

The beginning of 2012 also saw a refocus on amphibious activities. Simulation, command post exercise and time at sea with the RAN helped the Battalion regain its sea legs. Ex SEA LION saw us joined by fellow infantrymen from 2/1 RNZIR. Wild weather and subsequent range closures limited the battalion exercise but many of the tenets of amphibious operations were nonetheless reinforced. The simultaneous launch of the forces by rotary wing from the deck and by landing craft from the well dock was a first for the ADF from the new vessel HMAS CHOULES.

The major training event of the first half of 2012 came from EX HAMEL 12. 1RAR participated as the opposing force for 1 Bde. Some great training occurred with the battalion able to conduct a deliberate delaying defence over a two week period. The return to conventional operations was a welcome change to all and a number of lessons were re-learned in the process. The battalion acquitted itself well and returned to Townsville in good spirits.

On the home front, Coral Day was celebrated with a parade on the 3RAR parade ground due to the construction works within Coral Lines. The CDF reviewed the parade and Septimus behaved himself, mostly. The celebrations concluded with an Officers and "Sergeants Mess" combined regimental dinner. The year has also seen an increased presence and profile of the Battalion within Townsville community. This effort has been spearheaded by the 1RAR Rehabilitation Platoon with members conducting fund-raising efforts for families from PNG, assisting Legacy and supporting Ronald McDonald House and other organisations.

The remainder of the training year will see training overseas with A Coy to deploy to the US, B Coy to New Caledonia and C Coy to PNG. A handover of our contingency force responsibilities will occur with 5RAR later in the year.

The Big Blue One is in good shape and stands ready for whatever comes its way next.

Duty First

2RAR 2011/2012

CO: Lt Col Christopher Smith

RSM: WO1 John Pickett

Location: Townsville

When I last reported to the RAR Foundation the greater part of the Battalion and the Headquarters, as part of the Mentoring Task Force Three (MTF 3), had only recently deployed to Afghanistan. Many of our most significant events were still ahead of us.

The Battalion represented itself very well in Afghanistan. While I suspect that many will remember the Battalion's tour only for the death and wounding of several soldiers at the hands of two Afghan soldiers, the real story is in the manner in which the Task Force went about the mentoring (or advising in the old language) of Afghan soldiers.

Before leaving Australia the general consensus was that an Afghan Brigade should develop from the bottom up. The logic was that as the performance of the Afghan Brigade got

better, it would be reasonable to expect that the emphasis on close mentoring and assisting the Afghan companies would decrease while the emphasis on advising the battalion and brigade headquarters would increase. The assumptions behind this logic proved to be wrong.

After a few months we came to a few important conclusions. These were that the Afghan brigade and battalion headquarters functioned relatively fine. The logistics processes were at a level where we did not expect much more improvement from our efforts. The Afghan battalions proved relatively capable of conducting multi-day operations away from their bases with very limited logistical assistance from us. Most importantly, we found that the area that required the most attention was the Afghan rifle company (tolay).

While I cannot be specific about the particular points of concern and focus, I can say at least the problem was not really their skills (in a relative sense). Consequently, the emphasis of our operations was to demonstrate to the many remote companies that they could seek contact with the enemy, engage him, survive the engagement and have some success using only the resources available to the Afghan Army. The objective was to impart sufficient confidence to the troops of the 4th Brigade such that they would do what was necessary to deal with the insurgency in the absence of Australian assistance.

Such an approach demanded that we deprive ourselves the use of attack helicopters, close air support and our armoured vehicles during most engagements. Our aim was to break the Afghan commander's dependency on these capabilities because it is unlikely that the soldiers of the 4th Brigade will have access to such capabilities with such certainty after transition. The effect of the change meant that most engagements were simply small arms engagements where the difficult job for the Australian infantry mentors was to encourage the Afghan troops to go forward and close with the enemy. The way the infantrymen of the Task Force did this difficult task is consistent with the Regiment's history.

The success of the efforts to improve the Afghan companies by these methods is difficult to judge. In some specific locations the Afghan soldiers had marked success, which boosted their confidence in remarkable ways. In other areas it was very difficult to cause any change.

While deployed to Afghanistan the Battalion discovered that it was to assume a new role as the centrepiece of an Amphibious Task Group. The soldiers received the news with a reasonable amount of ambivalence. This is not unexpected from soldiers fighting a war. The most frequent question was, how long will we have to spend on a ship? Nonetheless, the historic nature of the announcement was not lost on them. The amphibious role marks a new and not insignificant chapter in the Regiment's history and 2 RAR is proud to be a part of it.

Another important chapter to the Regiment's history also seems to be beginning. It would seem that the Regiment's

involvement in the last decade-plus of constant operations may be drawing to a close or at least reducing markedly. For many soldiers who have known nothing other than an Army in which operational rotations come around every second or third year, this is a little disappointing. At the same time, the Government has reduced the size of the Defence Budget. The challenge for us, as it was for the Battalions at the end of the era of Malaya, Borneo and Vietnam, is to ensure that training meets two aims. It must ensure that the Battalion's fighting skills do not dissipate in the absence of war and a possible reduction in training resources, and the training must be such that the soldiers remain fit, tough, keen and interested.

We are addressing the training challenge now. We are also dealing with the other challenges of soldiering in the wake of an operational tour. The amphibious role is helpful. It provides 2 RAR with a clear and defined purpose and is a very timely imitative in this regard. More importantly, our focus is on the next enemy rather than the last. Our current training-focus is close country warfare which has already seen us return to the Paluma rainforests to get our jungle fighting skills back up to speed.

Before concluding it is important that we remember the members of 2 RAR who lost their lives over the last twelve months. We should also remember those servicemen and women attached to the 2 RAR Task Force in Afghanistan, who also lost their lives.

CAPT Bryce Duffy, 4th Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery - Killed in action.

CPL Ashley Birt, 6th Engineer Support Regiment - Killed in action.

LCPL Luke Gavin, 2nd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment - Killed in action.

PTE Matthew Lambert, 2nd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment - Killed in action.

PTE Christopher Peel, 2nd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment - Motor Vehicle Accident.

Lest we forget!

3 RAR October 2011/2012

CO: Lt Col Trent Scott

RSM: WO1 Shane McPhee

Location: Townsville

Contributor: CAPT J A Finger (ADJT 3 RAR)

The 3 RAR Task Group (3 RARTG) is currently deployed on OP SLIPPER conducting mentoring tasks in Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan. The tour has been exceptionally challenging for the men and women of the Task Group to date and the tempo continues to build throughout the 'fighting season'.

We received excellent support from our mounting HQs 7 Bde and 3 Bde and the Combat Training Centre (Live) conducted a very realistic and challenging Mission Rehearsal Exercise. The Task Group is based around 3 RAR with 39 contributing units nationwide, providing both combat and service support. Though 3 RAR was warned in late 2010 the Task Group only came together in February this year for a four month force readying cycle. All of the soldiers have worked exceptionally hard in preparing for OP SLIPPER and the TG was well prepared for combat operations.

After an excellent handover with Mentoring Task Force 4 (MTF 4), centred on 8/9 RAR, the 3 RARTG continued building on the solid mentoring base from previous MTFs with the Afghan National Army (ANA) 4th Brigade. The TG's mission is to 'enhance the operational visibility of the Afghan Nation Security Forces in Uruzgan to neutralise the insurgency in order to protect the Afghan people and promote the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan'. Our primary focus is the ANA 4th Brigade who, in conjunction with the Afghan National Police and Afghan Local Police, are responsible for protecting the people of Uruzgan.

The Task Group has had an exceptionally busy tour date, which has seen major operations across the Province including the clearance of the Tangi Vally in Deh Rawood, clearance of the Baluchi/Chora Valley and more recently the establishing of a checkpoint and clearance in Khas Uruzgan. We have had multiple contacts with the enemy and numerous IED and cache finds, including one of our snipers killing an enemy sniper at 1900m over a 500m incline. The soldiers of the TG are working exceptionally hard in unforgiving terrain, complex population centres and an extremely hostile environment.

It was with great regret that the Task Group suffered three killed in action on 29 August. Poatey, Milo and Marto gave their lives doing something they loved and they will be sorely missed. The Platoon Command team and the soldiers of the call sign involved in the incident did a commendable job in containing the situation, caring for the casualties and ensuring the security for the remaining soldiers. We have since farewelled our mates in a fitting manner and remain fully committed to the mission. Despite this incident morale remains high and the troops remain focused on the job.

The junior leadership in the Task Group continues to prove that the Australian Army produces some of the best soldiers in the world. In one of just many examples, one of our engineers was struck by an IED; immediately following the incident the young soldier received life saving medical attention from his mates. Of particular note, the actions of 3 RAR LCPL directly saved the life of the injured engineer. This JNCO was not only responsible for treating the casualty, but coordinating the aero

medical evacuation response from a precarious position. His actions were in the highest standards of the Corps.

The 3 RARTG wishes all of the units within the Regiment a successful end to 2012 and passes on it thanks to the continued support of the Royal Australian Regiment Foundation. We remain focused on our mission and tasks at hand and will be fully prepared to receive the 7 RARTG for handover in the coming future.

Duty First!

5 RAR (Mech)

CO: Lt Col Andrew Forbes

RSM: WO1 Dale De Kock

Location: Palmerston - NT

Life in the Tiger Battalion continues to be very busy and we are making full use of the available training opportunities. The Battalion remains very well equipped and resourced to conduct a full spectrum of war fighting training. During 2012 we will receive 150 new soldiers straight out of Initial Employment Training at the School of Infantry to boost our manning. This 'next generation' of Tigers will participate in a very intensive training regime that will prepare them well for any operational requirements that arise in the future.

Most of the Battalion commenced 2012 with a period of jungle training either in Tully or in Malaysia as part of Rifle Company Butterworth. This 'back to basics' training in a harsh and austere environment was a not so gentle reminder to all of us of the requirement to master our infantry skills on foot before commencing training with the Battalion's armoured vehicles. All Companies performed to a high standard and many tactics, techniques and procedures were either learnt or reinforced as a result of this training.

The Battalion deployed to Shoalwater Bay Training Area (SWBTA) in May to conduct Ex TIGERS WALK and RUN. This exercise series focused on mechanised manoeuvre by day and night at the platoon and company level. A range of demanding day and night live fire activities, including night company attack and company defence practices, reinforced the Battalion's ability to quickly integrate with our M113AS4s to exploit the superior firepower, protection, mobility and communications resident in the Army's Mechanised Infantry Battalions. These exercises concluded with a short Battalion exercise to confirm higher level command and control procedures before our redeployment to Darwin for a quick period of leave.

Early June saw the Battalion redeploy to SWBTA to participate in Ex PREDATORS STRIKE. This Brigade live fire activity grouped sub-units from 1 Armd Regt, 5 RAR and 7 RAR with supporting Engineers and Artillery to form Combat Teams

(CT). Each CT in the Brigade was rotated through a range of 24 hour tasks that had been planned by the Commanding Officers of 1 Armd Regt, 5 RAR and 7 Rar supported by each units key staff. The task that awaited CT at the 5 RAR stand was probably the most challenging live fire activity of all and I am pleased to report that both 5 RAR CT, based on B and C Company were amongst the best performing CT in the Brigade.

The bulk of the Battalion redeployed from SWBTA in mid-July after serving as part of the 1 Armd Regt Battle Group (BG) known as BG LION. This was a useful opportunity for 5 RAR to reinforce that the Battalion will not always be the main effort of the Brigade. After a very busy period from 03 December 2006, with more Battalion level operational tours than any other RAR Battalion, our soldiers enjoyed this unique training opportunity as the Brigade participated in Ex HAMEL.

The Battalion's next major challenge is preparing for Ready Battle Group (RBG) responsibilities which will culminate in the Battalion assuming on-line status in mid-November this year for 12 months. This is a new challenge for us as RBG tasking normally resides with Army's 3rd Brigade. I have every confidence in our ability to re-focus on this task and become ready to deploy anywhere in the world at very short notice as required by the Australian Government. Unlike preparing for a known operational deployment the Battalion cannot predict when and where we will be called to deploy and thus must prepare for the full spectrum of operations from peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance through to mid-intensity war fighting.

During our busy training year we have made time to mark Battalion events of significance and will continue to provide social and sporting opportunities for our soldiers. Binh Ba Day was commemorated with a presentation by the junior officers of the Battalion followed by a social function. The Battle of Binh Ba is relevant today to our Battalion, and Army, as an example of the effects that can be achieved by the combined arms team against a tough, unforgiving enemy in complex terrain. It also remains the single most successful combat action undertaken during 5 RAR's long and proud history.

A number of current and former members of the Battalion were recognised in the 2012 Queens Birthday Honours' list. All of these recipients were recognised for their dedication to duty, courage and leadership. They are an inspiration to Tigers both young and old and are thoroughly deserving of our thanks and appreciation.

Most of the Battalion will spend six months in the field this year training for our next potential operational deployment. This is a natural state of existence for Infantry Battalions. We are either at war or preparing for the next war. The dedication shown by our soldiers in the field would not be possible without the excellent support provided by their families and the wider 5 RAR and RAR communities. Thank you for your continued support.

Duty First!

6 RAR Year in Review

CO: Lt Col Mark Jennings, DSC

RSM: WO1 David Bromwich

Location: Enoggera QLD

The past 12 months have been a busy period for 6 RAR, as it seeks to maintain its training tempo whilst also rebuilding after its deployment to Afghanistan on Mentoring Task Force One (MTF 1). It has been a time of reflection for the unit, commemorating the significant achievements of soldiers past and present, and honouring the sacrifices made by so many throughout our proud regimental history. These events have served to maintain strong bonds between the current generation of 6 RAR soldiers and our predecessors, who continue to provide such valued support to the unit in the form of the RAR Foundation, the 6 RAR Association and the Long Tan Veterans Association.

Long Tan Day - 18 August 2011

18 August 2011 was one of the most significant days in the recent history of the Battalion. This special day marked the 45th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, where 6 RAR's proud history was forged by the brave men of Delta Company. A parade conducted at Gallipoli Barracks, and featured current and former soldiers marching together to honour the unit's history. The parade was highlighted by the award of the Unit Citation for Gallantry to Delta Coy 1966, and the Meritorious Unit Citation to the 6 RAR-led MTF 1. A large number of individual gallantry and distinguished service honours were also presented to 6 RAR soldiers past and present.

The parade was preceded by a memorable Long Tan Dining-In Night, featuring the unit's officers, SNCOs, and veterans from the Battle of Long Tan. A fine weekend was then concluded with the annual Battalion Ball at the Brisbane Convention Centre.

Major Exercises and Courses

The Battalion's training continuum in 2011 encompassed several major exercises including Ex LONG TAN, Ex DIAMOND, Ex TALISMAN SABRE and Ex Hamel 12. Ex LONG TAN featured section and platoon attack ranges, staffed and coordinated by Support Coy. Ex DIAMOND DOLLAR was a Combat Team attack scenario, intimately supported in the assault by tanks, cavalry and DFSW PI.

On Ex TALISMAN SABRE, the Battalion ran Rear Area Security Operations for 7 Bde, in support of the main effort to certify 8/9 RAR for deployment on MTF 4. Finally Ex HAMEL was a combined arms live fire exercise incorporating direct and indirect fires, armour, engineer and aviation assets to support sequential combat team objective clearances.

The results achieved during all of these exercises showcased the Battalion's ability to adapt and achieve mission success in conventional operations. The integration of combined arms teams and the professionalism at all levels from the supporting arms enabled the unit to achieve highly commendable results and bodes well for the future of the Battalion.

In 2012, 6 RAR began the year with a Support Coy course period, successfully qualifying a large number of soldiers for employment in specialist roles. A and Support Coys have been working up their training levels over the past few months, in preparation for Ex LONG TAN.

2012 Deployment Exercises

The Battalion has been heavily committed over the course of 2012 to operational deployments and major exercises. Numerous PMV drivers and crew commanders have deployed to Afghanistan as a part of MTF 4 (8/9 RAR), MTF 5 (3 RAR) and SOTG I8. Additionally, a PI from D Coy deployed to East Timor in ROCL capacity. All of these soldiers have represented themselves and the unit magnificently while deployed, writing their own new chapters in the Regiment's proud operational history.

D Coy deployed to Malaysia for Rifle Company Butterworth from the 01 May until 31 July 2012. The deployment saw D Coy conduct Section and Platoon level training in the Jungle, culminating with a week of live fire activities. The Company also participated in Ex HARRINGAROO, a bilateral exercise with the Malaysian Army, and two weeks of urban training in Singapore. The Company was also fortunate enough to be able to visit some of the battlefields from WW2 throughout Malaysia, the Changi museum, and the Commonwealth War Graves at Kranji.

Sporting and Social Events

While the Battalion has undoubtedly been working hard over the past 12 months, it always makes the time for sporting and social events. This year, the sporting highlight for the unit was Blood Week, where reputations are traditionally made and destroyed. The event coincided with the disbandment of B Coy, giving it an extra poignancy, and featured the four companies battling out five events for the right to be named 2011's Champion Coy. In the end, a dramatic rugby victory for B Coy saw them claim the title and send off their sub-unit in fine style. The Battalion also participated in the Brigade sporting competition, achieving very good results across all sports.

On the social front, key unit events have included the Battalion Ball, Fight Night and various functions at the 6 RAR Sportsman's Club. All of these events have contributed to the unit's Regimental Trust Fund, which continues to support charitable causes, unit sporting teams and the families of the Fallen.

Conclusion

6 RAR prides itself on maintaining strong ties with the key organisations that provide it with such magnificent support, and the RAR Foundation has always been there to help members of the Battalion during their times of need. On behalf of the unit, I wish to offer my sincere thanks to the Foundation for its generous support, as well as the extensive efforts of our veterans community, embodied by the 6 RAR and Long Tan Associations. We look forward to continuing these important relationships in the years ahead.

Duty First!

7 RAR - News from the Southern Battalion

CO: Lt Col Michael Garraway

RSM: WO1 Richard Verrall

Location: Edinburgh SA

By the time this article appears in the Foundation newsletter the 7th Battalion will have mounted for its second tour of Afghanistan. Having had the great honour of conducting the first Mentoring and Reconstruction Task Force, to be given the first of the 'advising' missions is an opportunity for which we are grateful.

Our path to the upcoming operation has included our consolidation in South Australia and growth of the battalion. We now have a strength of 730 all ranks, have completed the development of Support Coy, and have tested ourselves in the field with the full suite of battalion capabilities.

The first half of 2012 saw A and C Coy rotate through a series of exercises at Murray Bridge and Cultana concentrating on Mechanised Infantry skills through to company level supported by the specialist platoons, with joint fire teams, and combat engineers in support. The culmination was Ex BOAR'S RUN which saw each company conduct a series of missions under the direction of Tactical HQ against a free playing enemy, and concluding with a live fire attack over multiple objectives. This was a busy period of training with very good results achieved by the companies and by the specialist platoons. This exercise also allowed the opportunity for us to work with RAAF P3 Orion in direct support, with OCA Coy having a live video feed provided into the back of his APC immediately prior to their company assault onto one of Cultana's 'Afghan villages'. Our collocation with 92 Wing RAAF has reaped rewards.

While the series of exercises was being conducted, B Coy concentrated on its dismounted skills, deploying on a CTC-Live warfighter rotation at Townsville Field Training Area in March. The exercise was as demanding as any rotation faced in recent years, however, it had the added challenge of being conducted during the wettest period of weather in North Queensland

since the notorious Queensland floods. The exercise proved to be right of passage activity for many, but once again proved the worth of the CTC concept.

Through May and June B Coy participated in Ex PACIFIC BOND at the Pohukaloa Training area in Hawaii. The company were very well hosted by I/14 Infantry Battalion and conducted a number of demanding dry and live firing exercises. The Pohukaloa training area is located approximately 200 metres above sea level with the surface of the training area consisting almost entirely of volcanic rock. Very good results were achieved by the company, they were tested by the Americans' high tempo of live firing, and tested by the terrain; the volcanic rock surface for Pohukaloa will be remembered by the men of B Coy for many years to come.

2012 also saw 7 RAR redeploy to Shoalwater Bay for Ex HAMEL 12 with the other units of I Brigade. We preceded the exercise with a series of dry and live firing exercises, again constructed in a manner which had the respective Battle Group Tactical HQs facilitating a dry and live fires lane where each company (and squadron from 2 Cav Regt and 1 Armd Regt) was assessed at Army Training Level 5.

As with 2011, Ex HAMEL 12 was conducted after an extended wet season, and once again the superior mobility of the M113AS4 allowed us to maintain mobility through tough conditions. 7 RAR was battlegrouped with a squadron of tanks and our 'direct support' 9 Combat Engineer Squadron from Adelaide, and formed one of the three battlegroups of I Brigade. We were tested very thoroughly by the I RAR OPFOR. They proved to be a very difficult opponent and presented us with plenty of surprises. Most pleasing for us, was the opportunity to deploy as a properly formed battle group, (with our battlegroup formed battle group,) with our battlegroup headquarters complete and each of the specialist platoons deploying and delivering a collective capability for the Battalion. This effectively saw the achievement of Enhanced Land Force goal for 7 RAR being a deployable mechanised Battalion. This was a significant achievement for our small Army, and one of which each member of 7 RAR, from 2007 to the present, should be proud.

The return from Ex HAMEL 12 has seen us reorganised for the deployment on OP SLIPPER. As with all previous deployments of this nature, the dreaded manning cap has presented us with numerous challenges in addition to preparing for the operation itself. In our case the battalion rear group will consist of over 500 members. There have been plenty of good NCOs, WOs and officers selected to remain behind, and lots of good young soldiers who are very disappointed to miss out. Our C Coy and elements of Support Coy will form the nucleus of the group along with our brothers from 9 Combat Engineer Squadron and 102 (Coral) Battery 8/12 Mdm Regt. They are excited to deploy, they're in good shape and they look forward to maintaining the great standards set by those members the Regiment who have preceded them. We were also very pleased to learn that the deploying group will be formally

known as the '7 RAR Task Group', recognising the leadership and contribution of the battalion and protecting our heritage.

Duty First!

8/9 RAR - 2011/2012 in review

CO: Lt Col Kahlil Fegan

RSM: WO1 Ian D'Arcy

Location: Enoggera

Mentoring Task Force Four (MTF 4) was formed on 05 September 2011; the nucleus of MTF 4 being the 8/9 RAR Battle Group (8/9 RAR BG). Although Mentoring Task Force Four concentrated on 05 September 2011, in essence most of its members had been working together exclusively since January that year, due to 7th Brigade's emphasis on combined arms operations and development of a Battle Group ethos. As a result, the 8/9 RAR BG was able to capitalise upon training opportunities presented during 'deep' Mission Specific Training prior to force concentration. This allowed members to develop those essential habitual relationships within a Battle Group and gain a valuable understanding of each others' strengths and weaknesses. This would eventually serve the MTF particularly well during the deployment.

In late December 2011, under the command of LTCOL Kahlil Fegan (with RSMWO1 Ian D'Arcy), MTF 4 deployed to Al Minhad Air Base to complete the final theatre specific training before moving into Afghanistan throughout January 2012. MTF 4 then deployed into theatre as a Task Group of Joint Task Force 633 and was assigned under the NATO Operational Control to the Combined Team Uruzgan; a coalition headquarters commanded by an American Army Colonel.

MTF 4 deployed its mentoring teams out to Forward Operating Bases - HADRIAN west of Tarin Kot, MIRWAIS north of Tarin Kot, WALI to the east and SORKH BID. The mission was to mentor assigned elements of the 4th Brigade, 205 Corps Afghan National Army to achieve 'independent with advisor' status no later than November 2012 in order to ensure Afghan National Security Forces capacity to protect the population and set the conditions for improved governance, reconstruction and development within Uruzgan province. On arrival at respective Forward Operating Bases, mentoring teams received comprehensive handovers from the 2 RAR led MTF 3 before setting about the task of mentoring the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Kandaks (Battalions), 4th Brigade, Afghan National Army within the MTF 4 Area of Operations.

Throughout MTF 4's deployment to Uruzgan Province, its mentoring teams would become responsible for mentoring the Afghan National Army 4th Brigade in areas such as Deh Rahwud, the Tangi Valley, Tagaw, Chahar Chineh, Sahid-e-Hasas,

Chora, Baluchi, Kush Kadir, Kalach, Gizab, Mirabad, Charmestan, Chenartu, Khas Uruzgan, Tangay, Langar and Sowzal, to name a few. MTF 4 employed four combined arms Mentoring Teams containing numerous enablers. Each Mentoring Team was responsible for mentoring the Afghan National Army at the kandak level, with the 4th Brigade Headquarters being mentored by a smaller, joint Australian-Slovakian Mentoring Team.

Following a very good handover from MTF 3, MTF 4 ensured that, initially, the Afghan National Army detected very little change in the approach being employed to mentoring. That said, the first two months of the MTF 4 deployment were very challenging. MTF 4 was faced with the worst winter since the war commenced. This was compounded by potential strains on the relationship with the Afghan National Army due to the Koran burning incident, and later, the mass murder of Afghan civilians by a rogue US soldier. Whilst these conditions and incidents presented challenges, the relationship eventually established with the Afghan National Army at all levels was excellent at all levels. There were numerous examples of soldiers from both the Afghan National Army and MTF 4 placing themselves at significant risk to support one another.

MTF 4 quickly set about working itself into the Afghan National Army patrol programme and plans for future disrupt and clearance operations in the Area of Operations. The Mentoring Teams developed strong working relationships with the Afghan National Army by a number of means including proactively seeking interaction within the patrol bases. MTF 4 was barely settled-in when it found itself in the first of what would be many contacts with the enemy, achieving both tactical and mentoring success. As time passed, the Afghan National Army's confidence developed through successful skirmishes with the insurgents, large cache finds and extensive patrolling with the Australians. Eventually, MTF 4 stepped back, allowing the Afghan National Army to develop their capabilities without the direct support of the MTF 4 soldiers. The marked improvement in independence and confidence at the lowest levels allowed MTF 4 to refocus their efforts on brigade developed tasks such as Operations Hamkari Gorgai Jangee I and II in the Tagaw and Char Chineh Valleys. Operation Hamkari Gorgai Jangee II was a 4th Brigade initiated and executed operation with the main effort being the partnered clearance of the valley by 1st Kandak, 4th Kandak Engineers, Afghan National Police and MTF 4 force elements. The partnered operation located and destroyed seven IED's and 13 caches. The success of this operation not only gave great confidence to the Afghan National Army, but significantly disrupted the insurgency and undermined their capability.

Success of MTF 4 was measured by the development of the Afghan National Army confidence at conducting intelligence-driven; multi-day, self-sufficient tolay (company) sized operations. MTF 4 aided a major transformation in both the Afghan National Army's confidence and capability through the conduct of numerous Train-the-Trainer courses focusing on Engineer Search, Communications, Care of the Battle Casualty and Casualty Evacuation rehearsals. As a result, 4th

Brigade continued the outstanding progression and built on the successes from not only MTF 4, but all of the Australian mentors that had preceded MTF 4 within the district. With the steady progression toward independence and ongoing success in the provision of security to the population by the Afghan National Security Forces, MTF 4's mission had been achieved beyond the original expectation set in the pre-deployment training in 2011.

Whilst MTF 4 were busy mentoring their Afghan National Army partners, another organisation was working equally as hard to ensure that the deployed force was suitably cared for back home. Headed by MAJ Warren 'Polly' Farmer and WO2 Scott Woolley, Task Force Rear ensured that welfare support was provided to the families of deployed personnel, as well as performing the normal duties of a battalion in garrison.

Task Force Rear completed a wide range of support, administrative, security and governance tasks throughout its tenure. Support was provided to the community as well as participating in military efforts such as Ex HAMEL, Army Reserve and Officer Cadet field exercises. Task Force Rear provided ANZAC Day support to multiple schools, RSL and Association activities while also running a large scale event held at the Rams Retreat to support the families of MTF 4. Charitable events such as Legacy Day, Red Shield Appeal and the Diabetes Foundation Jelly Baby Gala were supported through the means ranging from member's door knocking for donations to providing static displays.

The Unit Welfare Team headed up by Maj Dan Kemp achieved some remarkable milestones as they worked hard to support and bring together families of MTF 4 members across Australia. They achieved this through the promulgation of timely information by letter, phone call and messaging, monthly happy hours, family fun days, off-site lunches and information sessions in Brisbane and at other venues across Australia. In so doing they developed a range of friendships and provided an invaluable service to the families. The Welfare Team also ran the first deployed families Facebook page ever. This generated many, many long hours of work. This effort could not have been achieved without the excellent support from the 8 RAR, 9 RAR and 8/9 RAR Associations, RSL Sub Branches, Young Diggers and the fantastic fundraising efforts of the Unit Welfare Team resulting in over \$40,000 being made available to provide welfare support. 24 June 2012 marked the Transfer of Authority between MTF 4 and the 3 RAR Battle Group. Despite the cold and snow of winter, the heat of the Afghan summer, and the constant threat of death or injury, the professionalism, dedication and courage shown by the soldiers of MTF 4 was beyond reproach. MTF 4 was officially stood down on 20 August 2012.

Duty First!

School of Infantry

CO: Lt Col Marcus Constable

RSM: WO1 Darren Murch

Location: Singleton NSW

The tempo of training has been high since the start of the year, especially with the Duke of Gloucester (DOG) Cup and Corps Conference being brought forward to April. Combined with this delivery of training and this event has been continued training development, particularly within combat shooting skills and delivery of the leadership training. To round out a busy year the School has also been transformed with delivery of the upgraded facilities under the Enhanced Land Force (ELF) project.

The 2012 DOG Cup competition focused on foundation war fighting skills and being 'brilliant at the basics'. Feedback from the Corps leadership group and participants alike was positive and will ensure that foundation war fighting skills will remain as the competition's focus into the future. This year's competition was intense and unforgiving with the competition being decided in the final activities. Ultimately the 2 RAR sectioned prevailed and can be justifiably proud of their achievements, setting a standard for not only the remainder of their Battalion but also the wider Corps.

A unique opportunity was afforded to the champion Section Commander, who along with Head of Corps and Corps Staff, were able to meet with His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, Prince Richard, at a function at Victoria Barracks Sydney. The Duke of Gloucester presented the DOG trophy to the winning Section Commander for what is believed to be only the second time since the competition inception.

A key component of training development within the unit has been the work of Rifleman Wing staff to develop combat shooting skills as part of the Infantry Employment Training (IET) package. The combat shooting training has been based on advice and assistance from SASR. The training focuses on aligning close quarter techniques with broader instinctive shooting techniques but also the manner in which we deliver the training. Formal trials of this package have shown significant improvement in both the speed of engagement and accuracy by IET, with their average scores being better than those shooting results achieved by trainees on the Urban Operations Instructor Course. Rifleman Wing is currently working to formalise the training within the IET course and as a doctrinal training note.

Throughout the year significant work has also been undertaken to prepare for and introduce the RAINF Physical Employment Standards for Army (PESA) within both the IET course and the Regimental Officers Basic Course (ROBC). As part of this preparation, several trials have been conducted in order to identify the best physical training continuum to prepare trainees to achieve these standards without accepting

undue injury risks. Results thus far indicate that physical training standards are close to but not yet at the required PESA standard.

Other significant work resulting from leadership discussions at the Infantry Corps Conference 2012 is the refinement of the delivery of the ROBC and Supervisor Infantry Operations Platoon (SIOP) courses. Over the years these courses have been delivered concurrently in order to ensure field training can be effectively achieved by a platoon size order of battle. Discussion at the conference concluded the recent trend towards combined competencies, not just combined training, needed review to ensure both the roles of platoon commander and platoon sergeant were appropriately recognised. Consistent with this review is broader work to tackle the issue of foundation war fighting standards and fault correction. Work remains on track to implement revised training methods in the first course in 2013.

Finally, the School of Infantry has occupied new facilities delivered under the ELF project. New facilities include the unit headquarters, A Coy, Rifleman Wing Headquarters and IET accommodation, a second WTSS facility, broader transit accommodation and a state of the art Simulation Centre. Further works include the significant upgrading of facilities and ranges in the Singleton Field Training Area. In ongoing works the old buildings within the cantonment will be now converted into an upgraded urban training facility at the range.

Overall the training tempo has ensured a busy year for the staff and instructors at the School. Despite this workload they continue to deliver quality foundation war fighting training to meet the Corps needs.

Duty First!

The Duke of Gloucester Cup Competition 2012

In 1946 the Governor General of Australia, His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, presented to the RAN,ARA and the RAAF Cups which were to be awarded annually for inter-service competition. The Army competition was to be conducted between the infantry battalions of the Permanent Military Force (PMF).

The first competition was conducted in Japan in 1947 between the Australian 65th, 66th and 67th Battalions (later 1, 2 and 3 RAR) of the 34th Brigade of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF). Competition activities included battalion drill, fighting efficiency and live firing range practices. Competition rules are as directed by the Regimental Colonel and may vary with each competition.

The competition format has varied since inception in 1947. Whilst the tenets of testing a standard infantry section on operational duties remain unchanged, the competition detail has deliberately varied from year to year to incorporate an element of surprise. The competition winners are awarded the Cup, which is retained by the unit until the next competition. Individuals and battalions of the RAR highly regard being acknowledged as the "Cup holders". Other trophies are awarded to the team that achieves the highest score in segments of the overall competition.

The competition is run at the School of Infantry in Singleton and this year the seven battalions of the Regiment competed for the Cup. The various activities undertaken by each team were, as usual, very physically and mentally demanding and challenged the individual members to continually and fully exert themselves whilst working as a team to achieve the overall aim. This year's activities included a section attack, bayonet assault course, general military knowledge test, counter ambush, a night ambush, water crossing and culminated in a 15km pack march and the obstacle course.

Although there can be only one winner and on this occasion it was the section from 2 RAR who took home the Duke of Gloucester Cup, the Regiment is also a winner as the final scores were close. The results show the high standard of training of the members of the Regiment across all battalions.

The winners of each segment of the competition were:

Sir Arthur MacDonald Trophy	- 2 RAR
Gurkha Trophy	- 2 RAR
Royal Ulster Rifles Trophy	- 1 RAR
OSCMAR Trophy	- 7 RAR
Duke of Gloucester Cup	- 2 RAR

This year the presentation of the Duke of Gloucester Cup was extremely significant for the Royal Australian Regiment and the winning section commander as this was only the second time in its 66 year history that the Cup has been presented in person by His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester. The current Duke of Gloucester, HRH Prince Richard, who presented the Cup to Corporal Lee Newham the section commander of the winning section, was here in Australia as a young boy when his father first presented the Cup to the Regiment in 1946.



From Left to Right: The Duke of Gloucester Cup, the Osmar Trophy, the Sir Arthur MacDonald Trophy, the Gurkha Trophy and the Royal Ulster Rifles Trophy

2nd/1st Battalion, The Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment

*By Captain Dan Thompson, Officer Commanding Bravo Company
2nd / 1st Battalion Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment, New Zealand*

The high demand of operations split the Battalion across the world over the course of 2012. Bravo Company deployed to Afghanistan, East Timor and the Solomon Islands. Alpha Company also deployed to Afghanistan and the Solomon Islands making for an intensely busy year for the soldiers and officers of the Battalion.

My role this year started as 2IC Bravo Company before being elevated to OC due to combat action in Afghanistan where I was deployed with the remainder of the lads for the summer rotation over April – October 2012. We found ourselves in Bamyán Province in the central region which has neighbouring Parwan and Baghlan Provinces to the East. We deployed as Task Unit CRIB 20 under Lieutenant Colonel Pete Hall who is now the Commanding Officer of the Battalion. We provided the combat element to the Provincial Reconstruction Team operating in the province.

The tour started with the initial spring melt, something that we saw in a very tangible light as we operated in the mountain region of the Hindu Kush which has very limited vehicle routes that are adversely affected by the rise of rivers' rise due to the spring ice melt of the surrounding mountain ranges. Thankfully, as we are from a light infantry battalion, we operated on foot as much as we could and mitigated travelling on roads wherever possible.

Over the course of our tour, the insurgency, in what is normally a peaceful and famously quiet province had a spike in threat group activity. The Taliban initially targeted Afghan National Security Forces before moving toward striking and initiating combat engagements with New Zealand Patrols and personnel. We battled through the height of summer and met with the enemy on several occasions, two of which claimed the lives of our own and forced friendly wounded in action upon us.

On 04 August 2012, we entered an enduring gun battle alongside our Afghan allies which lasted most of the day. In the early stages of the fight we had two of our New Zealand personnel killed in action with another six wounded in action. Our Afghan allies lost four killed in action with another ten wounded in action. We extracted our wounded, broke contact with the enemy after inflicting heavy casualties upon them and escorted the surviving Afghan forces back to firm locations.

On 04 August we will always remember Lance Corporal Rory Malone and Lance Corporal Pralli Durrer, killed in action at Baghak, Bamyán Province Afghanistan. May you always rest in peace.

The enemy presence continued and later the same month, on 19 August, during a routine patrol, one of our vehicles was struck by an IED, immediately killing all occupants. On this day we will always remember Corporal Luke Tamatea, Lance Corporal Jacinda Baker and Private Richard Harris, killed in action at Kalige, Bamyán Province, Afghanistan. May you always rest in peace.

The Battalion who was either at home or on other operations in East Timor or the Solomon Islands felt the impact of our casualties and brought our fallen home with the honour and dignity appropriate to those that have paid the ultimate sacrifice for their country, their family and their friends. There is little that can be said to describe the loss of our soldiers and I know that whoever chooses to read this article can relate to that realm of understanding with regard to the sadness of loss but the depth of pride felt in the same instance.

The Battalion at home and overseas continued to work hard and as we returned in October it was clear as to how busy they had been with continued developmental training in combined arms and preparing the company relieving us in Bamyán.

We here at the battalion are proud of our traditional ties and enjoy our lasting relationship with the Ghurkha Regiment. May it always continue. I acknowledge your lasting commitment to the battlefields of Afghanistan and wherever we may deploy to next on the world stage.

Onward

THE GURKHA BRIGADE ASSOCIATION

President:	General Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE		
Life Vice Presidents:	Field Marshal The Lord Bramall of Bushfield KG GCB OBE MC JP Field Marshal Sir John Chapple GCB CBE DL Brigadier Sir Miles Hunt-Davis GCVO CBE		
Chairman:	Brigadier J A Anderson		
Secretary:	Maj N D Wylie Carrick MBE		
Office:	c/o Headquarters Brigade of Gurkhas Trenchard Lines Upavon Pewsey Wiltshire SN9 6BE		
Telephone:	01980 615714	Fax:	01980 618938

Regimental Associations

The Sirmoor Club (2nd King Edward VII's Own Goorkhas (The Sirmoor Rifles))

President	Lieutenant General Sir Peter Duffell KCB CBE MC (Tel: 0207 184 7424 (W))
Chairman	Brigadier B C Jackman OBE MC (Tel: 0117 9733317)
Hon Secretary	Maj N D Wylie Carrick MBE (Tel: 01980 615714 (W))
Hon Treasurer	Major J W Kaye (Tel: 01730 828282)
Editor of Sirmooree	Major J J Burlison (Tel: 01892 782013)

6th Queen Elizabeth's Own Gurkha Rifles Regimental Association

President	Brigadier J A Anderson (Tel: 01189 841724)
Chairman	Colonel P D Pettigrew (Tel: 0208 265 7644)
Hon Secretary	T R Morris LLB Esq (Tel: 01189 333274)
Hon Treasurer	Captain R W Shoemith (Tel: 01264 782157)
Editor of Journal	Lieutenant Colonel J G C Mackinlay (Tel: 01730 823251)

7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles Regimental Association

Chairman	Brigadier D P de C Morgan (Tel: 01460 259471)
Hon Secretary	Lieutenant Colonel K G Robinson (Tel: 01722 780783)
Hon Treasurer	Lieutenant Colonel K G Robinson
Editor of Journal	Lieutenant Colonel R C Couldrey (Tel: 0208 675 0065)

10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles Association

President	General Sir Garry Johnson KCB OBE MC (Tel: 0207 798 8218)
Chairman	Colonel N Rowe (01276 28234)

Hon Secretary Captain H G W Stanford (Tel: (H) 02392 632155, (W) 01243 832047)
Hon Treasurer Colonel D F Mallam OBE (Tel: 01638 508602)
Editor of Magazine Lieutenant Colonel A J J Watt MBE

The Royal Gurkha Rifles Association

President Brigadier J C Lawrence MBE (Tel: 07944 296658 (M))
Chairman Lieutenant Colonel G C Bicket (Tel: 0207 836 6379 (W), 07960 212321 (M))
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The Queen's Gurkha Engineers Association

President Lieutenant General Sir David Bill KCB
Chairman Brigadier A D Harking OBE (Tel: 01634 813763)
Hon Secretary Lieutenant Colonel J F Wheeley MBE (Tel: 02392 594661)
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Editor of Magazine/Website Major A Gooch RE

Queen's Gurkha Signals Association

President Major General N A W Pope CBE
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The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment Regimental Association

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Former Regimental Associations

1st King George V's Own Gurkha Rifles (The Malaun Regiment) Regimental Association

Former Chairman Lieutenant Colonel E Gopsill DSO OBE MC (Tel: 01543 432571)
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3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles Officers' Association

Former President Major General R W L McAlister CB OBE (Tel: 01843 862351)
Former Hon Secretary R J Turk Esq (Tel: 01732 761856)

4th Prince of Wales's Own Gurkha Rifles Officers' Association

Former President Major D S Day (Tel: 01444 482854, Fax: 01444 482869)
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5th Royal Gurkha Rifles (Frontier Force) Regimental Association

Former Chairman Major E N Buckley (Tel: 01372 462541)

8th Gurkha Rifles Regimental Association

Former Chairman Lieutenant Colonel ET Horsford MBE MC (Tel: 0208 789 2924)

9th Gurkha Rifles Regimental Association

Former Chairman B T Roberts Esq (Tel: 01235 771422)

Regimental Association officials may be contacted through The Secretary of the Gurkha Bde Association

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GBA Calendar of Events 2013

UNIT	DATE	LOCATION	EVENT	REMARKS
GBA	11 Mar 13	London	Memorial Gates Ceremony (Commonwealth Day)	
	Apr 13	NMA	Inauguration of Gurkha Memorial	TBC
	10 May 13	Gr Museum	Briefing by Col BG	
	8 Jun 13	RMAS	GBA Memorial Service and Reunion	
	27 Jun 13	Farnborough	Nepal Cup Final, All Ranks Reunion & Beating Retreat	Note New Date
	Sep/Oct 13	Gr Museum	GBA Trustees Meeting	TBC
	7 Nov 13	London	GBA Trustees Meeting	
	7 Nov 13	London	Gurkha Statue Ceremony	
	7 Nov 13	A&N Club	GBA Committee Annual General Meeting	
	7 Nov 13	A&N Club	GBA Annual Dinner	
	10 Nov 13	Cenotaph	Remembrance Sunday	
	Apr 14	Romsey	Hillier Gardens	Date TBC 2014
The Sirmoor Club	18 May 13	A&N Club Farnborough	Sirmoor Club AGM & Reunion Luncheon	
	14 Sep 13	A&N Club Farnborough	Sirmoor Sathis Delhi Day Reunion	
4 GR	15 May 13	Stoke Poges Memorial Garden	4th PWO GR Association UK Annual Reunion	
6 GR	30 Mar 13	BGC Pokhara	All Ranks Reunion BGC Pokhara	
	8 Jun 13	RMAS	6GR Association Reunion at RMA Sandhurst	
	7 Sep 13	TBC	6GR All Ranks Reunion and Association AGM	
7 GR	12 May 13	Farnborough Gurkha Museum	All Ranks Reunion	
	4 Sept 13	Farnborough Gurkha Museum	Annual Reunion Lunch	
9 GR	27 Apr 13	Gurkha Museum	Curry Lunch Reunion	
10 GR	4 May 13	Gurkha Museum	AGM & Lunch Reunion	1st Sat May
RGR	27 Apr 13	Twickenham	Reunion	
QG Sigs	21 Sep 13	Bramcot	Regimental Birthday & AGM	

UNIT	DATE	LOCATION	EVENT	REMARKS
QOGLR	10 May 13	Gale Bks, Aldershot	Association AGM	
	6 Jul 13	Gale Bks, Aldershot	Regimental Reunion	
	18 Oct 13	Gale Bks, Aldershot	Association Annual Dinner	Note New Date
Gurkha Museum	12 Apr 13	Winchester	GBA Lecture and Curry Lunch	11.00 am
	7 Jun 13	Winchester	Friends Lecture and Curry Lunch	11.00 am
	3 Aug - 1 Sep 13	Winchester	Summer Temporary Exhibition	
	11 Oct 13	Winchester	GM Theme Lecture and curry Lunch	
	12 Oct 13	Winchester	Friends AGM and Tea	
Brit / Nepal Society	14 Feb 13	Pont Street, London	Brit Nepal Society Supper (St Colomba's Church Hall)	
	5 Dec 13	Nepal Embassy	AGM	
Nepali New Year/ Hindu Religious Festivals	14 Apr 13		New Year	
	4 May 13		Sansari Mai Puja	
	25 May 13		Budda Jayanti	
	16 Jul 13		Saune Sankranti	
	11 Aug 13		Naag Panchami	
	21 Aug 13		Rakchhya Bandan	
				Dates TBC
			Dashain 2013:	
	5 Oct 13		Ghatas Thapana	
	11 - 14 Oct 13		Phulpati, Kalratri, Maar & Tika	
3 - 5 Nov 13		Tihar 2013: Tihar Luxmi Puja, Gobardhan Puja & Bhai Tika		
Buddhist Religious Festivals	23 Jul 12		Choekor Duchen (the first turning of the wheel of Dharma)	Dates TBC
	28 Jul 12		Guru Tse Chu (Birth of Guru Rinpoche)	
	6 Nov 12		Lhabab Duchen (Buddha Shakyamuni Descent from heaven)	
	25 Feb 13		Chotrul Duchen (Day of Miracles)	
	25 May 13		Buddha Jayanti	

Note:

6 GRRR 'Gurkha Tamasha' from 25 Mar to 13 Apr 2013. See website: <http://www.2013gurkhatamasha.com>



1st KGVO GRRRA (Former)

Trust - Failed and Betrayed

By Lt Col John Cross

I never knew his name but, when I first wrote about him in the fourth volume of my historical quintet, *The Fame of the Name*, I called him Himan Dura, a.k.a. Lothé. His nickname means 'imperturbable'. I worked out that he lived between 1921 and 1945. In 1939 he enlisted in 2/1 Gurkha Rifles. He was a prisoner of war of the Japanese. He somehow managed to escape from Singapore but he never volunteered to be part of the turncoat Indian National Army, also known as JIFs, Japanese Inspired Forces (and sometimes even as Japanese Inspired Fifth Columnists). I was in the 1st Gurkha Rifles Regimental Centre in Dharmsala in the first week of January 1945, at the time of his amazing arrival there and managed to pick up his story. The Adjutant, Captain 'Jimmy' Coleman, later became a close friend of mine, as did Lieutenant Colonel Charles Wylie, 2/1 GR and 1/10 GR, mentioned below.

Early January 1945 - Dharmsala

Snow lay thick on the ground, up to the roofs of the bungalows in the cantonment area. By the time Lothé had reached as far as his railway warrant took him, Pathankot, reaction had set in. He had just enough money for a bus to take him to Lower Dharmsala and he had to walk the rest of the way to the camp. Not far but almost too far. By the time he reached the camp he was on his last legs. He remembered where the office block was. He pushed his way forward, intent as never before, to honour his inner resolve to do what Wylie sahib, the Adjutant of 2/1 GR, had told him to do, all those many moons, nay years, before - "try to get back and tell them what happened."

Men called to him, seeing a stranger, albeit a Gurkha stranger. He took no notice. He walked round the parade ground and staggered up the wooden steps that led on to the verandah where the offices were. The Stick Orderly tried to stop him. Lothé ignored him, his automatic compulsion, his overriding urge, driving him forward. He pushed open the door of the Adjutant's office.

Sitting at his desk the Adjutant acted angrily at this unwarranted interruption and no knocking on the door. "What the...?"

He was interrupted. The Gurkha, giving as smart a salute as he could manage, gave his regimental number, name and rank but in such an indistinctive voice that the Adjutant did not pick them up.

"2/1 Gurkha Rifles, did you say?" he stuttered in amazement.

Lothé opened his mouth to reply but crashed onto the floor in a dead faint: physical decrepitude but not moral turpitude the cause.

Only a week later did the doctor allow the Adjutant to visit Lothé. "Are you ready for me to talk to you?"

"Sahib, that is why I have come back," answered Lothé, smiling broadly.

"Right. Here I have the battalion long roll. We will go through it together and, as far as possible, you will tell me what has happened to people."

"Sahib, I can only tell you exactly who was dead, who was missing, who was wounded up to the time that Captain Wylie sahib was captured."

"I'm sure that will be of the greatest help."

Name for name, almost without any hesitation, the answer was given.

At the end of the session the Adjutant was amazed at Lothé's knowledge. "That is amazing. How can you remember all that in so much detail?"

"Sahib. I was Wylie sahib's batman. Whenever we had news of casualties, he amended his own nominal roll and, helping him to do so, I knew what had happened to whom."

Captain Coleman shook his head in disbelief. "And at the end, what did Wylie sahib say to you?"

"Sahib, his words were 'Try to get back and tell them what happened.' That is why I have come back."

"But however have you, one man, managed when no one else has?"

"Sahib, excuse me. I am tired. Can we talk tomorrow?"

"Of course. I'll come back at the same time," said Coleman and left.

On the morrow Lothé started telling the Adjutant, accompanied by a short-hand clerk, about the behaviour of the INA, 'Jifs', especially Captain, later Major General, Mohan Singh and what he and Captain Wylie had seen at the Siam-Malay border when he met, and went off with, a Japanese officer. Coleman was appalled and muttered under his breath about 'Desi turncoats'. Not only that, Lothé told of the hectoring tone used by Mohan Singh when he tried to get the Gurkhas to enlist in his INA, Azad Hind Fauj, about the man, who had refused to volunteer for the INA, had the full night soil bucket poured over him to make him do so. He passed out and, later was not allowed to wash till he did volunteer. This he never did [I personally interviewed him in 1999 - see *Gurkhas at War*, page 40] and how three other men were killed in cold blood because they, too, did not volunteer. Coleman probed further and found out who was responsible for exactly what atrocities, where, when and against whom. Lothé also told him about Japanese behaviour as he related his adventures, although he had no knowledge of Japanese names.

“Although the war has yet to finish, so many of the INA have been captured and brought to India that their trials are being planned for later on in the year. Your evidence, especially about Mohan Singh, will be crucial. No doubt about that whatsoever.”

“Sahib. I need to go back on leave but I will stay until I have given my evidence.”

The Commandant, Colonel N M Macleod, had been sent a sensitive letter which revealed that those who joined the INA were to be graded into three categories, White, Grey, Black. In brief ‘whites’ were those who stayed loyal to their oath, obeyed, performed, orders given to them by the INA but did not volunteer for service with it. ‘Greys’ were those who, while entitled to some measure of sympathy and understanding because of the pressure they had undergone, nevertheless showed by their manner that they were suspected of actually joining the INA. Some of those would be allowed to rejoin their units. ‘Blacks’ were those whose conduct was left no doubt that they had to be tried by court martial.

“Lothé, I have one question for you,” said Coleman, at the end as, having read that letter, a tiny, nagging doubt had occurred to him. “Did you at any time tell the Indians you volunteered for work in Siam?”

“Sahib. Never, never, never after that night soil and the wanton killings. I told the Subedar Major sahib and he didn’t want me to go but I then told him what Wylie sahib told me and he agreed. He personally told the Japanese in charge of our lot. Indians had nothing at all to do with my going.” Lothé was as adamant as any Gurkha Coleman had seen.

“Good. In that case your evidence will be of the greatest importance. You have done more for the battalion and the regiment than was ever expected of you. Wylie sahib, no, we don’t yet know if he is dead or alive, would be more than exceptionally proud of you.”

Lothé looked as pleased as he felt. Before he left for Delhi he had an interview with the Commandant of the Regimental Centre who also gave Lothé his heartfelt congratulations. As the Gurkha was the only man to have made such a dramatic escape, those others captured in 1942 still either prisoners of war or stranded in the jungle with Chinese guerillas, his evidence in the case of Mohan Singh took on an especially significance.

June 1945 - Red Fort, Delhi

But, sadly, all was to turn to dust. So much political pressure was put on the Viceroy, Field Marshal Lord Wavell, and the Commander-in-Chief, Field Marshal Auchinleck, by Pandit Nehru and other Congress leaders, not to press too severe charges against the ring leaders of the INA movement, let alone any lesser mortals, that even the slightest doubt about anyone’s evidence against the ring leaders meant that it was not to be allowed to be used against them.

Unaware of any of that, Lothé waited in one of the temporary huts that had sprung up around New Delhi, ready to give his evidence so justice could be done for what he had suffered.

But it was not to be. He was told that he had been categorised ‘Grey’ so his evidence could not be accepted.

Next morning a body of a Gurkha was found hanging in the washroom. It was recognised as Lothé’s. It was taken down and the pockets of the clothes searched.

Inside one was a note, written in pencil with letters not well formed. It was short and to the point - ‘The British taught me to keep faith. The British did not keep faith themselves. I have no wish to live any longer as I am not regarded as a man who can be trusted.’*

Had he stayed alive assuredly the gangrene from the night soil bucket would have been little to that which he had experienced at the hands of the people he had so trusted so implicitly for so long: mental and moral turpitude had, sadly, beaten him, literally to death.

* The sentence for Lieutenant Dhillon, one of the ringleaders, was Transportation for life, Cashiering and Forfeiture of pay and allowances while with the Japanese. In the event the sentence was commuted to the last two, Auchinleck, John Connell, Cassell, 1959, pages 807-808. As for Captain Mohan Singh, in December 1942, he ordered that the Indian National Army be disbanded. The Japanese took him into custody and he spent the rest of the war in Sumatra.

Prevailed but Delayed

During the retreat down south to Singapore in 1942, 6582 Naik Nakam Gurung, also of 2/1 GR, was ill from malaria when his company commander, Captain Wylie, had to look for a position to his front. He said he would return the next day but never did. Nakam’s platoon commander likewise went forward having told Nakam he would return the next day, but he never did either. From then on Nakam was alone. He had been left some rations.

Days turned into weeks, into months. Only the man himself and the angel that looks after wild animals and soldiers on operations knew how he managed. About six months later he gave up hope. He had probably heard disquieting rumours of defeat during one of his desultory contacts for essentials from some frightened villagers and formed his own conclusions, which he had to pay for with some help on the land.

One day, sitting in a cleft in the branches of a big tree where he had made himself a shelter, for to live on the ground by himself was dangerous and to leave where he had been told to wait would make it even more difficult for whoever came to fetch him, he was in such a mood of black despair that he decided to end his life.

His first attempt was to shoot himself but his rifle misfired. His second attempt was to plait a vine rope to hang himself with, but it broke when he jumped off and he hurt his leg as he fell heavily from a height. I am ordained to live, he thought.

He was periodically visited by Chinese guerillas and slowly the years passed. In 1945 the war came to an end but

the Chinese guerillas did not tell Nakam. In 1948 the Malayan Emergency began and he just kept on farming the patch of jungle he had cleared. The aircraft he periodically heard flying overhead were Japanese, he was told by the Chinese guerillas.

One day in 1949 a patrol of 1/10 GR came into his patch, saw him working the ground and presumed he was an unarmed guerilla. As Nakam did not run away there was no need for the patrol to open fire. The soldiers approached him and, talking among themselves, noted what a scruffy-looking daku - dacoit, the Gurkhas' word for guerilla - the man was.

The lone man suddenly realised with a surge of hope flooding out all other emotions that the men around him were speaking his language so had come to fetch him. "I was told to wait. You must have been sent to find me," he said. This the patrol commander did not believe him, merely saying that he was a spy and should be shot. But first he asked Nakam who had told him to wait.

And now a curious and unbelievable coincidence occurred: the adjutant of the patrol's battalion was the same Wylie who, in a different battalion, in a different army, was now fighting a different war. 'Wylie sahib', came the answer.

"That's our Adjutant sahib," and, slightly grudgingly, they took Nakam back with them, again threatening to shoot him if he was lying.

An Army Schoolmaster's Challenges

By Lt Col John Cross

From late 1949 to early 1951 I had the high-sounding title of Chief Instructor, Army School of Education (Gurkhas). We were billeted in an old lunatic asylum near Tampoi Village, not far from Johore Bahru. The wits said that that was the only time they had heard of the inmates of such an establishment administering themselves. The camp also included training facilities for jungle warfare and weapon training and was known as the FTC, short for FARELF, itself short for Far East Land Forces, Training Centre.

At about the same time embryo Gurkha sappers (more than half were from 1 GR and I had the idea of the Gurkha Engineers being King George V's Own), Signallers and Military Policemen descended on us, who also came under our aegis for their English work.

The first two OCs of ASE (G), now mercifully no longer with us, were cap badged 7 GR. Both were peace-loving people, who, sensibly, preferred text books to tactics, grammars to grenades and reference books to rifles, realizing that military value did not necessarily embrace military valour or virtue. When, in 1948, future Boss number 2 was recruiting in Lehra he enlisted a Darjeeling 'wide-boy' - whose local history would have prevented him being enlisted in the east. The Recruiter

So, after such a long time and in such unexpected circumstances, Wylie and Nakam, met. "I knew you would not forget to send for me," said Nakam as the two men embraced, both in tears. Nor was Nakam ever to know that the patrol was, in fact, ten degrees off their correct bearing when it met him.

The tailpiece occurred in 1953 when Wylie, returning from the conquest of Everest which he helped with Sherpas and oxygen, visited his old battalion, then in Agra. He met Nakam at the camp entrance, now the Police Havildar.

"Still serving?" Nakam was asked. Yes, he was because although he had got his back pay, time in the jungle had not counted for pension - so why waste all those years waiting to be rescued?

(At the suggestion of the Gurkha Major of BG Pokhara, Major (QGO) Hitman Gurung, 2 GR, in 2001, I have given all new recruits both of the Brigade of Gurkhas and the Gurkha Contingent (Singapore Police Force a 'Grandfather to Grandsons' talk annually ever since. One of the points I stress is regimental cohesion and the other is that Gurkhas have made their name just as much by 'singing by a mountain river and working in the dark' where they are trusted so to do as they have with bravery awards. This latter story is one that I have always used as an example of trust prevailing. I have not given them the first part of this short story.)

then came to command ASE (G) as Boss number 2, bringing with him the Darjeeling 'wide-boy', by now a Colour Sergeant. Quick promotion, if you know other channels than that of normal command. I found that besides being an ex-Indian Gorkha League man and a Communist to boot, his secret aim was to try and subvert students to be anti-British and Pro-Communist.

He asked for local leave and went to Bhutan Estate (near Seremban where there is a Gurkha labour force, brought over from the Darjeeling area in 1904. There are two other estates in the area, Bute and Lothian, with a Gurkha labour force). He went with a Lt (King's Gurkha Officer - KGO), a potential instructor. The aim of his visit was to try and meet any Communist on the estate who could get him up to the Secretary General of the Malayan Communist Party, Chin Peng. He failed in that. He and the KGO had a violent quarrel and the Sergeant took off his belt and thrashed the officer who, shamed, asked to go back to his unit, 1/7 GR. He was a B Company (Royal Company as it was known from it being Ganju Lama's when he was awarded his VC) man: he asked to do an important camp recce after B Company located a large terrorist camp. This was allowed: he walked straight up to the camp and was shot dead - killer and killed on purpose.

With a certain amount of difficulty I managed to get rid of the 'wide-boy' instructor - who was clever: he could compose English sonnets - and his boss also felt it was time to go.

The third OC was a Royal Army Educational Corps (RAEC) officer who had served in 2/10 GR in Italy and, before joining up, was the reserve goal keeper for Liverpool football club. He was a friendly enough soul who passed most of his days in an alcoholic daze and whose brigadier boss, stationed in GHQ Singapore, fancied his wife as much as, if not more than, her legal owner. That ended by the OC being posted to Penang. I was blamed, rightly as it turned out, and when the brigadier was made a major-general in charge of army education in the War Office, he got his revenge by turning down my Singapore-published, later HMSO-produced, English for Gurkha Soldiers as not being professionally produced. (I found it being used 60 years later in the hills.)

The fourth OC, also an RAEC officer, was a close relation of a legendary and ultra-left wing Welsh socialist minister who had been with the Trade Unions' Movement since a lad: he told me he wanted a new sort of roll call where the men would vote for what to do the following day. I told him that the Brigade of Gurkhas had not reached its pinnacle of excellence by such methods and, grudgingly, he admitted 'perhaps they are not ready for it'. During my early days we had an inspection by a group of earnest men from the heart of army education in Eltham Palace, London. I was asked what teacher training I had done and received tut-tuttings of disbelief when I said none but any infantry officer worth his salt was always instructing his men so I felt there was no need for any. Besides which, I added, I had started to read an educational pamphlet that on the first page asked the reader 'how long he had not thought of a steamroller for'. With such nonsense I was quite content to stay as I was. The tut-tuttings were joined by frowns and shaken heads. I did not let on that I had once got 0% for an essay at school and had also failed my School Certificate (later known, I think, as 'O' Levels) when I first sat it.

An historical note: at the end of the war, the British Military Administration (BMA) ran the country until returning or liberated colonial functionaries took over. One aspect not quickly resolved that caused difficulties was tracking those on our side reported as 'believed killed in action'. After the Japanese had taken over the then lunatic asylum in 1942, they let most of the loonies out to fend for themselves. Some were shot; others wandered away but most loitered about till they died. Not only that, some wounded British troops being treated there were killed and their bodies buried in shallow pits without any individual markings. Low mounds were all that was visible. A hundred odd yards away from our farthest building was the jungle and in between was some open ground where we played football. The area to be looked at was where we had seen some mounds of earth just inside the edge of the jungle. I can still vividly see one incident in early 1949: a small team from the Graves Registration Unit, comprising a few British soldiers under a time-worn if not time-expired officer, came along to see what was in those mounds of earth, to see if any

skulls or skeletons could be found for identification. There was more than sentimentality in the gesture as such matters as life insurance or knowing that one was no longer a wife but a widow made a hard post-war life even harder. It was important for 'believed killed in action' to be confirmed as such. After so many years in a tropical country, it seemed a hopeless task but, if that was what was wanted, so be it.

On the morning in question I was teaching a practical map-reading lesson and so we were out of doors. We were at the top end of the football pitch, the end nearest the class rooms but, naturally, we wandered as near as we could to where the soldiers were carefully scraping at those sad-looking mounds. By that time we saw that they had dug up a number of skulls, six by one mound, and a couple each in another three. It was clear that, by then, the team had had enough and we saw that none of them was keen on his task.

We watched as the oldest of the soldiers went over to the officer and, from his pocket, produced a flask - what of? Rum? Whisky? Who knows - but it was alcohol of some sort. The officer still seemed hung over from the night before and, as he reached for the flask, we could see his hand shake. As the soldier engaged him in conversation the other men quickly lit some cigarettes and put one in the mouth of each skull. At a quick glance it looked as if the skulls had come alive and were smoking. The soldiers moved smartly away out of sight.

The officer turned, suddenly saw the appalling sight of the skulls smoking and, to everybody's amazement, did not take it as a harmless practical joke but believed the evidence of his eyes. He shrieked and fell into a dead faint. For the few seconds he was unconscious the other soldiers returned and, in a flash, removed the cigarettes from the skulls' mouths. The wretched officer obviously thought he had been hallucinating.

The last we saw of the officer was him being led away. History never related what happened to him but, according to the Gurkhas, the two things that money cannot buy are parents and self-respect. We had not thought about the former but we now knew about the latter.

We were threatened with another visitor, completely different this time, the CIGS (Chief of the Imperial General Staff). Before he arrived, during one English class, I told the students about the CIGS. 'Who knows what CIGS means?' I asked and had visions of a baton cross my eyes at the answer: 'Chief Instructor, Gurkha School'.

Although I had never been an essay writer I had to teach students how to write the wretched things. I said that their essays had to answer the questions why, where, who, how and what. Blank stares greeted that sally. Luckily we were on a veranda and a chicken was wandering around. I told one man to catch it: he did. I held it beak down on the table in front of the class, took a piece of chalk and drew a line from the end of the beak to about a foot away. The chicken squinted at it and made no movement. I gave that as an example of what to

write about. Only about half a minute later did I clap my hands loud enough to wake it from its trance.

During my time at the school, Britain recognised Red China. 'Any questions?' 'Yes, we did not know that Queen Victoria had promised the Chinese their [independence].' However, I want to leave such dull and trivial matters and turn to what happens when confronted with madmen. The first, an ordinary student, was a rifleman from 2/10 GR, Chapalsing Rai. In those early days of the Emergency we had to carry loaded weapons with us wherever we went, the terrorists not yet having lost their zest for being pugnacious. One evening I was called from my room by the Orderly Sergeant, Sete Gurung of 2 GR, and asked to go to the canteen where Chapalsing was trying to balance beer bottles on glasses and not paying any attention to being told to desist. I was intrigued so went. 'Chapalsing,' I said, after temporarily dissuading him from not making any more mess, 'Let's go to your barrack. It is time for bed.'

He looked for his rifle, now in the Orderly Sergeant's hands, and away we went. Once out in the open Chapalsing asked me to run away with him and hide. I demurred, saying to leave it to the morrow. Reluctantly he agreed and we got to his barrack room. He sat down by his bed and tried to take his boots off without lifting his feet off the ground. Eventually we got him under his net and I left.

Next morning, early, I was sent for by my boss, the one who had enlisted the Gorkha League man. 'Chapalsing has run away. Go and look for him.'

'Where are you going?'

'Back to bed as I have a cold.'

I went to below the camp buildings to the open space that we used as a football ground above the sad mounds of earth. From the far end a line of men were slowly beating up towards me. In the foreground I saw Chapalsing lying on the grass. He got up when I approached him. Six yards away he took the 'on guard' position, safety catch off, and told me that I would get shot if I came any nearer.

Over his shoulder I saw the line of men, some thirty yards away. I spoke with him, to no effect until I used an English word. I think it was 'boot' but I can't remember. At that he lowered his rifle. I took two paces towards him and one of the advancing men, by now in earshot, used an unpleasant word that Chapalsing heard. He thought it was I who had spoken so this time I had his rifle two yards from my navel.

I used another English word when talking to him and he lowered his rifle and, from behind, was overpowered.

I looked round and saw the Major sahib looking at me from behind a bush. I waved to him and shouted out that I thought he had gone to bed with a cold. Rather shamefacedly he said it had got better before he had reached his room so he had come back.

Before we took Chapalsing to hospital the camp doctor decided to inject him with Pentathol. He went back into

childhood in what he told us: fascinating! At the hospital he was found to have a tumour on his brain. He was utterly shocked when I told him about the 'incident', nor would he believe me when I told him how he had threatened to kill me, twice.

It was during my visits to him that I was asked to see a 2/7 GR man who was of unsound mind. I had to look at the name board above the beds to see which one he was in. Next week he was in a different bed and the week after yet again in a different bed. I had to look for him each time.

As I left the ward the third time a Tamil, a civilian from HM Dockyard, jumped out of his bed and came up to me and angrily accosted me. 'You are the one who is mad. You come from another ward, put on officer's clothes and look for the bed you feel you should be in. We here are the sane ones,' and I managed to run away before he clobbered me. I did not go back on any more visits.

However, one night not so long afterwards, I was woken up by a KGO in 2/7 GR. I found out later that he and a British corporal had beaten up the corporal's wife and a few others, got into a car and driven off. The car with the corporal in it was on its side in a ditch at the bottom of the hill where our Mess was and the KGO came to me for help.

'What do you want, Sahib?' I asked.

'To go and see the ship's captain and for him to take me to see Pandit Nehru and then on to see Winston Churchill.'

'Now?'

'Yes,' and hinted it would be unwise of me not to help him.

'Let me get dressed.'

Luckily my own Singer Roadster was nearby and in we got. 'Tell you what,' I said coaxingly, 'you won't be allowed on the boat if you have not been jabbed. Let's do that before we go to the docks.'

'Yes.'

I took him to the military hospital and dumped him in casualty reception, gave an adequate reason and left to catch up on my sleep.

The RAMC major in charge of him was an Irishman. 'Oh yes,' he told me later, 'I thought he'd go mad again and I wanted to see just by how much.'

As I write this I ask myself how long can I not think of a mad Gurkha for?

Chief Guest

By Lt Col John Cross

In Nepal practically all functions have a Chief Guest who has formally to be invited into the central seat on a platform in front of the expectant crowd. Living in Nepal, as I do, I find myself from time to time being asked to a function as Chief Guest. There are normally three types of functions to which I am invited, religious ones, Hindu and Buddhist only, never Muslim or Christian, sports tournaments, and schools' parents' days: I have been invited to all three and all of which need a speech to be delivered - "now the Colonel saheb will say two or four words," is the usual formula and I heave myself off my chair, go to the dais and start ad libbing. I normally manage to raise some laughs. The success or otherwise of the talk is shown in the number of hands offered to be shaken by the others on the dais on my return. However, I am practically always asked to speak at any function to which I am invited, Chief Guest or not.

On 14 January 2011, however, it was, for me, a 'first': I was asked to be Chief Guest in the Indian Army Pension camp here in Pokhara. This time it was to start off the Nepal India Friendship School sports day: I was warned just before dusk the day before. The invitation said the ceremony started at 1015 hours on the morrow. I walked round to the camp - we can see it from our house - and arrived there a tad early. Once inside, I met a vehicle sent to fetch me and saw consternation on the driver's face. Protocol had come undone. As I was talking to the driver, the Assamese camp doctor, a major, came up with his wife. He is a delightful man and our joke is my never asking him 'How are you?' but 'How am I?'

"Get in the vehicle, please," implored the driver. Bewildered, because I had arrived already, I did as bidden and was driven about 200 yards to the CO's bungalow. The CO is Lt Col Himanshu Bohora, 6/8 GR, whose grandfather was Subedar Major of 2/2 GR and was tortured to death in Singapore by the Japanese. His great-grandfather was in 2 GR and wounded in 1914 at Neuve Chappelle and his great-great-grandfather was in one of the Afghan wars.

I was bidden to sit in the veranda by his wife and given a cup of coffee. I was quizzed by the Colonel - what did the P in J P stand for? - and then all three of us were driven back to the main Rally Ground, on which all students, from the very young to upper teens, were waiting for us, with the Principal on the platform and the staff ushering the little ones, trying to get them to stand still. I was told to sit in the centre of the front row of comfortable chairs, with two cushions and, once seated there was a march past, the four houses with their coloured flags, boys in front and girls behind, giving a passable 'eyes right' as they passed us.

The Colonel then rose and gave a speech in impeccable English, giving my background - that is when the P of J P came in - my Indian Army service and much else. I was impressed by his knowledge. He waved a copy of Jungle Warfare in front of

him, not that anyone could tell that my name or face were on the cover. Although he did not say so as such, anyone like myself in the middle 80s who was in India pre-partition is looked on as a rapidly disappearing member of an endangered species. In fact, for the many Indian officers who visit Pokhara, I am the first - and only ever? Such an oddity they thought they would never meet.

After the CO sat down next to me and knowing I would have to speak, I asked him, "English or Nepali?"

"English. The school's only language is English," he replied, in a slightly shocked tone of voice.

He then left me to go to his office. An important matter had to be settled: a 7/8th soldier, Naik Bishnu Shrestha, coming on pension had been in a train attacked by over forty Indian robbers. He charged them single-handed and killed three and wounded seven with his kukri so making the others run away and getting back all the loot they dropped as they escaped. He is due to be given the highest award the Indian Government can give for such an action on 26 January, Republic Day. He was also being recalled to extend his service and lot of paperwork was entailed and, as it was a Friday, whatever had to be done needed to be done before the weekend.

The students then gave a PT display after which "The Colonel sahib will now say two or four words."

It was strange to be the Chief Guest at an Indian-Army-sponsored function; strange to be the only non-Nepali and non-Indian there; and strange to be talking in English to such an audience. I spoke slowly and distinctly, using simple words and tried not to sound like a chi-chi. I said how honoured I was to be there - and I meant it - and said that the mind and the body both had to be exercised. I allowed myself a short Nepali saying: 'The king never says a person is poor [enough not to pay taxes], fire never says damp wood never burns and going uphill never allows a fat person any forgiveness.' (It sounds much better in the original.) I then stood apart from the dais so all could see me and said "I am [Nepali] 86. I have had the suit I am wearing for 50 years and it still fits properly. That is what I mean by keeping fit." I was rewarded by a collective gasp from the others on the platform.

The Principal then thanked me graciously and the invited guests, only a handful on a working day, went for refreshments. I spoke with the doctor, who was about to be posted. The conversation started on the impending bravery award. The doctor said he had been recommended for a bravery award but 'doctors don't earn them' had been the answer. I told him that two of the three VC and bar winners were doctors. He showed his surprise.

Somehow we switched to the first Field Marshal, Sam Manekshaw, and the second Field Marshal, Cariappa. I told him that I had not met the first one but that, at Ootacamund in December 1971, during the Indo-East Pakistan War, I had been summoned to the house of the Maharaja of Porbandar to meet him.

The day before, newly arrived in Ootacamund I had tried to find accommodation. At the first port of call two Indian ladies from South Africa were holding forth at the reception desk about the colour bar. I, as the only European in a bunch of Dravidians, was eyed suspiciously. "Tell me, mister," importuned one of the ladies in her sing-song accent, "why is colour bar?" I looked at her, wondering how best not to become involved. "I know where is this Malabar," I countered, "but I am not knowing where is this colour bar." I abruptly left with my baggage, seeking other accommodation, before my audience could further react.

This I found at the Savoy Hotel, a European-owned and run institution 25 years out of date but still surviving. The manageress still spoke of Home, read her English newspapers disdainfully, took tea exactly at half past four every afternoon in her office (knees rug-draped to ward off the cold as fuel was so expensive) and fed her fat and pampered Pekinese pet dog on paper-thin jam sandwiches while it was sitting on her lap.

That first afternoon I called in at the Nilgiri Library. It was a fascinating place. Except for a few recent daily papers, it was a monument to 1947; nothing had changed, so it seemed. I was allowed into a smaller room, where the Encyclopaedia Britannica (1929 edition) was kept. Here, sternly staring from a frame on the opposite wall was a painting of the Queen Empress, presented to the library on the occasion of her Golden Jubilee in 1887. All else was much older. Dust was the only post-independence addition to the old magazines and periodicals: Nineteenth Century from 1878, Frazers Magazine from 1864, with Bailey's and Badminton equally old. Tantalisingly, Blackwoods started with volume 2, dated 1817, and continued intact until 1915. What farthest ripple of the Great War lapped into that bleak room, putting an end to a 98-year collection?

I saw what I thought was a man's name, Neil Ghery, but I learnt it was the old Anglo-Indian spelling of Nilgiri, the 'Blue Hills'. I was also told that Ootacamund was the bastardised version of the local aboriginal Toda 'Otha-ka-mand', the Village of the One Big Stone. Victoriana spoke of the place as 'Snooty Ooty'.

My musings were interrupted by the secretary introducing himself, an ex-Major Son Dutt. Urbane, impeccable English and friendly, here indeed was a living link with the past. More links were made manifest when, next evening, I was called to the telephone by a staccato voice and addressed by a dictatorial voice (which failed to identify itself) asking me my business and inviting me to breakfast on the morrow with the Maharaja of Porbandar. The latter then came to the telephone when the invitation was repeated and, mystery settled, General Cariappa would also be there. It was the General who had heard from Major Son Dutt that a British Army officer was in Ooty. The General, the first

Commander-in-Chief after the British left India, had retired some years before. He was in Ooty giving a lecture to the Indian Union Club Cultural Centre on 'Mother India'.

Breakfast the next morning was good. The General and I had fruit, porridge and cream, rumble-tumble, followed by toast, butter and the Maharani's home-made marmalade. However, it was fasting day for the Maharaja, who nibbled a raw carrot, and for the Maharani, who toyed with a banana. The General monopolised the conversation. He suggested to the Maharani, who was the secretary of the Indian Union Club Cultural Centre, that I give them a talk. I demurred, pleading a clash of dates. The proposed lecture was then brought forward to a Thursday ("the first time in our Club's history") and I was obliged to name my subject. I chose 'South-East Asia - Historic and Prophetic'. Thus it was that many little notices appeared all over Ooty during the next few days, advertising this supposed attraction.

Soon after this the party dispersed. The General drove down into the Plains, escorted for the first few miles by the Maharaja and Maharani, who showed him a short cut through the town. There farewells were said. I accompanied the General some distance in his car before returning to Ooty by a previously ordered taxi. "What wonderful English the Maharani speaks," I ventured. "Should do," he said, "she's a Welsh woman." I learnt that the Maharaja had captained the first Indian Test XI to England in 1932 as well as being an international squash player, an author, an artist and a composer. Talented and positive, the ex-ruler was one of the Old School.

That bit is for the reader's background. In Pokhara I turned to the doctor and said, "Doctor sahib, you will be the only serving officer in the Indian Army who will know what I am about to tell you about Field Marshal Cariappa. On our way down into the plains, the General, not a Field Marshal then, opened up. He, a stickler for time, told me how he had once thought he was late for the function to which he was driving himself. Just as he came to a level-crossing the barrier was dropped. Passage barred. I called the gate keeper over and said to him in the local language 'Please lift the barrier. The train won't be here for five minutes. Please let me through.' 'No', came the answer, so I waited impatiently. As soon as the barrier was lifted, I sped through and, five miles farther on, the same thing happened. The barrier to another level crossing came down just I arrived. Again I pleaded in the local language but the answer was the same. 'No.' I glanced at my watch. I was worried. When the train had passed up went the barrier and through I dashed. Colonel sahib, you will not believe me when I tell you a few miles farther on another barrier came down just as I arrived.'

"Although he was driving down a winding road, he looked round at me. 'This time I called out to the keeper in English: "Open the bar, you bloody fool. What the devil do you think you're doing?" and open it he did. I slipped through and arrived just in time. That's the way to get around.'

"Doctor sahib, I marvelled.

"The General went on. 'One has to have discipline. My daughter was married to a Captain. That first evening, after the party, I told the new bridegroom, 'Breakfast is at 8 o'clock. Be punctual.' He came down at twenty past. I was angry. I said, 'after breakfast you will go back to your battalion and have a week's extra Orderly Officer and only then can you go on your honeymoon.'"

By that time the Doctor's, the other guests, and the assembled ladies' eyes were button bright.

"And another point I'd like you to know - and I guarantee no one in the Indian Army knows this," I continued, bit between the teeth. "In 1936 or 1937, at Alexandra Post, on the North-West Frontier and at 8,200 feet high the highest fortified position in India, Captain Cariappa handed over to Captain Vaughan, the first CO of the British Army 1/7 GR. Vaughan [the men pronounced his name 'Bhagwan'] told Cariappa to open a sealed box of 2-inch mortar ammunition. Cariappa cavilled: 'it is sealed,' he said. 'You have signed for a full box of 2-in mortar ammunition. I want to count them,' said Vaughan, so he opened it and, horror of horrors, it was full of sand. A court martial offence if ever there was one, especially on the Frontier."

The excitement in my listeners was obvious.

"The paperwork made its way to the Highest Authority. Everybody expected a court martial but, to everybody's amazement, nothing happened."

"Why not?" asked the Doctor.

"Because," I said, "even as long before independence as that, British officers knew that the post-independence army would need good officers. It was obviously a mistake and he was given the benefit of the doubt."

And heads shook in wonder, smiles appeared on all faces and a different view of pre-independence British India made heads shake in appreciation.

Time to leave. I said my farewells and, although prepared to walk back, I was taken by vehicle.

All in all, it was a different ending to an unusual Chief Guest day.

I wrote both to the Principal of the school and the Colonel on the morrow. In the latter's letter I put that I had missed the Indian Independence Medal by two minutes. My disappointment had now been fully obviated by such a wonderful and happy occasion. And why not?



2nd KEO GR (SRA(SC))

Aspects Of Development

Dan Huntington (1988 -94)

The first and most sensible thing I did since leaving the Brigade in 1995 was to get married to Janet who was, and still is, in the FCO. We now have three girls aged almost 15, almost 13, and nine years old.

Within a short while of being married, we set off for Venezuela where Janet had been posted to the British Embassy. We loved Caracas - it was pre-Hugo Chavez and already quite dangerous, but there was fabulous food and a massive country and region to explore. Venezuela itself has everything one could want, from the Andes to the Caribbean, El Dorado, massive and very fertile plains, massive flat-top mountains called tepuys and Angel Falls. The seeds of the current chaos, though, were being laid - the governments pre-Chavez were so corrupt and self-serving that people thought they had nothing to lose by giving Chavez a chance. They have proven to be wrong, but I think I too would have voted for him in desperation if I had been in their position.

On leaving the Army, I had been taken on by a small kidnap response company called Sheldon Little. I learnt the ropes principally on a long case based in Colombia, involving an American citizen who had been kidnapped by a wing of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC). While in Venezuela, I did some work for Sheldon Little, but also developed my own risk management business in Caracas. Work often took me to out of the way places. One of these was the south-eastern part of Venezuela where gold mines were attempting to operate. It was true 'Wild West', with really no functioning system of law and order, endemic corruption and routine and casual use of armed violence by security forces, criminals and entrepreneurs. Drug flights were using the area as a transit post from Colombia and Ecuador then up to the US. Despite having worked frequently in places like Afghanistan, Yemen, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nigeria, I still think of this pocket of Venezuela as one of the most dangerous places I have ever been. Work locations weren't all bad though - no-one can

complain about lymin' (local patois for 'hanging around') in Trinidad and Tobago or Guyana.

Sadly, Janet's post was cut in Caracas in 1997 and we had to move on. We were very lucky for Janet to be posted directly to New Delhi. Our four years in India were tremendous - we travelled widely, although mostly in northern India rather than south. We were also lucky enough to visit both Bhutan and Uzbekistan. We had Daisy, our first child, in our first year in Delhi and then Poppy in our third. By now, I had been retained by a larger risk management consultancy and so was 'doing' the occasional kidnap, mostly in Latin America.

While in India, I decided to learn about aid and development. I worked to gain experience with the International Federation of the Red Cross and with some Indian NGOs. I also took a diploma in Natural Disaster Management. Almost by magic, as soon as I'd finished the chapter on cyclones, one would hit some unfortunate part of India and I could go off and practise what I had learnt. Then I would finish the bit about drought, so then I would be sent off by the Red Cross to Gujarat and Rajasthan to assist on the drought response there. Our posting ended in 2001 with the awful earthquake in Bhuj - I could not deploy for that because we were literally packing up our own belongings to leave.

We departed India by car, and drove with the two children from Delhi to Nepal's western border, and crossed into Nepal and a couple of days looking for tigers in Bardiya. I will never forget Poppy's delight - not at seeing a tiger, but at the way the elephant picked up her 'anywayup-cup' with its trunk once it had fallen off the howdah and gently gave it back to her! Our trip took us on a detour up to Kathmandu, and then on to Sikkim. We had the pleasure of meeting Lyangsong Lepcha sahib in Kalimpong before going on to Gangtok.

We had a couple of lovely years back in London, during which I visited Nepal from time to time working with DFID, who were trying to grapple with the implications of the Maoist insurgency on their aid programmes. The embassy was still in denial, very keen to portray the increasingly violent events in western Nepal as simply 'a law and order problem'. In 2002, DFID asked me to set up a team in Nepal to help them and the German aid equivalent, then called GTZ, to enable their staff and NGO partners to work safely and effectively through the conflict.

My deputy in Nepal was Captain Sherbahadur Pun with whom I'd served in 2/2GR. Sherbahadur was later awarded a well-deserved MBE for his work in our Risk Management Office (RMO). He and I walked many miles in the hills, particularly in the Far West, Mid West and East, training and supporting the staff, and meeting the underground Maoists as well as the Security Forces, in order to try and explain the neutral aims of British and German development. We had a fun and eventful time in Nepal - our third daughter, Phoebe, was born in 2003. The conflict reached a pitch that some had not expected, although it was no surprise to those who spent time outside Kathmandu. Conflict was not confined to Nepal - the relationship between DFID, the MoD and the FCO was so

dysfunctional and mutually aggressive that the Prime Minister had to appoint a Special Representative. Needless to say, this didn't help at all!

DFID, quite justifiably in my opinion, gets a very bad press much of the time, but I do think that in the case of Nepal they tried very hard to understand the roots of the conflict and to respond appropriately. But they were stymied by the FCO and MoD who were intent on supporting the King and the Royal Nepal Army (RNA), come what may - and despite very clear evidence, some provided by serving Brigade officers, that the King and his army were the source of the problem, not the solution. Figures produced by both the UN and the ICRC, backed by respected independent Nepali sources, showed very clearly throughout the conflict that around twice as many people were being murdered and 'disappeared' by the Security Forces than by the Maoists. Eventually, the King over-reached himself and seized power in such a manner that even the Embassy and the MoD had to sit up and take notice. British policy slowly began to change, although disgracefully we continued to provide covert assistance to the Nepali Army. It was a helicopter provided by the UK Government that was dropping mortar rounds (called 'Toraboras' by the RNA) on villages in the far and Mid West of Nepal. The King was swept from power in 2006, despite last minute attempts to save him led by a number of ambassadors, including the British.

Shortly after the removal of the King, I left DFID and GTZ and moved to the nascent UN Mission in Nepal as Security Adviser to Ian Martin, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (he's now SRSR in Libya). I left the RMO in the capable hands of Sherbahadur and my successor, Tim Holt (10 GR).

The first three or four months of the UN job were fascinating and fun. I was lucky enough to be present at the meetings of the UN mission, the RNA and the political parties as they hammered out the 'Tripartite Agreement on the Monitoring of Arms and Armies'. The UN was simply a witness and a catalyst to an agreement between the conflict parties, and we had no role beyond trying to ensure that both parties cooperated and to provide expert advice. Once the agreement was signed, I had a hectic month or so of flying around Nepal with both Maoist and RNA commanders to recce and confirm seven sites for the Maoist People's Liberation Army to be quartered, and their weapons put into containers (it was agreed that the Maoists would keep the keys). It was exhilarating stuff, and fascinating to see Maoists and RNA interacting, and to meet some of the Maoist leaders who had been underground for so long.

Over the coming months, however, the UN Mission grew from our original seven people to around 1,000. Bureaucracy became alien compassing, and anyone who has served with the UN knows quite what a stifling organization it can become.

We left Nepal for England in 2007 after five very eventful years. We had enjoyed it very much, and the children had

seen some amazing things and had loved their school in Kathmandu. But, when we left Nepal, it was a relief to be away from the almost constant bandhs, the riots, the lack of electricity and water.

The children loved being back in the UK, and were thrilled by big supermarkets filled with all sorts of food. It took them a while to get used to chewing solid food; they had lived for so long on squashy rice and dhaal. Janet got back to work again to my relief, and I set up my own consultancy, working principally in South Asia to provide aid agencies with advice on how to work safely and effectively in conflict or insecure countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, parts of India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka. I had a couple of trips back to Nepal too.

In 2009, I set up a kidnap and piracy response company with some old colleagues of mine. Somali piracy was beginning to have an impact, and we were soon very busy. Once a vessel is pirated, we are called in to provide advice on how to achieve

the liberation of crew, ship and cargo as quickly as possible. It's been a big change for me, working again with the private sector (and the shipping industry is very much red in tooth and claw) and deploying to large comfortable cities like Athens (where the shipping owners are based) instead of to decrepit conflict areas such as Kabul or Sana'a. But it has been a welcome change!

In 2009, Janet was offered a posting in Chile which having visited Chile in the 90s - we leapt at. In between my deployments for work, we've had some fantastic travelling. Daisy had a year at school in Santiago and then began at a boarding school in the UK, braving the world of an 'unaccompanied minor' on the Air France route between London and Santiago. Poppy and Phoebe remain with us, attending a Chilean school. To our delight, their Spanish is now really good, with a worryingly 'organic' grasp of the vernacular. We are due back in the UK in February 2013. Chile has been wonderful, but it will be nice to be back in the same country as all the children - living in separate hemispheres can become quite confusing!

'Give With Care or Not At All'

Colonel Christopher Lavender (1978 - 94) writes on Asian Development

The Kadoorie Charitable Foundation (KCF) funds projects in China, Bangladesh, Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, Andhra Pradesh, as well as, of course, Nepal. We visit all projects in the field on a regular basis and have built up a sound knowledge of what works and what does not - and recognise the difficulties in delivering funding to the point of need and making a lasting difference to the communities we try to help.

However, having been actively involved in funding community projects in the developing world now for 15 years I have become rather cynical about the claims by such as UN organizations and International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) to be 'lifting people out of poverty'. You don't lift people out of poverty; you might provide better food security, access to water and basic health needs and enhance their livelihoods, but let's not fool ourselves - they are still in poverty - by whatever yardstick you define it.

Andrew Carnegie said that it is more difficult to spend money for charitable purposes wisely than it is to make it in the first place, and there are certainly plenty of examples of bad philanthropy around - some of it perpetrated by such behemoths as the WHO, World Bank and any organisation beginning with the letters 'UN..'. This is not to say that these organisations do no good, in an imperfect world we have to accept that there are imperfect solutions to many of our problems - not the least poverty. Indeed when giving hundreds of millions of US\$ away such organisations as the UN, the Global Fund and the Gates Foundation have little choice in working with government ministries and the larger INGOs, as smaller

NGOs do not have the capacity to cope with such enormous sums. However the KCF has the luxury of selecting our funding partners (note we do not refer to donors and beneficiaries as this suggests dependency) and in the main we are able to work with small domestic NGOs where transparency and accountability are easier to monitor and where you can build up more enduring relationships.

Much is made by the media and the charity community of the importance of 'giving' (and Bill Clinton wrote a whole book all about it) but the importance is not so much in the giving but in the careful application of funds. If you give thoughtlessly you may as well not give at all.

Having said all this, there is an enormous amount of good being achieved in the developing world by well focused NGOs. The increasing wealth of the burgeoning middle class in most developing countries certainly plays a key role in raising and applying funds locally although most countries we work in still rely overwhelmingly on funding from overseas. But so much can be achieved with modest resources, a micro-credit programme that allows a family to buy livestock or plant vegetables and increase their income might not 'lift them out of poverty' but it will enable them to send their children to school, pay for medicines and invest in other income generating activities. The poor can also have crippling debts, as was the case of a project we funded in Andhra Pradesh (AP). Following a reservoir desilting programme which increased yields by 25% when the silt was applied to vegetable fields I naively enquired on what the farmers would spend this income - only to be told that they would be paying off a small part of debts accrued from

loan sharks over 20 or so years of bad harvests - the suicide rate in AP is the second highest in the World!

Evaluation is the only way to ascertain that a project is worth funding in the first place and that the qualitative and quantitative difference made through the project is likely to be sustainable. Pre-funding evaluation reassures us that the implementing NGO has the capacity to complete the project according to the agreed objectives. Frequent communication is critical in funding projects in the developing worlds and we want to hear about the problems as well as the successes. If the six-monthly reports we require arrive with only good news we send it back and ask for a more truthful account! Good communication builds confidence and trust between partners and poor communication can destroy an otherwise worthy project. Oversight of implementation is also critical - and here some INGOs display a weakness. Many individual donors do not realize that it is often not Christian Aid, Oxfam, Action Aid or World Vision who implement the project on the ground but a local NGO or Community Based Organisation (CBO), and therefore oversight of this work by the INGO is critical - but in our experience not always as thorough as it should be. Indeed in one instance involving one of the aforesaid INGOs

the CBO was embezzling our money from the project without the INGO knowing and it took a visit by one of our field staff to bring the whole issue to light. We withdrew our funding.

Post Funding Evaluation (PFE) is perhaps the most useful measure of success and we have a continuing programme of PFE. A revolving micro-credit programme should revolve indefinitely, so we may be looking at projects in 25 years time. I recently re-visited a project with the Saigon Children's Charity near the Cu Chi tunnels used by the Viet Cong about two hours from Saigon. The project had been introduced to us by the Editor when he was working with the British Executive Service Overseas - and I am happy to report that ten years after we funded improvements to the school it was in excellent condition with an energetic and resourceful Principal and staff.

As advice for individual donors I would urge you to identify a good local NGO (go on-line: most have websites) working in a country and sector (healthcare, education, income generation etc) and to fund them directly rather than going through an INGO where it is very difficult to trace where your money is going. And avoid UNICEF - in my view the most trying child of the UN family!

Sirmoor Piscatorial Society

By Major David Thomas MBE

Well, it sounds more erudite than 'Fly Fishing Club' and the Nepali equivalent which I suppose would be *balchima makar lagaeko machhar marne toli* would get some uncomprehending looks - both British and Nepali. Not that this was unusual with many British officer translations!

Be that as it may, Joanna and I and Tony and Sally Berry met up on 20 May at the Seven Stars Inn, Aberedw, after Norman and Alison's splendid Red Carpet Ball. Carol and Bruce were to have joined us but could not at the last moment, so we spent a day on the Wye, had a delightful dinner with Cornelia and Geoffrey and fished the next day on the Edw. We did not catch much but it did not really seem to matter. Fishing in Wales has a charm of its own and a fine day on the Edw is like a fine day nowhere else on earth - even if you do slip and fall in - again!

The serious business was to be had on the Meon where Thomases, Ashleys and Berrys launched off in fine style and black ties with *Madam Butterfly* at Grange Park Opera. The music was splendid but one had to use a bit of imagination to transform the rather substantial *Madam Butterfly* into the lissom Japanese girl she was supposed to be! Grange Park is a superb evening out in crumbling Palladian splendour in the Hampshire hills. Not as polished as Glyndebourne but with its own distinct character.

Oh yes, the fishing report. Well, the Meon has not changed; it is still a delightful and varied chalk stream winding its way through the valley with the trout as elusive as ever. Nigel Haynes, Tony Berry, William Shuttlewood, and I met at Wickham church on Monday 18 June morning and Bruce Jackman with Carol and Christopher Bullock and Charlie Ward joined us at the pub for lunch and the afternoon. Plenty of small fry were caught and returned; larger fish were harder to come by. They do not get big by getting caught!

Thanks to Joanna's arrangements and Lucy Cook's expertise ten of us dined nobly at Parhazard that evening. I put my cook's hat on for the breakfast next day and Joanna's picnic lunch by the river next day was as popular as ever.

And we even caught some fish! A total of four three-pounders were taken over the next two days and numerous small ones that we dutifully returned for next year. I am looking forward to it already.



6th QEO GRRRA

Medicina Remembered 2012

On 25 April every year Italy celebrates 'National Liberation Day' to commemorate their freedom in 1945 from the tyranny of the Fascists and Nazis. The battle to free Medicina, one of the last actions of the war in Italy, occurred on 16 April 1945. To this day the people of Medicina remember the sacrifices made by the two allied regiments who freed their town; the 14th/20th Hussars and the 2/6th Gurkha Rifles.

Bob Harrison, Chairman of the 14th/20th Noah's Arc Old Comrades Club had organised a group visit to coincide with the town's 'Festa della Liberazione'. He asked Luigi Trevisan, a big fan of the British Army, to act as the group's guide and interpreter. In 2011, it was Luigi who hosted Captain Namsing Thapa so generously during his visit from Hong Kong to Medicina, the battlefields and war graves in northern Italy. And it was Luigi who persuaded Brian O'Bree to come with Ciska to Medicina this year.

The celebrations started with the town band playing on the main square whilst various dignitaries gathered. From there the band led a march around the town back to the Town Hall. Following the band were representative of the Carabinieri Association, the Partisans' Association, the Mayor with the town police and Carabinieri chiefs, the Town councillors, the fire brigade, the visiting 14th/20th group with a large number of Medicinese falling in behind.

At the town hall the Mayor called for a brief silence to commemorate all those who had lost their lives during the war. Then came the speeches; first the Mayor; then Bob Harrison spoke on behalf of the 14th/20th party; Brian O'Bree delivered 6GRRRA Chairman's brief message; and finally a speech by the

Deputy President of the region, Emilia Romagna. A children's choir from the town school sang the National Anthem very enthusiastically; after which they were very keen to shake the visitors' hands.

The formalities over, the visitors were invited inside the courtyard of the Town Hall to see the plaque erected by the Town Council in memory of the sacrifice made by the 14th/20th and 2/6th in April 1945 (shown at the end). Bob had brought with him a happy party of fourteen ex-14th/20th, several of who had not served for 40 or more years, and 11 ladies.

Then came a trip of some 2 kilometres on the main road to the west of the town to a bridge across the River Gaiana which was the site of a little known but very fierce battle. The line of the Gaiana with high flood banks was designed by the Germans as being their final line of resistance to prevent the allies reaching the River Po and the area of the bridge was defended by the 1st Parachute Division, acknowledged as one of the finest formations in the German Army.

Despite managing to cross the river the small 2/6th and 14th/20th force was outnumbered and ordered to withdraw to allow a larger, fresher formation through. On the night of 17 April the defenders were bombarded with a huge artillery barrage followed by flame-thrower carriers. The following day the 2/8th Gurkhas and the 2nd Royal Tanks took the position and the German resistance was broken.

The locals report that over 1,000 Germans died in a 600 metre wide area and they still come across their remains today. The 2/6th's casualties were greater than at Medicina and



The Medicina town square with the tower, recognisable from the Cuneo painting, in the background



The speakers, from left: Bob Harrison, Brian O'Bree, Sig. Rambaldi the Mayor and the regional Deputy President

members of the Battalion won three IOM's, probably a record for one action, two MC's and four MM's for their courage at Gaiana.

After the sobering visit to the Gaiana, the group was taken to a nearby 'party hall' used by the town for high days and holidays. There they joined some two hundred locals tucking into a classic Italian lunch - an antipasto, a pasta primo, as much meat as you could eat secondo, followed by a dolce all washed down by some very drinkable local wine.

Nearly two hours later, after fond farewells, the visitors happily negotiated their way back to their transport for their journey.

Brian was delighted at the way he and Ciska were included in the Noah Arc's visit. The day served as a happy reminder about how the Hussars and Gurkhas have always got on well together. Bob Harrison gave Brian a copy of a letter by a Hussar survivor of Medicina which you can read below. And, if further proof of this bond of friendship which was to become a formal affiliation 21 years later is necessary, you should read an extract from the 6GR Regimental History, also below.

That the town of Medicina remembers their Hussars and Gurkhas with such fondness even today is remarkable. Brian believes others of the Association would appreciate this experience and enjoy a visit to Northern Italy and Medicina in the springtime before too long; the 70th anniversary of the battle in 2015?



New friendships made .. Luigi, Brian, Laura, Ciska, Bob and Linda



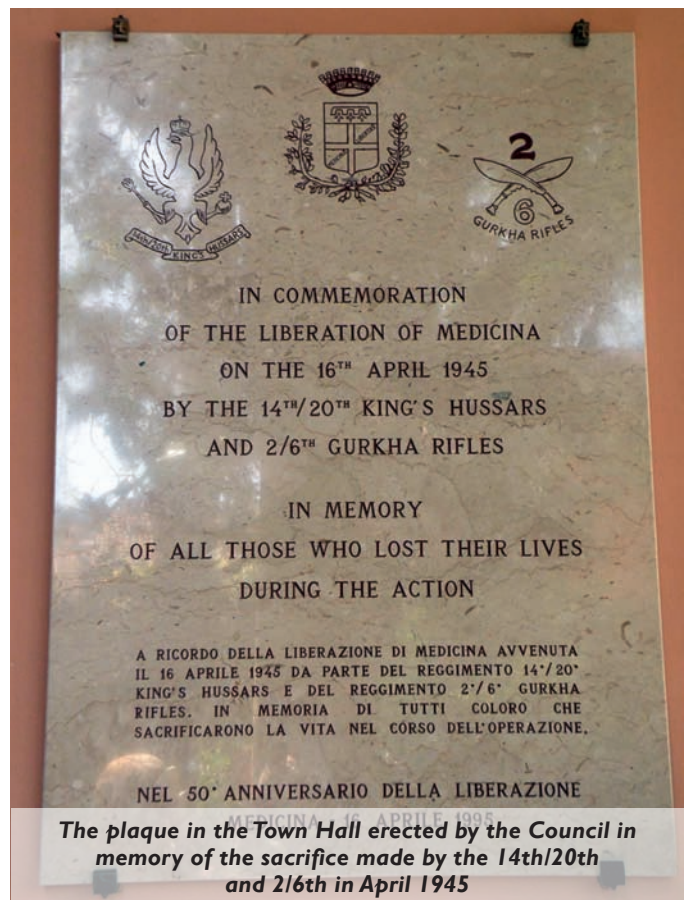
The Battle of Medicina painted by Terence Cuneo



The 14th/20th group in the courtyard



The overgrown Gaiana River and bridge looking west



The plaque in the Town Hall erected by the Council in memory of the sacrifice made by the 14th/20th and 2/6th in April 1945

Medicina 1945 - Recollections of Mr Max Simon

(Sent to Mr Bob Harrison, Chairman of the 14th/20th Noah's Arc Old Comrades Club)

Dear Bob,

You asked for memories of Medicina, I am afraid my recollection of details has almost faded completely.

I was in 'B' squadron and my tank commander and troop leader was Lieut Michael Loveitt, we were in a Sherman tank with a 17 pounder gun and I was bow gunner, about as low as you can get in a tank crew.

We waited outside the town while 'C' squadron started the attack, after a while we were ordered to back them up. If my memory serves me right Major Mann our Squadron Leader instead of following them ordered us to swing right and we entered the town from the side. The noise was tremendous and I remember buildings on fire, a scene very much like Cuneo's painting but not quite so colourful.

One incident I do remember occurred after the battle was over.

It was dark and I was acting as sentry, very nervous in case we suffered a panzer-faust attack, which we had already had before, when out of the dark a voice called out "Teek-hai sahib". I nearly jumped out of my skin. I turned on my torch and there around us were six grinning Gurkhas, who had been detailed to guard us. Their ability to move unseen and unheard was uncanny, and I thank my lucky stars they were on our side.

Wishing you a successful trip to Medicina.

Yours sincerely,

Max Simon

Medicina 1945 - Extract from 6GR Regimental History

"The Battalion now received new vehicles in place of their lorries. These were Kangaroos, Sherman tanks converted into troop carriers and intended to enable infantry to keep up with the leading tanks during an attack. The Kangaroos were provided by "A" Squadron 14th/20th Hussars, old friends of the 31st Armoured Division and of days gone by when their polo team had visited Abbottabad. There were forty Kangaroos distributed as under: one troop of eight tanks to each company; each platoon had two and Company Headquarters had one, the eighth being spare. The Kangaroos were operated by men of the Hussars and were fitted with half-inch Browning guns and No. 19 wireless sets. Training with these new vehicles was taken up with enthusiasm, but early results of training exercises caused some head shaking by those who looked for speed in the coming breakthrough.....

The friendship between the Battalion and the 14th/20th Hussars was very great. The Regiment associates very closely with them to this day and is very proud of the association. The spirit that existed between the two regiments was remarkable; whilst operating in their hangars our officers and men slept, fed, lived and moved as an integral part of the 14th/20th. With them, of course, were the battery commander and his OPs with their staffs. Cavalry, Gunners, Riflemen, all worked as one; it was on this that so much of the latter successes hinged."

Medicina Battlefield Tours

Editor. The next articles demonstrate that the Battle Honours of the past are well remembered by the veterans of the 6GR Regimental Association as well as by their successors. The support offered by Luigi Trevisan, the Italian authorities and by the local populations is a measure of the esteem and gratitude still felt today on the sacrifices of the past.

From: Luigi Trevisan
Sent: 08 January 2013 07:28
To: John Anderson
Subject: greetings from Italy

Dear Brigadier Sir,

Good morning from Luigi.

I always receive your e-mail destined to Capt Nam Sing Thapa and I would be honoured to send you my best wishes for the New Year.

With this occasion I'm glad to inform you that your Ancestors have been well remembered also last July: Capt Badri Rai, who knew about my trip with Capt Nam Sing Thapa and my devotion for the Gurkhas, asked me for help for their visit to Northern Italy.

At the beginning of July my wife Laura and me had the honour to have been with Capt Rai and his Boys in Tavoleto, Faetano, Rimini, Monte Farneto and Medicina for honouring the 2/6 GR. You can be proud of them, dear Brigadier Sir, they are really the finest soldiers I have ever seen.

Please see also the following article and six photos published in the home page of the City of Medicina: www.comune.medicina.bo.it/moduli/notizia.aspx?ID=1284

They consider that visit the best of their lives (they visited Belgium, Flanders, France) and I'm happy because I'm only a former Sgt with devotion for them.

The name list for the group, all from 1Yorks-C Gurkha Reinforcement Company, now disbanded was as follows:

1. Capt Badrikumar Rai
2. Sgt Lakhbahadur Gurung
3. Sgt Bikash Rai
4. Cpl Surendra Tamang
5. Cpl Amar Tamang
6. LCpl Hombahadur Limbu
7. LCpl Tanka Tembe
8. Rfn Debendra Ale Magar
9. Rfn Dambar Limbu
10. Rfn Jeevan Rai
11. Rfn Sunil Galami Magar
12. Rfn Arjun Gurung
13. Rfn Bijaysing Subba Limbu
14. Rfn Narayan Budha Magar
15. Rfn Ananda Thapa
16. Rfn Padamraj Limbu

Personally, I dedicate the trip and my efforts to LCpl Gajbahadur Gurung, from the same Company, killed in Afghanistan last January.

Warmest Regards,
Luigi Trevisan

Young Gurkas follow in the steps of Heroes of the Second World War

On Friday 06 July, a group of sixteen Gurkha Soldiers from the 1 Yorks D Delhi (Gurkha Reinforcement) Company arrived in Medicina to honouring their forefathers from the 6th Gurkha Rifles, British Army, who fought in Italy during the WW2.

From their base in Munster, Germany, the young Gurkhas arrived in the Romagna Region of Italy and first made a visit to the Rimini Gurkha War Cemetery. Then at Medicina, inside the courtyard of the City Hall they were shown the memorial plaque dedicated to 2/6GR and to 14th/20th King's Hussars who liberated the town of Medicina after a famous battle fought on 16 April 1945.

The Battalion of those very young Gurkha Soldiers was deployed in Afghanistan until last April and in January suffered the painful loss of a young comrade-in-arms, Gaj Bahadur Gurung.

The group's guide for the trip in Italy was Luigi Trevisan from Conegliano, in the Region of Venice. Luigi and his wife Laura have a passion for history.

Trevisan described to his Gurkha friends the actions of the 2/6th in Medicina and the tragic story of the hero of Medicina, Mr Angelo Licurgo Fava, awarded Gold Medal for Military Valour. Mr Fava's grand-daughter, Mrs Dilva Fava, was present with another of Medicina's Town Councillors, Mr Matteo Montanari, to receive and greet the Gurkha guests.

Having honoured the commemorative plaque to the 2/6th and 14th/20th Kings Hussars and the one to Mr Fava with a few minutes of silence, the group then visited the nearby River Gaiana, the site of a very bloody battle by the Gurkhas immediately following that of Medicina.



9th GRRR (Former)

By Bruce Roberts. (Latterly Chairman 9 GRRR)

Newsletter

Having closed down the formality of the Regimental Association in December 2008, annual reunions of Veterans and friends have continued to be held every year in the Gurkha Museum with a very good attendance and with distinguished guests.

In 2012, the number signing up to attend reached nearly 50 including guests. It was pleasing to have Brigadier John Anderson and Louise as our principal guests and to receive a few words on the activities of the Gurkha Brigade Association. It is hoped that former members of the Regimental Association and family members will attend to keep their interest alive with the present affairs of our Gurkha Brigade.

It is also pleasing that more sons and daughters and even grandchildren are beginning to take an active interest and of

those present, there were 12 including wives. Peter Leathart, with the help of Fiona, has organised these meetings with great enthusiasm. Surpluses from the meetings are donated to the GWT or other charitable activity of the Brigade. This year, Ron Morris, son of Brigadier Jumbo Morris of the Chindit Morrisforce, made a special plea for the two remaining old Gurkha pensioners of the 4/9th.

We were very pleased to welcome Captains Chinbahadur Thapa MVO and Devikumar Gurung MVO, the Queens Gurkha Orderly Officers this year as well as Daniele Cesaretti from San Marino who organised the beautiful roadside memorial to Sher Bahadur Thapa VC in San Marino.

Jai 9th Gurkhas

A Chindits Recollection of being Wounded

By Bruce Roberts

(It is fortunate that the glorious history of the Gurkha Brigade has been well documented in records, books and in the Museum at Winchester as well as many personal tales. Scott Leathart of the 3/9th Battalion wrote vividly about his experiences in his book, *With the Gurkhas* published in 1996. It is a book which I read and re-read frequently. The following description of one of his recollections may encourage readers of *The Kukri* to seek the book out and read of his affection and praise for his Gurkha soldiers in so many desperate circumstances)

The 3/9th Battalion, the first of the 9th Gurkhas war substantive battalions came into being on 01 October, 1940. Scott Leathart joined the battalion when it was on the NW Frontier and later was Adjutant in the 1943 Arakan operations. In 1944, the Battalion became part of Special Forces for the Chindit operations and was flown by gliders to BROADWAY, to set up a fortified stronghold behind the Japanese to disrupt their supplies and communications. Scott Leathart was OC "D" Company. Later, the Company was ordered to clear a village, a few miles down from the Indawggi Lake, a day's march through thick jungle and said to be occupied by the Japanese.

It was in this action that Scott Leathart was badly wounded. After treatment by the accompanying doctor, the day after, he was left under the care of his orderly, Bombahadur as the Battalion moved north. The following is an extract from his book.

"As far as I was concerned, there followed several very confused days. My orderly, Bombahadur, took complete charge. He built me a shelter, with a bamboo bed raised off the floor and a little table beside it. There he attended to my every need; he gave me morphine injections on a schedule ordered by Doc Wright, he made a bed-pan out of an old kerosene tin, he made powdered milk drinks, and other concoctions out of K rations, he sat and talked to me and gave me encouragement. His devotion was deeply touching and never to be forgotten. I can see him now, never more than a few yards away, sometimes squatting by a little fire over which he would be cooking something that he hoped would stimulate my wretched appetite; at other times just sitting nearby waiting to give me my next injection or ready to give me the nursing help in my desperately weak condition. If it rained at night, he would be there in an instant to make sure I was keeping dry. He never failed and seemed to know instinctively exactly what I needed; and all this in the back of beyond with minimum facilities. How can such devotion ever be matched?"

Pursuit of the Past and Continuing Bonds

By Roger Massie - A follow-up to an article in *The Kukri*, No 61

Former Regimental Colonel-in-Chief, Maj Gen Kishan Singh, AVSM, VSM, now retired, and his wife Sandhya, had, when still serving, entertained and instructed me and my wife so memorably in Dehradun and Pune, as described in *The Kukri*, No 61, also, during that visit, kindly suggesting that we visit them in their retirement in Wellington in the Nilgiris. We needed little encouragement to take them up on an offer which fitted in perfectly with our plan to visit Kerala, via Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Arrangements were once again taken in hand by the excellent Puran Bardhwaj of Treksindia, who accompanied our small group of eight, which flew into the mighty southern metropolis that is Bangalore, in humid heat, before heading for the cool of the Hills. Our destination was indeed to remind us powerfully of Scotland, with porridge on the breakfast menu, and hot-water bottles and logfires in our bedrooms.

(2008) and most informative book by Christopher Penn (for some of our group, a neighbour and Oxford contemporary), entitled *In Pursuit of The Past* - The discovery of the life and work of ATW Penn, pioneering photographer of South India.

A Time Of Gifts

Wellington, resonantly named, and home to the Indian Staff College, is a small Hill Station, linked by a famous and historic train ride with nearby Ootacamund (Ooty), a name known to every student of the British Raj. We had done our homework, having in our luggage copies to present to our hosts of a recent



Our group was to learn more from Kishan and Sandhya, over a delicious curry they had personally prepared for all of us in their home, opposite the Staff College, represented round their hospitable table by a delightful Colonel and his wife. Our hosts, on their side, reciprocated by presenting us with a 500-page *History of Ooty*, of 1908 by Frederick Price, as well as an up to date guidebook, and - a more personal gift - a framed photo of our host, the General, presenting to the 3/9th Regiment's Varanasi Headquarters the mess jacket waistcoat, in a glass display case, worn by my father, Lt Col TAMassie, who had been proud to command the 1st/9th, as we had been to follow in his footsteps.

On our side, the above-mentioned literary gift to our hosts was supplemented by a pictorial one in the form of an etching of Earl Roberts (and signed by him) of Kandahar - a name again familiar in our own day. Frederick Roberts (Kipling's "Bobs"), as it turned out provided a link both with the Gurkhas (he had tirelessly encouraged the recruitment of the martial races), and with Ooty's Golden Age, which resulted, from his insistence, when C-in-C of the Madras Presidency - at a time when he was much photographed by Penn - overriding strong opposition, in establishing the Army Headquarters permanently in Ooty, rather than just in the hot season.

Wellington Gymkhana Club And Ooty Hunt

Our host is frequently in nearby Goa, where his son Hanut runs a certainly most successful Hotel catering essentially for a clientele with a military background. And we owed it to Kishan's intervention, that our whole group was accommodated for a night and dined at the historic Wellington Gymkhana Club, whose motto is Courtesy, Care, Comfort, beneath fine tea plantations, where he also lent me his golf clubs, although the

courage of my military ancestors nearly deserted me on seeing the notice "Beware of Bison".

His intervention was also invaluable in securing our entry to the Ooty Club, where the game of snooker was invented, to be entertained to tea by the Secretary, Jimmy Camdin, beneath walls covered by big game trophies, prints of photographs by Penn - who had been 'Court Photographer' to Ooty (where he is buried) for nearly 50 years - and oil portraits of such magnificent masters of the Ooty Hunt, as Colonel Jago, a Hunt with which my great great grandfather, Captain Joseph Ernest Edlmann, of the King's Dragoons, must have ridden. The record of his marriage in 1864 was a surprise discovery, pursuing the past to the Registry of St Stephen's Church. His Coventry-based regiment had been among those drafted in after the Mutiny/ Uprising of '57, in whose failure Gurkha loyalty to the Crown played an important part.



NOTIFICATION OF DEATHS

The Editor records with regret the deaths of the following members of the Brigade between 1 January 2012 and 31 December 2012.

2 GR	Capt T P Thornton*	24 May 12
	Maj E J H Moore MBE DOM*	13 June 2012
	Lt Col R J Parker FTCL ARCM (DOM)*	01 July 12
	Maj J C Slater*	02 July 12
	Maj N Turnbull RAPC*	29 August 12
	Lt M S Boswell*	01 September 2012
6 GR	Lt Col A P M Griffith*	08 May 2012
	Capt A P Denny	05 May 2012
	Maj P Griffin MBE*	29 January 2012
	Maj P B H Robeson*	15 June 2012
	GM Dalbahadur Gurung MVO (Nepal Branch)	26 July 2012
	Maj V Sams	28 August 2012
Lt Col R C Neath OBE*	27 October 2012	
7 GR	I Wilson	31 December 2012
	B Davies	December 2011
	Maj D Drayton*	31 January 2012
	Maj P R Richards MC MBE*	16 March 2012
	A Hunter Choat	12 April 2012
	Maj C J Thorne*	05 July 2012
Lt Col G Lloyd*	16 August 2012	
9 GR	J H Edleston*	21 March 2012
	Maj D V A Craddock*	13 May 2012
	C E Ross*	07 July 2012
	Lt Col L J V West OBE AMN PJM*	October 2012
RGR	30048322 Rfn Sachin Limbu	24 June 10 (WIA) 02 Jan 12 (DoW)
	21171410 LCpl Gajbahadur Gurung	27 January 2012 (KIA)
	25194218 Lt E A Drummond-Baxter	30 October 2012 (KIA)
	21171435 LCpl Siddhanta Kunwar	30 October 2012 (KIA)
	21171629 Rfn Aman Gurung	22 April 2012
QGE	Maj G Thompson	07 April 2012
	Maj J Parfect MBE	01 May 2012
QOGLR	2nd Lt J M Connochie*	01 March 2011
	P Treble	26 January 2012
	Mrs A Ratcliffe	23 June 2012
	Col C W Wilson	06 September 2012
	Lt Col A R Price*	27 October 2012
	Hon Maj Kunjalal Moktan MBE*	16 November 2012
BMH Dharan	Ranjitsing Rai MBE OSTj*	20 December 2011

* Obituaries provided

OBITUARIES

Captain Terence Patrick Thornton (2 GR)

Although Terry Thornton served in the Regiment for less than two years at the end of the Second World War he came to regard it so affectionately that he became a founder member of the Regimental Association, now called the Sirmoor Club, and stayed faithfully with us until he died on 24th May 2012 aged 93.

Terry who was the son of Captain A J P Thornton MC The Royal Irish Rifles (later The Royal Ulster Rifles), was born on 10 December 1918 and educated at St Joseph's College, Beulah Hill, London, where he was a contemporary of Dudley Spain. In October 1939 he enlisted in The Royal Sussex Regiment and became a Sergeant in its 7th Battalion before he was sent to the Officers' Training School at Belgaum in 1944. In September that year he joined the 2nd Goorkhas and, in recognition of his long period in the ranks, was promoted Lieutenant the same day. As an experienced soldier Terry was kept in the Regimental Centre in Dehra Dun as part of our huge training organisation

for the remainder of his service. He was also a key member of the Centre's football XI.

Terry left Dehra in February 1946 for demobilisation in England and a month later he was married in London to Miss Moira Murray. Having taken a course in business management he became a Member of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries and worked for Erlangers. Later he became Deputy Chairman of Merchant Bankers Hill Samuel and held several Non-Executive Directorships until he retired in 1982. Throughout his life he played cricket and squash to a very high standard - indeed he was a Kent County squash player.

Terry's wife, Moira, died in 1998, but we extend our sympathy to his daughter Moira Begg and her family at her loss.

DRW

Major Ernest James Houghton Moore, MBE (2 GR)

'Dinty' Moore, who died on 13 June 2012 aged 95, will be remembered with affection by everyone who served with him in the Army as a warm friend as well as a very smart soldier and a star of his days in the world of military music. Having been appointed as the Regiment's second Director of Music, it was no mean achievement that he mastered the hard act of following the redoubtable Major Bill Bailey. How lucky we were to have two such stalwarts in succession.

Dinty, who was born in Westbourne, Sussex, on 24 October 1916, was the eldest of the six children of Captain Ernest Thomas Moore. His mother came from a naval family, and both his grandfather and father served with distinction in the Royal Army Service Corps. While living in Germany where his father was serving in the occupation forces after World War I, Dinty learned to speak German as a child. But in 1927, when his father was posted to Khartoum, Dinty left his parents to begin his own military life by starting at The Duke of York's Royal Military School in Dover at the age of eleven.

In 1931 the 15 years old Dinty left school to join the 1st Battalion The Border Regiment as a Boy Musician. He grew up with them in Northern Ireland and England and earned a place on the Pupils' Course at the Royal School of Music, Kneller Hall from 1937 to 1939, where he won prizes. Later in 1939, once more in his battalion and now a Corporal, he went to France as part of the 2nd Division. When the 'phoney war' ended abruptly 1 Border, with many others, advanced from Lille into Belgium on 10 May 1940. After the encounter battle and the subsequent retreat to avoid total disaster, Dinty

was evacuated from Dunkirk. In 1941 1 Border became an Air Landing [glider-borne] Battalion in the 1st Airborne Division and Dinty became a Sergeant. In 1943 he left it to attend the Bandmasters' Course at Kneller Hall where he qualified in 1945. His reward was appointment as Bandmaster of the 1st Battalion The East Lancashire Regiment with which he was to serve for the next 13 years, including active service on the Suez Canal.

After their amalgamation with The South Lancashire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Volunteers) on a ceremonial parade watched by many of us in Hong Kong in 1958, Dinty became Bandmaster of the new 1st Battalion The Lancashire Regiment (PWV). His MBE in 1960 reflected his excellent work. Dinty had so much service - nearly 14 years in the ranks and over 15 years as a Warrant Officer Class I that he also had the unusual distinction for those times of a Bar to his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal as well as the Meritorious Service Medal. As testimony of his musical prowess, he had gained the PSM qualification at Kneller Hall, as well as qualifying as a Licentiate of the Royal Academy of Music and an Associate of the Royal College of Music.

After becoming Director of Music of the 2nd Goorkhas in October 1960, Dinty joined us in England and very quickly showed his skills, including a flair for training others. During his ten years with the Regiment he brought the Band to new heights and took it to perform to huge acclaim in many parts of the world, including a spell with the 1st Battalion on operations in Borneo in 1964. In several editions of The Journal Dinty has

left us good descriptions of some of those highly successful visits and tours.

When Dinty retired in November 1970 he and Kay went to live in Aldershot where he continued in the work he loved. Surrey County Council employed him to teach music at several

schools, including Cranleigh. Dinty and Miss Kay Ainsley had been married in Northumberland in 1943 and their happy marriage was to last for 69 years. To Kay and their daughter, Marilyn we send our deepest sympathy at Dinty's death.

DRW

Lieutenant Colonel Rodney James Parker FTCLARCM (2 GR)

Rodney Parker, Director of Music from 1983 to 1986, died on 1 July 2012. Born in 1941, he developed an interest in music while at Bournemouth Grammar School, and decided to join the Army as a junior bandsman at the age of 16. After nearly ten years service with the Wiltshires, he qualified as a Bandmaster and was posted to the 2nd Battalion, the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers. In 1977 he was commissioned and, after service with the Prince of Wales Division and RAOC, was posted to the 2nd KEO Goorkhas. Subsequently, after service

in the Household Division, he retired in 1992, but retained links with the Army for a further four years as Director of Music of the Royal Yeomanry (TA). He also became a music teacher at several schools, where he encouraged and inspired so many young musicians. This ability to inspire others, coupled with notable energy and technical know-how, was recognised and highly respected by all those who got to know him, but especially by his fellow musicians. Our condolences go to his wife, Cathy, and family.

Major James Cannan Slater (2 GR)

James Slater - Jim to his many friends - died on 2 June 2012 at the age of 86. He was our highly efficient Intelligence Officer in the 1st Battalion during the earlier days of the Malayan Emergency when operations against the Communist terrorists in Johore were still at their most intense and the tide had not yet turned in our favour.

Born on 7 October 1925, Jim was the only child of Brigadier P J Slater DFC TD ADC DL, a solicitor with a distinguished record in World War I who later reached the unusually high rank of Brigadier in the Territorial Army. Jim's mother was the poet May Wedderburn Cannan who, in 1976, published her autobiography *Grey Ghosts and Voices*.

After leaving Eton, Jim enlisted in The King's Royal Rifle Corps in October 1943 and went to the Motor Battalion Officer Cadet Training Unit at York. In June 1945 he joined The Green Jackets Infantry Training Centre where he was Weapon Training Officer. In 1947 he became a platoon commander in the 2nd Battalion of the 60th with which he went to Palestine in 1948. A year later he moved to their 1st Battalion but he soon got bored with serving in Germany and applied for secondment to the 2nd Goorkhas. Somehow he was sent to the 2nd/10th Gurkhas in Hong Kong but that was soon put right and he arrived at Slim Barracks in September 1950.

With us Jim became a much loved character and a congenial companion. During most of his time he was our Intelligence Officer serving with Tac HQ in Mersing, Kluang and Segamat,

some of the Johore black spots of those days. He worked all hours with huge enthusiasm and several times put himself at serious risk in the chancy business of going out at night with a police colleague to meet intelligence agents and informers in lonely places when it was impossible to know if it might turn out to be an ambush to cost his life. In his office at Tac HQ, Jim's patience was occasionally sorely tried by the primitive wartime field telephone instruments we still used, and when his telephone played up very badly his custom was to throw it through his open window. The Signal Platoon quickly latched on to what they thought was Slater Sahib's curious habit and kept a few instruments in reserve to be able to restore his usual sunny temper and their reputation in short order. Towards the end of his time with us, Jim took delight in commanding D Company on operations, and he was mentioned in despatches for his outstanding services, particularly as our IO.

In March 1952 Jim left us to rejoin the 1st/60th where he commanded D (Training) Company at first in Germany and then in Libya where he later enjoyed being Technical Adjutant. In 1953 and 1954 he was successively GSO 3 of 42 Infantry Division (TA), Staff Captain at HQ Salisbury Plain District, and Training Officer at the Rifle Depot in Winchester. In 1957-59 he was GSO 3 HQ North West District, Preston, and then again Staff Captain HQ Salisbury Plain District until he retired in September 1959.

In 1960 Jim and Jenefer, daughter of Brigadier E F Davies, DSO MC, late The Royal Ulster Rifles, were married and settled in Yorkshire where Jim first worked for a large mail order

company and then, more happily, helped to administer the East Pennine division of a nationwide Sheltered Housing Association.

It was in Yorkshire that Jim began his interest in narrow gauge working trains by joining local enthusiasts to visit Welsh slate mines and some small hill-side railways. In 1987, when they retired to Budleigh Salterton, he determined to have a 16 mm garden railway of his own which he and Jenefer (a landscape architect) managed to fit into their tiny back garden. The twists and turns of the track ensured that visiting trains behaved themselves by slowing down to a suitable speed. It was lovingly known as the Budleigh Bumblebahn and greatly admired by numerous visitors. Among Jim's other interests he was an avid reader of an amazing number of subjects ranging from

archaeology through history and ships of all kinds and periods. He also wrote authentic articles for modelling magazines in the UK and the United States and he exhibited his own beautiful working models.

Besides having been a good soldier and an extremely skilful model maker, Jim Slater was a friendly, amusing, colourful and erudite person, kind and generous in every way. He was always keenly interested in Gurkhas and he remained a member of the Sirmoor Club from the day he joined us. To Jenefer and their daughter, Clara, and her husband and children we send our deepest sympathy at his death.

DRW

Major Norman Turnbull RAPC (2 GR)

Norman Turnbull died at his much loved home in Spain on 29 August 2012 aged 92. Like so many officers of his generation, who were subsequently attached to the regiment, he had led a very full and varied life before joining the 1st Battalion in 1965 as Paymaster. Born in the north-east of England with strong Scottish roots, he joined the British Army before World War II, but then transferred to the Indian Army, serving in India for most of the war. He returned to the British Army at Partition and joined the Royal Army Pay Corps, serving in East Africa, Aden, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Borneo. After leaving the battalion in 1970 and at the end of his regular service, he was Paymaster with the Grenadier Guards, followed by a period as a retired officer looking after the accounts of the School of Military Survey at Hermitage.

Norman had strong beliefs and firm views about what was right and what was wrong. Integrity and trust were essential characteristics, which he expected to see in others - when they were not, he did not hide his disappointment. But any austerity in his outlook was more than balanced by a perceptive and penetrating wit and a great love for a party. There is no

one in the regiment who served with him who will not recall with great pleasure the hugely warm and generous hospitality which he and Margaret, who sadly predeceased him by 11 years, extended to us all. They were great fun to be with and were marvellous hosts. David Scotson affectionately recalls Norman's 'silver swizzle stick' which appeared to accompany him everywhere ready to mix his favourite tippie of whisky soda". As a middle-aged officer he was more of a spectator of sport than a participant. Once to his fury his OC HQ Company told him that he needed to play volley ball with his pay staff.

After 40 years' service for the Crown, the Turnbells decided to avoid British winters and move to Spain, where they lived very happily for the rest of their lives - in the case of Norman for a further 25 years, during which he made many new friends who helped him through the inevitable periods of loneliness he experienced following Margaret's death. Norman will be remembered with great affection by all who knew him, but of course especially by his five children (Rosemary, Dale, Ian, Elizabeth and Peter) and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Lieutenant Martin Stane Boswell (2 GR)

Martin Boswell, who died on the Isle of Wight on 01 September 2012 aged 86, served in the 2nd Goorkhas shortly after the Second World War. He was born on 13 December 1925 in London, where his father worked for the BBC, and he went to Bedales School, Petersfield. He had started to read Agriculture at Reading University before he enlisted in August 1944.

After training in the General Service Corps and The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment Martin went to the Officer Cadet School at Bangalore, and was gazetted to The Royal West Kent Regiment on 07 April 1946. He was immediately seconded to us and while completing the usual young officer's training in Dehra Dun, he was sent as an umpire on an All-India Combined Services Exercise at Allahabad. Later he joined the 4th Battalion in Calcutta where, during the difficult and dangerous process of splitting the sub-continent and its institutions between India and Pakistan, Hindu and Muslim, he commanded a platoon guarding the Watt Gunge area of Calcutta docks. He enjoyed playing football with his platoon there and developing their love of the game.

After leaving the Army in 1948, Martin worked in farming and was also a bargee on the Grand Union Canal delivering goods between London and Birmingham. After marrying Miss Norah Knight in 1950 they purchased a ten-acre smallholding and when it had grown to 50 acres they acquired the tenancy of Mersley Farm with 139 acres at Newchurch on the Isle of Wight. As innovators and pioneers he and Norah developed a flourishing sweetcorn business and grew garlic for which their farm and the Island became famous.

Martin had wide interests but he was particularly devoted to natural history and archaeology which included his great collection of prehistoric flint tools. He was also a keen follower of the Isle of Wight Hunt and later a member of the Isle of Wight Beagles.

We send our deep sympathy to Martin's widow, Norah, and their two sons and two daughters and their families.

DRW

Lieutenant Colonel Adrian P M Griffith (6 GR & RGR)



Adrian Griffith was commissioned into 6 GR in 1979 aged 19, fulfilling an irrepressible boyhood ambition sparked off by seeing Gurkhas for the first time at the Royal Tournament as an eight year old. From that day, as he would often cheerily admit, his future was set. The young Adrian was possessed by his dream, forever reading about Gurkhas in the books and comics he collected. He doodled Gurkhas and kukris in the margins of notes and papers, a habit he maintained throughout his life.

He led his friends in battles with wooden kukris that his father made for them. Adrian's remarkable resolution earned him an Army scholarship with the Brigade of Gurkhas when 14 years old. Finally, as a young man in 6 GR, he was rewarded for years of playing with toy Gurkhas by having real ones to command.

His fascination with the regiments, history, language and culture of the Gurkhas and Nepal spanned the rest of his life. His 33 years of service in 6 GR and RGR were dedicated to the soldiers and country of the Brigade and his fervent commitment to them lasted until his untimely death on 29 January 2012.

"Griff" to his brother officers, or "Bahun" to his soldiers (fondly nicknaming his facial features), was born on 24 November 1959, the third son of his clergyman father Michael Griffith and mother Muriel. He spent most of his childhood in Warwickshire and at 13 went to St John's School, Leatherhead in Surrey. An upbringing of courtesy, respect and tolerance marked Adrian's character. Yet his own nature and strength of personality impacted on everyone he ever met. He was full of an abounding sense of humour and warm-hearted fun that he imparted to others through a broad smile and a frequent, full and rich laugh that was recognisable as Griff from miles away.

He is widely regarded, both within the Brigade and without, as one of the most accomplished officers to have worn the cap badges of 6 GR and RGR. As a cadet at RMA Sandhurst he became a Junior Under Officer in the company commanded by Gordon Corrigan who, being from the same regiment, felt he could not nominate Griff for the Sword of Honour but was

sure he would have won it otherwise. Adrian arrived in 6 GR in Hong Kong when Christopher Bullock was CO and was sent to 'C' Company under Gopalbahadur Gurung, who forbade him from speaking English - a presage to Adrian's renowned fluency in Nepali. High esteem for his qualities pervaded his entire service from Hong Kong, Northern Ireland with 1 RGJ, Germany and Canada with 14/20 King's Hussars, Brunei, Belize, Bosnia, MoD, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, to his last posting in 2011 as Commanding Officer, Kabul Joint Support Unit, Afghanistan.

Yet it was Nepal that formed the centrepiece of Adrian's career, and the focus of his affections and attentions. He served there for a total of ten years on three tours of duty, from a 21 year old Acting Captain 2IC of the British Gurkha Centre Pokhara in 1981, to Lieutenant Colonel and Field Director of the Gurkha Welfare Scheme until 2011.

Having come top of his Gurkha Language Course, Griff embraced the opportunity to go to Nepal early in his service. His cultural understanding and linguistic skills developed significantly during his first tour under John Cross in Pokhara. He trekked for long periods, often in the monsoon, and loved being in the hills. He was forever perfecting his dialect. He continued throughout his life seeking new words to add to his encyclopaedic vocabulary. He is acknowledged as the best Gurkhali speaker of his generation, true to his belief that fluency in the language was an essential part of the bond of trust and effectiveness between British officers and Gurkhas. He only ever worked in Nepali. This skill, combined with a twinkling sense of humour that lit up Gurkhas, generated a huge amount of affection for him amongst serving and retired men and their families. He found fascination in their life and customs. He read and re-read any material he could find on Gurkhas, both regimental and cultural. Nepal was where he enjoyed being most and where his trademark laughter was most resonant, bringing smiles wherever he went.

Regimental and other duty naturally engaged him elsewhere. After 6 GR was amalgamated in 1994, Griff was proud of saying that he had served in the Regiment for the period required for a rifleman's pension. He had variously been platoon commander, IO, MTO, Ops Officer, ADC to MGBG Derek Boorman, Adjutant, company 2IC and company commander. Throughout these years he was trusted as a professional soldier by his brother officers and as an amusing and loyal friend. Griff enjoyed life, and was rewarded with heartfelt popularity. An infrequent pipe smoker and often sporting a monocle (he had perfect eyesight in one eye but not the other), one of his favourite japes as a young officer was to remove his false front teeth and smile broadly for effect, a reminder to alarmed onlookers that he had lost the originals in the infamous car accident of Christmas 1979 that put four 6 GR officers in hospital and caused him and Nick Gordon-Creed to spend six months in Headley Court.

Perhaps Griff's proudest appointment in 6 GR, and as it turned out the most propitious, was Adjutant. Under the command of John Anderson in Church Crookham, Adrian

became the longest serving Adjutant since Field Marshal the Lord Slim in 1921. Yet that is not for what his tenure of the Orderly Room is best remembered. Unbeknownst to him and unpredicted by anyone, his life was about to change inexorably, heralded by the arrival in September 1987 of a WRAC Assistant Adjutant into 6 GR. Second Lieutenant Anne Whittaker created a ripple of interest as only the third female Assistant Adjutant in the history of the Regiment. However, she caused more than a mentor's glance from the Adjutant and his usual effervescence took on a fresh air. From sharing an office they soon became inseparable outside working hours and were married on 18 February 1989 at RMA Sandhurst.

Griff attended Staff College from 1990-91, after which he was posted to Hong Kong as a company commander in 6 GR. Soon after his arrival, the Regiment was called upon at short notice to fill the post of DCOS 48 Brigade under Philip Trousdell. Although it undoubtedly interrupted Adrian's career progression he very typically put his Regiment first, forwent self-interest, and agreed to step into the job. During this period he and Anne had two daughters: first Harriet Lucy born in 1992, then Phoebe Camilla in 1993 who at the age of ten days attended the last 6 GR cap-badging ceremony in Malaya Lines - performed by her father.

From 1994, Griff served in 1 RGR as a company commander and as Battalion Second in Command. Separately, he was posted to Bosnia with the UN, served as a staff officer in Shrewsbury (which henceforward became the family home for him, Anne and the girls), and was reunited with 1 RGR as 2IC during an operational tour in Kosovo.

In 2000 he continued his service in Nepal for four years as Chief of Staff, British Gurkhas Nepal. It was a tense period in the country, with an insurgency affecting many parts. In 2003, during a trek with a BBC film crew and Michael Palin, Griff was abducted by Maoists and forcibly taken away to their sanctuary for two days. An anxious and potentially dangerous situation was defused when his captors were enchanted by Adrian's command of the language, cultural understanding of themselves, and engaging wit. They could not have taken hostage an officer more able to handle the situation or better equipped to win their acquiescence. He understood them. He articulated that the work he was engaged in, via the Gurkha Welfare Scheme, was of great benefit to them. Griff was released with no harm to him or any of his companions.

His contribution to Gurkha welfare throughout his service, most notably as Field Director of the Gurkha Welfare Scheme from 2007-2011, had great impact in Nepal. He diplomatically and skilfully steered the priorities of the Gurkha Welfare Trust towards the most effective projects. His leadership of the staff of GWS took the organisation to new heights of excellence, and won it recognition by an international consultancy as the finest NGO of its kind they had encountered. Griff was the authority and the inspiration for this success. His briefings, whether in Pokhara or at the board table of GWT trustees, were a delight for their deep knowledge, wisdom and enthusiasm.

Adrian was personally, as a family man and as a leader of men, morally very strong. Strength of character and sense of right and wrong were in his spirit. He set an example and tone of high standards, compassion, uncompromising principles and kindness. He was the quintessential gentleman officer with innate modesty, firmness and generosity. All who served with him and experienced his warmth, humour and intelligence - both his juniors in whose development he took a great interest and his seniors with whom he was always genuine - understood the abundance of his skill, decency and integrity. They knew that he was the emblematic Gurkha officer of their generation.

They also knew they could not keep up with him on a jog or on trek! He was a remarkably fit runner and a keen competitor in the Khud Race. He was an aficionado of mountains, climbed peaks and kept maps of all his treks.

He was at heart a traditionalist, respectful of history and recognising the value of honour, customs and ceremonies for upholding the fabric of a regiment, and yet he was also progressive. It is typical of Griff that he both embraced being Pipe President of I RGR and initiated the launch of a BFBS radio station, 'Kukri FM', for the benefit of families in UK. He was always on top of professional developments and was particularly mindful that the Brigade of Gurkhas is a modern organisation and needs to move forward whilst safeguarding its fundamentals.

John Cross wrote of Adrian: "He had an infectious laugh, a good sense of humour, a character that did not know wrong, a body that was ready and fit for anything – and, to cap it all, was a wonderful example of a practising Christian in the best sense." Much of Adrian's fibre emanated from his strong faith that he held dearly and never lost, and from which he derived the grace to have a keen interest in and respect for other religions.

Adrian's light, tough, athletic frame belied a big heart. It was biggest for his family. Of all his strengths, his greatest gift was as a family man. His love for Anne was the principal feature of his life following their marriage. His friends could see the delight and fun he derived from being her husband, from being loved by her, and from laughing at her repartee. As a father to Hattie and Phoebe, he was inspirational, amusing, interested in their every whim and development, loving and devoted. He conjured a collective noun for his family unit: "Griffharu". As he often said, it was the best thing the Army ever gave him.

Adrian's funeral took place on 31 May 2012 at St George's Church, Shrewsbury and was attended by his family, friends, and hundreds of officers and men of the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Jeremy Brade

Major Paul Griffin MBE (6 GR)



Paul Griffin, teacher, churchman, poet and scholar, joined 3rd Battalion 6th Gurkha Rifles shortly after its formation at Abbottabad and served with them, and as a staff officer until the cessation of hostilities. The names of Tulbahadur Pun and Michael Allmand were forever on his lips as examples to be followed.

Paul was born an only child at Chingford, Essex, in 1922. His father spent his life in a London bank, except for service in the Great War. Money was scarce, and Paul's top Scholarship to Framlingham College was a relief to the family. When the Second World War broke out, Paul, as captain of the School, volunteered in a scheme for public schoolboys to go to India and join the Army there. He was accepted and was still 18 when he embarked for Bombay. In 1941 Paul arrived with the 3/6th Gurkhas, based at Shagai Fort in the Khyber Pass; he became a Captain at 20 and learned Pushtu. His battalion spent time in Waziristan and was then selected for Wingate's Chindits in the jungles of Burma. Bouts of malaria and dysentery, coupled with his obvious ability, led him to becoming a specialist Air Staff Officer and a Major while still under 23.

On his return to the UK, he married Felicity Dobson, the sister of a Framlingham friend, Patrick (later Major-General Sir Patrick) Howard-Dobson, and went up to St Catharine's College, Cambridge, to read English Literature. With money short, life was not easy. Their daughter, Angela, was born while he was still an undergraduate, and their second child, Jonathan, at Uppingham where Paul had been appointed to sort out the teaching of English. After six years, Paul took the post of Principal of the English School in Nicosia, Cyprus, a school founded in

the belief that the Greek and Turkish communities could be brought together through education. He worked towards this end and showed great courage in walking the talk, making lasting friendships in all Cypriot communities. He was fully involved in local life and activities, including acting and reading the radio news during the Emergency under the pen name Peter Lyon. He was awarded an MBE for his contribution to education.

When independence came, having lost staff, buildings and many pupils to terrorism, Paul returned to the UK, and was appointed Headmaster of Aldenham, where he spent 13 years. Through his dedication to teaching and to insisting on the highest standards, he inspired enormous loyalty and respect among those in his charge. These were times of great social change and youthful rebellion: a challenge for a man who had experienced the order and precision of the military life during wartime. He described himself in those days as a cautious progressive, for which in retrospect many of his former pupils will surely be grateful. Not unusually, he liked to walk the dog, but did he sometimes, as a rumour had it, almost prefer dogs to people?

A new phase began with seven pleasant years starting a language school in Cambridge, before retirement to Southwold, in Suffolk. He had been writing sporadically ever since India, and won many literary competitions, contributing regularly to *The Spectator* and other periodicals. In so doing he came across a group of writers with whom he wrote a series of humorous books, including *How To Become Ridiculously Well-Read In One Evening*. After that, he published a number of volumes of his own poetry. He was awarded £5,000 for providing the winning entry in the Literary Review's National Poetry Competition with *Love in an English Garden*; and on three occasions, the last as recently as 2010, he won the Cambridge University Seatonian Prize for Religious Poetry.

Throughout his life his religious faith was deep and uncompromisingly orthodox, and was expressed in some of his most moving poems. He enjoyed preaching, first as Headmaster and then as a Reader of the Church of England, and leading services in various parishes in Suffolk. While at Aldenham, Paul had joined the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy, of which he became Treasurer (Chairman). He also devoted himself to the work of St Mary's, Huntingfield, in whose Rectory Felicity had grown up and where they were married.

To everything he did he brought a fierce intelligence; while loyal to a fault, he was always more at home as his own man than in the role of willing subordinate. In Southwold, many of the local Suffolk boys whose authenticity he relished will fondly remember him on the beach at night, with windbreak and tilly-lamp, casting his line for dabs. He died peacefully at home on 29 January 2012, five weeks short of his 90th birthday. He leaves a wife, Felicity, and two children, Angela and Jonathan.

Merrick Fall, Paul's son-in-law

Remembering the Chindits - The Late Paul Griffin remembers his journey to India and joining 3/6 GR

Paul was still eighteen when he embarked in the stuffy refrigerators of the hell-ship Highland Chieftain for Bombay. Chased in convoy all over the Atlantic, the ship took seven weeks to reach Durban, where the indignation of its cargo made itself felt, and all the cadets were transferred to a decent ship, arriving in Bombay two weeks later.

'Six months at Bangalore followed. India, a paradise to some, had not much appealed to a young suburban boy. Life, it seemed, was better in the Gurkhas. Jointly with David Butler, with whom he had travelled out, he was commissioned into the 3rd/6th Gurkhas, at Shagai Fort in the Khyber Pass, the current Adjutant being Ian Christie, and Paul's Company Commander Bobby Dales. The CO, Hubert Skone, a fine soldier with limited patience, especially with regular officers and anyone from the British Service, took to both boys, and by the time the battalion had shifted around the Frontier, from Peshawar to Landikotal, he had Paul as his Adjutant (Captain at 20) and David as Intelligence Officer. Paul was sent on courses at Saugor and told to train the battalion for modern war. He was astonishingly immature, but perhaps for a future H M C headmaster, it was not absolutely ridiculous. He also learnt Pushtu.

'This seemed a wise move when, instead of being sent to Burma, the battalion was consigned to Waziristan. However, after three months it was selected for Wingate's Chindits, potentially a suicide posting. Paul now found himself organising a jungle camp at Orchha, near Jhansi. His health and morale, at an age when he would normally be a young tearabout, was not good. He had several doses of malaria and one of jaundice, and after an arduous two-week Brigade exercise, was admitted to hospital with recurrences of both. Convalescence was lengthy, and on his return to Orchha Freddie Shaw, who was now second-in-command, had him downgraded to medical category B and sent as a G III to Wingate's Headquarters. Hubert Skone returned from leave in time to pat his protégé sympathetically.

'Chindit HQ proved a tonic: it was full of intelligent people with original ideas. Paul's medical troubles were soon in the past, and he became a specialist Air Staff Officer, helping with the fly-in of the Chindit troops for their second expedition. He went into Broadway, the jungle stronghold near Indaw, and organised the fly-out of Bernard Fergusson's 16th Brigade. He also flew out Hubert Skone, who like him had fallen foul of the medics and was returning to India. Returning to Assam in the monsoon, Paul found the Broadway water had given him amoebic dysentery. More weeks in hospital, at Shillong.

'When the Chindit operations ended, Paul (a Major while still under 23) went to be personal G II (Liaison) to General Ouvry Roberts, commanding 34 Indian Corps in the planned invasion of Malaya. The General gave him leave in UK before the operation, and he and Felicity became engaged. Mercifully the Japanese capitulated before the invasion landed in Malaya.

After three months there, Paul was repatriated via an Indian desk job and a transfer to the Suffolk Regiment.

(From Paul Griffin's unpublished account of his life "The Lost Battalion"; reproduced here with the kind permission of his family)

Paul Griffin The Lost Battalion

I thought I saw, in living truth,
The lost battalion of my youth;
I told them all the news since they
Shouldered their arms and marched away,
Until with puzzled smiles they said:
'Who is the living? Who the dead?'

I hear the lost battalion still
Deep in the Burma of my will,
Dying to save me from defeat,
Fighting to cover my retreat,
Till I, without a deal of pain,
Stand in line with them again.

The Lost Battalion is inspired by Paul Griffin's experience of 3/6 GR. It is from his anthology *Sing Jubilee* privately printed in 1996 and published here with the kind permission of his family.

Major Patrick B H Robeson (6 GR)



Strangely, perhaps, for someone who was widely known throughout the Brigade of Gurkhas and to 6th Gurkhas in particular, there is remarkably little evidence in Brigade, Regimental or Association journals of Pat's military career - but then he was a very private man. However, one thing is very clear, and that is that there is considerable evidence - not least throughout his subsequent association with the Regimental Association - that he was clearly marked out to be a first rate staff officer: in 1957, within two years of his joining the Second Battalion of the Regiment in Malaya, he was selected to act as ADC to FM Lord Harding, for the latter's visit to both Battalions in 1959 - to mark the occasion of the award of the title "Queen Elizabeth's Own" to the Regiment. Pat put dread into the hearts of potential understudies for that role by going down with flu two weeks before Harding's visit; however, much to everyone's relief, he recovered sufficiently to fulfil his duties. Not long after that event he took long leave, returning to the Battalion in the Spring of 1960, only then to be posted as ADC to Maj Gen Jim Robertson; thereafter a relationship of friendship and mutual respect developed between Pat and General Jim that lasted throughout their lives.

After two very successful years based in Aden and travelling throughout General Jim's Middle Eastern 'parish', Pat returned to the Battalion in Spring 1962 and was appointed Adjutant. But Pat was not just a staff officer: in time for the Battalion's move to Seria in Brunei in September 1964 during Confrontation, he became OC C Company - responsible, in April 1965, for a most successful ambush against Indonesian terrorists, which accounted for three enemy casualties.

In 1968 Pat met Sheila, while on leave from Kluang; the chemistry was clearly right, and they married shortly afterwards. They rejoined the Battalion in Hong Kong in 1969 and there enjoyed together some of Pat's happiest times in the army, quartered in Sek Kong, where their first two children were born. The cuts to the Brigade of Gurkhas in 1969/70 led to the departure of many British Officers, among whom Pat was one; he decided to leave the army in 1970 and to embark on a civilian career. There were many in the Regiment who, whilst respecting his choice, believe that the army consequently lost an officer, whose abilities and experience should have seen him advance to greater things.

Both Pat and Sheila had strong connections with Ireland - so it was no surprise that on leaving the army the family moved to Ireland, where Pat took on the franchise of an Irish international management and training consultancy - Tack Ireland - with offices in Dublin. Life in Ireland revolved around horses and their home outside Dublin, the extension and refurbishment of which proved him to be a master craftsman in a variety of trades. Through his father, Pat had inherited a love for music and a fine singing voice. Living in Ireland enabled him to introduce the family, particularly the young (by now expanded to include a third child) to music and more particularly to his great love, opera.

In 1983 the family moved to Jakarta, where Pat had accepted the post as Chief Executive Officer of an American publisher of educational books. His elder son, Simon, described this move as "typical of Pat's willingness to make bold decisions". It proved to be a wonderful time for them all - Pat and Sheila made friends easily and settled in quickly once again to the expatriate life - and the family have many wonderful, enduring memories and friendships from those days. Some years later they moved back to the UK, eventually settling into their much

loved family home in Westbury. Pat had set up a specialist recruitment consultancy for the NHS Primary Care Trusts, and for the Care Home groups. Pat's success in 'headhunting' senior executives did not go unnoticed and the business flourished.

The return to the UK provided Pat with the opportunity to become more closely involved with the Regimental Association; he was elected to the Committee in November 1988, eventually becoming Honorary Secretary in 1998, the post which he held until retiring in 2010. In the course of his Association Committee 'career' he had held a variety of posts, including that of Social Secretary (masterminding numerous Annual Reunions with impressive precision and attention to detail), and as Secretary of the Cuttack Legion Lunch Club. In the early 1990s Pat was elected a trustee of the Regimental Trust; it was as a trustee that he coordinated and conducted the two very successful auctions of former Mess property, which had become surplus to the needs of the Royal Gurkha Rifles following their formation in 1994. His roles within the Association and the Trust enabled him to keep closely in touch, both with his many friends and former colleagues in the Regiment, and also with Gurkhas for whom he had a lasting respect and affection.

In 2012 Pat suffered two heart attacks and the consequent problems resulted in hospitalisation in March of that year. Sadly he never recovered and passed away in hospital on 15 June aged 77 years. A Service of Thanksgiving for Pat's life was held in Tewkesbury Abbey on Thursday, 28 June at which 6GR and the wider Brigade were well represented; Sheila was supported by all their children, and grandchildren, as well as by the extended family and a large number of friends and former colleagues - including friends from all walks of life, and brother Officers from Sandhurst days. His elder son, Simon, gave a fine eulogy, which reflected his military career, and, often with humour, the several paths trodden by Pat throughout his life. The Service ended with a moving Lament beautifully played by a sole Gurkha piper at the back of the Abbey.

To Sheila and to his children, Simon, Philippa and Nick, and their respective children we extend our sincere sympathy on their loss.

Mike Channing

Lieutenant Colonel Roger C Neath OBE (6 GR)

In the darkest days of the 1939-45 War, Roger won a scholarship to Downing College Cambridge to read English, which he completed with great success. This almost certainly provided him with the intellectual rigour that so characterized his thinking processes in later life. In September 1944 he was commissioned to the Second Battalion and sailed to India where he completed the language course at Dehra Dun before returning westwards to Italy in 1945. He disembarked at Toranto and caught up with 2/6 GR a few days before the Battle of Medecina. The Second Battalion was by now at the top of its form and it must have been hard for Roger to gain a foothold in the battalion hierarchy during the short and extremely violent period leading up to the final disengagement in Italy. He remembered the period directly after the 09 May ceasefire with greater clarity, when the battalion moved to prepare a defensive position on Italy's eastern border with Slovenia. After the ferocity of the recent battle, they enjoyed contemplating their survival and he remembered basking in the warmth of the Italian orchards and the kindness and natural hospitality of the local people.

After Italy a series of troop movements brought the battalion across the world via Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Abbotabad, Secunderbad and finally to Delhi in February 1947. By this time India and the Indian Army regiments were gripped by the whole agony of Partition. During this unbelievably chaotic period Roger, now Operations Officer and Adjutant, took on a central organising role in the battalion. His huge capacity for creating order from chaos kept them as an entity; drafts of men and officers were demobilising, or transferring from the Indian Army to the British against a landscape of terrible inter-communal bloodshed. The villages and communities around their camp in Delhi at Anand Parbat were seething with violence and without much warning or rehearsal rifle companies were "pitchforked" (as the regimental newsletter

put it) into the blood-spattered confrontations, which characterized partition. Violence in Delhi and the surrounding villages continued to grow, magistrates were no longer asked to authorize the garrison to take action, rifle companies fired on rioters day after day and all that stood between the survival of the city and total anarchy was a handful of battalions.

On the final day of the British Raj 2/6 GR played a crucial role. At last light on the eve of the handover ceremony, 2/6 buglers rehearsed by Roger sounded the retreat for the last time at the Red Fort and, after it had been hauled down forever, the Union flag was "secured" by Roger for the mess where it was proudly displayed; it is now in the Gurkha Museum. At the Independence ceremony on the following day (15 August 1947), the battalion marched through huge crowds to get to the Red Fort and as the population swarmed forward to touch the Indian tricolor, the rifle companies had to grip each other's weapons to prevent the ranks from being broken apart. In his characteristic way Roger wanted very little credit for himself in the hectic day to day planning and execution of these actions, but as Adjutant he had played the key role in what was a moment of history.

In March 1948 2/6 GR embarked on the P&O Ship Strathnaver at Bombay. The battalion was once again on the move - to Singapore, to Hong Kong and finally back to Kluang in Malaya. Roger was still adjutant during this strange period of transition when the battalion was frequently quartered under canvas and dinner nights were held under rotting EPIP tentage, the officers in Canadian pattern mess kit, the mess sergeant Riluram Dogra, locally recruited during the Indian Army period, still wearing a tall turban and long frocked jacket and, as mess call sounded, Roger teaching the naya Sahibs how to tie their black ties.

Major Denys Drayton (7 GR)

Denys was born on the 26 July 1923 in Jerusalem where his father Sir Robert Drayton CMG was firstly the Solicitor General and then Recorder of The Government of The British Mandate of Palestine. He edited the three volumes of *The Law of Palestine* which to this day are referred to as Drayton's Laws. His mother Gertrude was Australian who had served as a nurse through WWI. Denys was brought up in the German Quarter of Jerusalem, had a German nanny and went to a German school.

On returning to UK Denys first went to a prep school in Weybridge and then on to Tonbridge School. There he was a member of the shooting eight and competed at Bisley. In 1940 he travelled with his mother and sisters on the RMS Strathnaver to join his father in Ceylon. They were bombed whilst in the Channel but were not hit.

He declined to go to University but elected instead to join the Indian Army. He had met a 7th Gurkha Officer in Colombo, had like him, so asked to join the 7th and was commissioned into the 2nd Battalion 7th Gurkha Rifles on the 15 March 1942. In October 1942 the 2nd Battalion was reformed after the surrender of Tobruk. (It may have helped that his father knew the Colonel, Lt Colonel Brierley).

Early in 1943 the battalion with Denys left Egypt for Palestine where until July they were the demonstration Battalion to the School of Mountain Warfare. After this the battalion was trained in opposed landings from the sea and they all enjoyed the training on the Bitter Lakes in Egypt. Denys and the Bn were then sent to Syria to assist the free French put down smuggling on the Turkish border. Training then commenced in Palestine in cooperation with tanks and artillery after which it was back to the Mountain Warfare School this time as students. However as always plans changed and the Bn was ordered in late 1943 to Italy.

It was early in February that Denys and the battalion joined 11 Brigade near Naples from where they could hear the drumming of gunfire from Cassino. On the 24th February Denys then commanding A Company was under command of The Rajputana Rifles, whilst the rest of the battalion took over a position on the Monastery ridge from the 1/9th Gurkhas. The weather was atrocious. Denys was ordered to join them via the Castle but the route up the ridge was under such heavy fire that the only other way up was to climb up the cliff. They had of course been trained in Mountain Warfare! They got up there without being seen or shot at. The question now was how to get into the Castle to help the defenders. Denys left his company strung out on the ridge and worked his way round until he found a hole in the wall. He popped in and was nearly shot by the defenders, the 1/4th Essex. Denys made contact with the Company Commander and said he was there to assist but if not needed was ordered to push on up the ridge. The Company Commander, a Regular Officer, flatly disagreed with the orders and eventually had the orders rescinded much to

Denys's relief as it would have been murder going on up the ridge with no support. While they were discussing these orders the war seemed to stop and the guns stopped firing and then a party of five German Stretcher Bearers came in through the same hole led by a Sergeant. Now Denys spoke fluent German so he talked to the Sergeant. Apparently in an attack on the Castle part of the wall had been blown down onto the defenders, some Essex men and some Indian Soldiers. Denys and the Germans disappeared through the hole to rescue those they could. Then a German Machine gunner started firing at them so they all got back inside the Castle. Denys suggested to the Sergeant that he stay and go off to a nice warm comfortable POW camp as the war was not going to be won by them, The Sergeant said 'No thank you I am a German Soldier and I have a job to do'. The Sergeant then gave Denys a cigar, saluted and left. On the night of the 25th the forward companies of the Bn were hit by a heavy mortar barrage causing communications to be wrecked and many casualties all this in blinding sleet over very rough ground, heavy with snow, mud and ice. To make matters worse no rations or ammunition were able to get to the Bn for several days as the porters were scattered by shell fire. The Bn held on until the 08 March when they were relieved.

During the period 18 to 22 March 1944 A Company was having a very exciting time amongst the ruins of Cassino Town on the slopes of Castle Hill and were ordered to hold a particular valley and stop any penetration. In this fighting A Company lost 20 men, Denys was Mentioned in Despatches, and members of the company were also awarded the MC, IDSM and the MM. The Bn was withdrawn from the line in April, but after a rest period continued to fight through Italy until September.

In October the 2/7th Gurkha Rifles with Denys still with A Company were sent with 4th Indian Division to Greece. The British were there to act as a buffer between the National Guard and ELAS the Left wing Guerrillas. No easy task and the Bn found itself in the thick of it. Denys was ordered to hold a Castle behind the town. He said 'It was ludicrous really; twenty century warfare and in Italy and Greece I find myself commanding two medieval castles'. The Bn, as part of a major attack, marched round behind the main ELAS position to cut off their retreat when attacked by the rest of the Bde from the front. It was very successful although the Bn suffered some casualties. The action took place in Klaus, the centre of one of the finest wine growing areas. Naturally the Officers and no doubt the men made the most of this opportunity, Denys among them! Denys enjoyed Greece he was away from Bn HQ and the men enjoyed chasing the guerrillas up and down the mountains. After a very good year in Greece the Bn was ordered home after New Year 1946.

In 1947 the decision was made on which Regiments were to remain with The British Army. The 2nd Bn left Ahmedabad for Madh Island near Bombay for the Opt, which was disastrous for the 2nd Bn with only some 50 men electing to remain. This

small number with its Officers, Denys included, sailed from Bombay on the RMS Strathnaver the same boat Denys had sailed on to Ceylon all those years ago.

Denys, at some point, decided to leave the Army and join the Malayan Police, he said for more pay, but even so he found himself serving alongside his old Regiment on jungle operations. He eventually became ADC to The High Commissioner Sir Henry Gurney but was fortunate to be on leave in UK when Sir Henry was ambushed and killed otherwise it might have been a very different story. Denys was married to Pauline in January 1952 whilst in UK although he had courted her in Malaya where he thought his red MG had helped!!

In 1956 with the Malayan Emergency in decline Denys decided to leave Malaya and joined the Ugandan Police. His duties took him all over the country and he stayed until

after Independence until 1964. He was for many years the squash Champion of the Ugandan Police and on one occasion Champion of Uganda. On leaving Uganda Denys worked for some of the big names of British Industry, British Aluminium and Spillers.

He eventually came to rest in Winterborne Whitechurch, and it was only when he broke his hip two years ago that he moved into a Nursing Home near his sister Diana.

The Regimental Association was very proud of Denys who was always willing to undertake any task asked of him usually with his great friend Pinky. He very loyally supported the Association at Reunions and Regimental Lunches and we will miss him a great deal.

We send our heartfelt condolences to the family.

Major Peter Roger Richards MC MBE (7 GR)

Roger was born on the 29 October 1920 in Hastings Sussex. His father was a Dental Surgeon. Roger was educated at Hurstpierpoint College, from where he won a Scholarship to study Greats at Oxford.

When war broke out in September 1939 Roger, not yet quite 19, volunteered and joined The Artist Rifles; he was placed on the Reserve. Later he was called up and joined The Royal Sussex Regiment from where he was earmarked for a commission.

He sailed to India in 1941 was commissioned from the OTC Bangalore and posted to the 3rd Bn 7th Gurkha Rifles in September 1941. He found himself commanding a company throughout the withdrawal from Burma. At the Sittang Bridge, Roger with his company was conducting a fighting withdrawal to the Bridge when they hear the most almighty bang. The Bridge had been blown with still half of 17 Division on the wrong side. Units and sub units became separated and Roger was on his own. At the age of 21 he organised his exhausted company and got them all safely across the fast flowing river some 600 yards wide without losing a man. Once across the 1st Bn and the 3rd Bn combined as the 1st Bn was only some 300 strong and the 3rd Bn 170. Barefoot and half clad the survivors made their way across open fields and along the railway line to Waw where trains met them and took to Pegu.

In June 1942 the 3rd Bn was reformed and became a Para Bn, subsequently renamed as 154 Gurkha Para Bn. Roger jumped with the combined 153 and 154 Gurkha Para Bns on to Rangoon still commanding his company. He was wounded during the operation. In 1946 the Gurkha Para Bns were disbanded and Roger took all the 7GR men to Palampur and then on to Burma to join the 1st Bn at Pynmina. In December 1946 he took over A Company from Jimmy O'Donnell and took part in ops against Burmese terrorists through 1946/47.

In January 1947 after 'The Opt' Roger took the advance party of 1/7GR to Seremban, Malaya.

Roger took part in the Malayan Emergency from 1948 to 1951 with the 1st Bn and with Ferret Force as OC B Company. It was during the period January to December 1950 in the Negri Sembilan area that Roger hunted the CTs in his area mercilessly. His citation particularly mentions the following. 'During the period Jan to Dec 1950 Richards through his hard work and fine leadership brought his company to the highest state of efficiency. From information obtained from captured CTs his area was considered to be highly dangerous for the CTs. He killed a large number showing great skill in gauging the CTs reactions and placing his troops accordingly. He showed a high degree of courage, energy and leadership. The C in C Far East Land Forces, John Harding signed off the recommendation in January 1951.

He passed his Staff College exams and went to Staff College in 1952. On completion of the course he was made BMBG from 1953 to 1955. He accompanied The Major General, The Brigade of Gurkhas to Nepal for The General's first ever report to the King. He was Awarded The Star of Nepal. He was also awarded an MBE in 1956. He then had a year back with the 1st Bn before being sent to The War Office as DAAG Manpower Planning. Roger was also asked to advise General Templar on Regimental matters. Templar was then our Colonel and it was with his help that Roger was allowed to resign against the wishes of his Commanding Officer and the MGBG. It was in 1958 that Roger took the then Golden Bowler and retired from the Army to Australia with Xenia to join her parents in Perth. Roger states that his decision to leave was based on confidential information that the Brigade was about to be disbanded! In Australia Roger set up a very successful construction company.

Roger was a very supportive Officer of the Regiment and took a keen interest in all that went on. He tried to arrange his visits to UK to coincide with our Reunions.

At his funeral his great friend summed him up as 'Roger was a man for all seasons who, I believe, could have succeeded

in any occupation to which he turned his mind. We have all lost a caring, generous and wonderful friend but we are all the better for having had the privilege of calling him our friend'

We send our heartfelt condolences to Sylvie-Anne and the family.

Major Christopher John Thorne (7 GR)

Chris was born in Trimulghery Southern India where his father worked for The Imperial Tobacco Company but was away at the time in Bombay. His mother was staying with her brother (a Mysore Lancer) when Chris was born. Chris's mother came from an old Indian Army family and she had been born in Rajputana where her father Colonel BH O'Donnell, was in the Indian Political Service. Her great uncle had been a 39th Garhwali/3rd Gurkha.

Chris was educated in Elizabeth College Guernsey and then The Royal Military College Dehra Dun. At 17 Chris joined up as a private soldier and was sent to India, for some reason not on a troop ship but on a British Steam Navigation Company liner which he found very comfortable. He was paid 1.6d a day although this was increased by Rs1 per day on board. Pte Thorne No: 14199901 was on the general service list. He remembers that at the various ports of call, Mozambique, Dar-es-Salaam and Zanzibar he was served a dish of fresh caught prawns with every beer!

Chris, the son of a Bara Sahib, found life as a private in India a very rude shock. He travelled third class and was treated like dirt by everybody. He slept on a string charpoy with mosquito net and sometimes a blanket. The food he found was unspeakable because it was cooked by fatigue parties with little or no interest in cooking. Chris was an Officer Cadet and as such found that the others made sure he and his fellow cadets were given the worst jobs, cleaning the latrines and of course peeling spuds.

Life changed for the better when he went to WOSB near Poona. Sheets on the beds, plates and bearers!! Here he was told that The Indian Military Academy produced gentlemen, Bangalore, poodle fakers and Mhow, Officers so speculation was rife as to where they would be sent. It was to be Mhow.

Mhow was based in the old Cavalry Barracks with prefabs on the perimeter. The Barracks were two storey granite blocks surrounded by verandahs, high ceilings and huge rooms. There was a great mix of cadets, Aussies, South Africans, a Mauritian, Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims and some Anglo Indians and they all mucked in together. Towards the end of his course Mhow was closed and they were sent to Bangalore where they became Gentlemen Cadets, at Mhow they had only been Officer Cadets!! Chris remembers that they were often sent to climb the rocky hills nearby where the film Passage to India was set

- he says 'I must have climbed that flaming rock far more times than Miss Whatshername, film star lady, who alleged rape!'

Chris was commissioned in February 1946 and sent to Palampur, the 7th Gurkha Rifles Regimental Centre. From there he was posted to the 2nd Battalion in Ahmedabad. He was to Command D Company. Shortly afterwards the Battalion was sent a large amount of hand grenades, including Italian and Japanese. He started off with his company practicing the throwing of these grenades when one did not go off. Of course, it was the Officer's job to take some explosive and arrange to blow it up. Chris miscalculated the length of fuse required and as he reached the trench it blew up with a whopping great explosion and he finished up with a very painful back and a torn eye lid. In fact a very small piece had pierced his eye and he eventually lost the sight in that eye. He started wearing a monocle when he needed glasses as he said he did not need spectacles.

Chris mentions that his mother's family rodded, roaded and ruled India from way back. If you look in the old Indian Army lists you will find Brocks and O'Donnell. Chris was sent off to be ADC to a local General in October 1947. Their first stop was a place called Idar. The name rang a faint bell but it was not until he wandered into the Durbar Hall, no 60 in a line up of 70, that he realised why. On the walls were portraits of King George V and Queen Mary and above them Grandpa O'Donnell. He spoke to the Maharajkumar Sahib and asked him what grandpa was doing on the wall. The MJK shot off to his father the Maharaja and His Highness came steaming down the line and barked at Chris 'Are you Colonel JB O'Donnell's grandson?' Chris replied 'Yes Sir'. 'Good God' he said 'your grandfather put my grandfather on the Throne'. Chris was moved up 68 places in the line. Word spread rapidly and old retainers came tottering up to shake the hand of the grandson of O'Donnell Sahib. Apparently the previous incumbent to the Maharaja's grandfather had been a sodomite, drunkard and notorious for all sorts of things the Victorians disapproved of.

After Independence Chris's CO received a signal asking him to send Chris to Idar to see the Maharaja. HH sent his private train which was the most luxurious railway travel Chris was ever to experience. He arrived about lunch time and was taken by the ADC into the Palace and straight into the dining hall where to his surprise around an enormous table sat several elderly gentlemen some of whom were white. They turned out to be the Diwans or Prime Ministers of all the Princely States

in Rajputana. They had a jolly good lunch; an enormous brass tray carried by four servants with different rices and brass bowls with different curries.

After lunch instead of being allowed a siesta Chris found himself taken off to The Durbar Hall where he was sat on HH's right hand. It was then explained to Chris that the Princely Rulers had heard from their contacts in Delhi that the Indian Government were going to abolish all the Princely States. HH asked Chris whether The British Government would be prepared to honour the treaties that had been signed between each State and HMG in the mid 1880s. Chris had to confess that Attlee and the Labour Government had less feeling for The Princely States than fishes in the sea and that he was perfectly certain that they had no intention of coming to their aid. At which point many of the Rulers produced yellowing pieces of parchment on which the treaties were written and signed. The treaties promised that HMG would go to their aid if ever the need arose.

Chris says 'Here was I, a 19 year old Captain, telling these old men, that for all the blood and treasure they had given to the Empire over two world wars etc it was now not going to be honoured'. I still feel demeaned by it all these many years later. They then gently said 'fine, in which case we are seriously thinking of opposing the Indian Army with our Princely forces but need a general to command them, would I please accept this position.'

'The thought of being a 19 year old Major General briefly flashed through my mind but common sense prevailed. I declined the honour with as much grace as I could muster. Although incredible to the Western mind, to the Eastern mind family background is everything. I, as the grandson of Colonel O'Donnell, was unreservedly qualified to lead their army. I was somehow regretful that I did not accept the offer it would have been interesting, I might have been shot so I probably did the right thing.'

Lieutenant Colonel Geoffrey Lloyd (7 GR)

So who was Geoffrey Lloyd - particularly in later life? First perhaps we should look at him in his natural habitat - Stoke House. This is Geoffrey Lloyd, the contented domestic wallah.

His uniform - a tea towel thrown jauntily over one shoulder, a Dyson Dustbuster in one hand ready for light Hoovering at a moment's notice. His domain - the dishwasher and the kitchen sink, the ironing board and the silver polishing kit, the cobwebbed corner and the Robbie moistened carpet. He pretended it was all a bit of a hardship - that what he did wasn't valued. But - in reality - he relished it.

Now, in part, I think this was down to his real love of orderliness. But bear in mind that this is a man who loved comedians such as Peter Sellers, Peter Cook and Spike Milligan.

Not long after Independence Chris was sent with his Company to Rajkot in Kathiwar. When he asked what he was to do there he was told run the place. On arrival he found that the police and the ICS (British) had all gone and that the area under his command was the size of France and Belgium! There was practically no outside supervision so Chris and Henry Stucke ran the show. They left the problems of difficult Station Masters to the VCOs Indradoj and Chatraman later GM in Malaya (1950-56). The Sahibs drank tea in the Station Dining room while the VCOs did their stuff. Chris mentions that 'Discreet ignorance is often a useful addition to discretion in the East' The only slight cloud on an otherwise almost blissful existence was when the India Defence Minister suddenly flew in and told them to invade Junagadh, a State with a Muslim Ruler and an 85% Hindu population. Chris explained to Krishna Menon that 7GR had been selected to join the British Army and that he did not think it would be politically acceptable to obey KM's orders as it would lead to difficulties if, a soon to be British Army Unit, were to be used in a warlike role against any part of India or Pakistan. Chris stuck to his guns and KM flew back to Delhi. A pleasant outcome of this incident was the arrival of Denys Drayton, a Major to command. Soon the remainder of 2/7GR arrived and then an Indian Brigadier.

The Battalion then left for Madh Island, the combined ops training unit, just outside Bombay before sailing for Malaya on 01 January 1948. Chris could not wait to be demobbed and get back to South Africa. He then joined up as a Colonial Police Officer in Northern Rhodesia from 1950 until its Independence. Later he qualified as a solicitor in Guildford before retiring to South Africa in 1980.

We send our most sincere condolences to Bridget and the family.

Dad loved playing this part. For me there was always a huge parallel between the long suffering Tony Hancock and the tongue in cheek, domestic martyr act that Dad so enjoyed putting on.

So, what else made him tick? Well he was always slow to complain. And he hated fuss. An obvious example was that he really didn't like receiving birthday and Christmas presents because they made him the centre of attention. And he absolutely never wanted to be the centre of attention.

As a man who didn't like fuss, he would undoubtedly publicly have said how unnecessary it was for so many people to have come from so far to be here today. Privately, he would have gladly admitted to being hugely touched by the presence of so many people who were so important to him.

Like many people of his generation, he was a very modest man and, if this leaves one regret, it is that we may not know quite as much of his story as we would now like to.

What about his humour? To quote the Colonel of the 4th Gurkha Rifles in a recent e-mail "there was an infectious enthusiasm that seeped through his twinkling eyes". He loved poking fun - very often at himself and often by his use of language.

To illustrate.....

A particularly domineering lady he met at a lunch party many years ago was swiftly renamed the Graf Spee - after the German pocket battleship of the Second World War. Loquacious female acquaintances were affectionately described as 'chattering like belt fed machine guns'. And a 15 year old James Melville-Ross - after a bout of particularly excessive clowning around - took real pride in being told by Dad that "on his day, he was incontestably the leading buffoon of his generation".

We have of course been blown away by the vast number of letters received following Dad's death. On behalf of Mum I would like to thank you all for your kind words and gestures in the last fortnight or so. I clearly can't mention everything but by way of example real joy and solace will be taken for years to come in matters such as the reminder of mackerel fishing trips in Pembrokeshire where the only animals in any real danger of losing their lives were Dad's crew as his outboard motor failed yet again.

Good also to discover that most of his time "serving in Stoke Stores" appears actually to have been put to demonstrating his prowess with a 6 foot Sumatran blowpipe.

A man who never took himself too seriously, I think.

Finally, his family apart, what was his passion? While he may have been at his absolute happiest in recent years sat in the armchair in his study explaining to a grandchild for the hundredth time the history of the leopard on the wall or repeating to another grandchild for the two hundredth time one of his many impossibly bad jokes, it is not possible to talk about Dad without talking about the Gurkhas and India.

He worked tirelessly for the Gurkha Welfare Trust in his later years and was actively involved in campaigns that raised hundreds of thousands of pounds for the charity. The GWT can have had few more willing servants in the last quarter of a century.

As well as regularly attending events in the UK, he journeyed to India repeatedly to attend reunions of the 4th Gurkha Rifles - on four of these occasions accompanied by one or more of Mum, Roddy or me. It is particularly pleasing that in the last 15 months he managed two trips out there. On the second of these trips - being the only British officer who

served in the 4th Gurkhas able to travel to that reunion - he was horrified to be given five minutes notice that he was to be interviewed on Indian national television.

He also genuinely couldn't understand why he was given the place of honour next to the Colonel of the Regiment at the formal dinner on the final night of that reunion.

What he really loved about these trips was the chance to catch up with the people of the 4th Gurkhas. It made no difference to him whether he was speaking to a retired Indian general, a new recruit, an ageing Gurkha pensioner or a serving havildar. If they loved the Regiment, that was what defined them for Dad, not their rank, colour or creed. In return his obvious love of their Regiment earned him their respect. He will definitely be missed - not just in this country - but also in Delhi and the Himalayas.

There is perhaps one Indian trip that sums Dad up rather neatly. It relates to the 4GR reunion of some five years ago. Dad succeeded in obtaining charitable funding for part of his trip by persuading a fellow 4GR officer that Dad should go as this chap's health carer (the guy was - after all - a full six month's older than Dad). I would remind you that our, no doubt highly professional carer was a man who had had heart surgery, whose knees had long since packed up, whose hips had definitely seen better days, who was largely deaf and whose memory was generally like a sieve. Somehow both patient and carer seemed to have had an enjoyable time.

Perhaps buoyed by this success, Dad decided to immediately follow this trip with a visit to an old Gurkha acquaintance in Pakistan. However this wasn't a matter of a couple of days in Lahore. This was a trip to the North West Frontier - real bandit country. Dad knew there would be a tremendous fuss (and in all probability an outright ban) as soon as he mentioned the proposed trip to Mum or any of his children. So he took the very Geoffrey Lloyd approach of jumping on a plane to Islamabad, hiring a jeep and a driver for a couple of weeks of huge fun and consulting with his family about the proposed trip shortly after returning from it.

So that's it. A warm, kind, funny gentleman who never had too high an opinion of himself but was always devoted to what was really important to him. A privilege to know and a proper example of how to live life.

I have mentioned his sense of humour and I don't think he would mind one bit me finishing with two favourites of his, from his favourite - Ronnie Barker. So, in some late news today, the toilets at Clare police station have been stolen. Police say they have nothing to go on. And on that note, it's good night from me and it's goodnight from him.

Robert Lloyd

James Harcourt Edleston (9 GR)

James (Jim) Edleston was born on 12 April 1920 in Nantwich, Cheshire and died on 21 March 2012. He was a much loved husband, father and grandfather and an accomplished architect. He gained a reasonable education at Willaston School in Nantwich and took up a place at Manchester University for architectural studies. He was, however, wrenched away from his first year to serve with the Cheshire Regiment in France and Belgium in 1939.

It only emerged to his family much later in life that he was injured after hitting a mine whilst riding a motor cycle with the Cheshire Regiment in Belgium, was evacuated to the UK and just escaped Dunkirk which occurred shortly after. After a period of convalescence, he was sent to officer training at Sandhurst where he met his cousin, Richard Edleston, who advised him of the advantages of service with the Indian Army and more particularly, with a prestigious Gurkha Regiment. His passage to India then took the usual course at that time, around the Cape of Good Hope and he arrived in Bombay in May 1942. After a course at Bangalore, he joined the 5/9th Battalion at Dehra Dun. His description of all these experiences is graphic and has been placed in the Gurkha Museum. It describes what numbers of young men had to contend with, without much guidance, often travelling and coping with a new language on their own in India.

The 5/9th Battalion was formed on 15 July 1942 to replace the 2/9th captured after fighting a vicious rear guard action against the Japanese invasion of Malaya in 1942. Whilst still in the process of formation at Dehra Dun under some very experienced pre-war officers, the Battalion was called on for internal security matters, guarding Saharanpur and Dehra Dun railway stations, patrolling the line and picketing the bridges. Jim was sent to guard Dehra Dun station with a platoon and later to Saharanpur for similar duties; a "total immersion course" in speaking gurmali and service with a Regiment of Gurkhas; "out in the blue" with only a Jemadar to interpret his hesitant few words of the new language. He also tells of being involved with Civil Administration, investigating for the District Commissioner, what had happened to a village police station. The Commissioner then required Jim to join him in making a complete tour of the District to provide an escort. He was amazed how remote the villagers were.

In October, the Battalion moved to the NW Frontier Province and Jim was given the responsibility for the rear party clearing up after the main party had left, and, as a result, was able to enjoy Christmas and the New Year at Birpur, and then to catch up with the Battalion, now at Loralai in Baluchistan. With his rear party, it was a long and tortuous journey; passing though the searing heat close to the Rajasthan desert to the snow and freezing conditions of the Frontier

The Battalion was then much involved in training exercises for the frontier, supplying drafts for the 4/9th and Morrisforce but also providing personnel over three months for the production of an Indian Army Recruitment film in which Jim was involved. He was then engaged in a number of regimental appointments, at one time in charge of HQ Company and another time as Adjutant. However, he saw that the Army were looking for Air Liaison Officers, applied and in due course was called to join the Air Liaison Training School at Peshawar.

Then followed intensive action as an Air Liaison Officer from the end of 1944 to May 1946, through to the final months of the defeat of the Japanese and the release and care of British POWs. He joined, first of all, No 103 Air Liaison Section at Imphal and then took over the liaison section of the 14th Army which had by then reached the Tamu bend on the road from Imphal to the crossing of the Chindwin River.

Air support was provided for the rapid advance to Meiktila and Mandalay by Morrisforce, under the command of Brigadier Jumbo Morris of 9th Gurkhas, which was attempting a flanking move on to Mawmye. In June, Jim was sent to Ramrie Island to relieve Captain Burge of 31 Squadron, RAF, and later was transferred to 117 Squadron which was sent back to Chittagong. Following the Japanese surrender on 15 August, in September, the unit took the British Mission and 114 Brigade to Bangkok to withdraw Prisoners of War who had been working on the Bangkok - Moulmein railway. After removing all the POWs from Indo China (Vietnam) and Siam (Thailand), 117 Squadron was then commissioned to move general supplies and equipment to Java, Sumatra and Malaya, where the 9th Gurkhas were also engaged. Just before Christmas 1945, 117 Squadron was disbanded and a month later, the Air Liaison Section too. After a brief spell in Singapore with the Allied Land Forces South East Asia, at the end of March Jim commenced his long journey home calling first at the Regimental Centre, Dehra Dun before embarking at Bombay and eventually landing at Liverpool.

He returned to study architecture at Manchester University but found it unsatisfactory and joined Warwickshire County Council and studied independently. After qualifying, he eventually founded his own architects practice where his drive, creativity, huge pride of Nantwich and willingness to challenge authority created many opportunities; the business thrived. His passion for historical buildings was also a great driving force. He was a keen follower of the Beagles in his younger days, before taking to sailing off the North Wales coast. Often outspoken, forthright and downright difficult at times, he always true to his principles.

He is survived by his wife, Jill after 56 year of loving marriage, two sons, and four grandchildren.

Bruce Roberts

Major Douglas Vaughan Arthur Craddock (9 GR)

Douglas Craddock, known as Duffy, was born in Shanghai on 05 July 1921 and died on May 13 2012, seven weeks short of his 91st birthday. His parents had lived there for many years as his father worked with Jardine Mattheson both before and after WWI. He first of all attended school in Shanghai, and was largely brought up by his Amah until he was sent to school in England with his elder sister when he was aged eight years; first of all at St Michaels at Uxbridge and then at Sherborne. He saw his parents only once in many years and forged a long and loving relationship with his sister Pam.

Although only 5'2" tall arriving at Sherborne, he played all sports with great vigour, but in rather straightened circumstances and at a disadvantage with other pupils, which all served to endue him with great personal confidence and endurance and which enabled him to endure and survive the dreadful odds of the Morrisforce Chindit operations in 1944 with the 4/9th Gurkha Rifles. He was one of the very last of the gallant four niners who played such a great part in the defeat of the Japanese threat to India in 1944.

He left school in April 1939, still only 5'2" tall and was one of the first to volunteer for the Army although at that time too young and told to come back when he was 21. He then took his first step for civilian employment with the London Trust Company and whilst there he joined Kingston rowing club and in his time coxed the Kingston second Eight at the centenary regatta at Henley. However, in due course, he was called up to serve with the Queens Royal Regiment but after training and promotion to Corporal, he applied for a Commission and entered Officer Training with a view to joining the Indian Army. He then followed the usual route at that time, around the Cape of Good Hope and to Officers' Training at Bangalore where he arrived in May 1942. After training he joined the 6th Gurkhas but in March 1943 he volunteered to join the Special Forces being trained for Chindit operations and was posted to the 4/9th Gurkha Rifles. By then he would be have had some experience of soldiering with Gurkhas and be fluent in Gurkhali.

With the 4/9th he was in the first wave flown into to Burma in March 1944 with David Anderson, Ted Russell and three Lieutenants, including Douglas, and 100 Gurkhas to create a rough airstrip at Chowringee. As has been reported before, the advance party, with enormous enthusiasm and dedication, completed the task within 24 hours using hand tools because the one glider which crashed contained the bulldozer and operator. Thus, the subsequent build-up of the full column was accomplished in record time. The landing strip had to be abandoned quickly because the Japanese soon discovered the activity and commenced bombing. The switch to Chowringhee rather than the planned Piccadilly landing project meant the whole column was on the wrong side of the Irrawaddy and the

first obstacle, a big trek away, was a tributary of the Irrawaddy, the Shweli, a fast running 350 yard wide stream which was crossed in mid-March. Then followed the months of trekking through the mountains and jungles of Burma, all accomplished by food and ammunition supply airdrops which frequently failed, and to disrupt and destroy the supply lines of the Japanese Army, all in the most arduous circumstances, where hunger, thirst, malaria, dysentery, typhoid, and other diseases and handicaps were every bit a hazard as fighting the Japanese. All the terrible conditions of these circumstances have been well documented. Put simply, of the 1,000 men who went in in March, only 100 came out without injury and illness. Douglas went in March weighing 12 stone and came out in July during the monsoon weighing only 8 stone and suffering with acute malaria, and when the column could no longer be considered a fighting force.

After recovery he returned to Britain and was posted to Germany with the 2nd Gloucester's, a part of the occupying forces but shortly after, as a 24 year old Major, he resigned and returned home to his parents in Esher and found a job with the Bank of England. Two years later he joined Commercial Union and took up a post in Calcutta, meeting his future wife on the ship to India, and spent an enjoyable four years there before returning home, marrying Stella, with whom he met and had kept in touch after meeting four years ago, and was then sent off to work at Nairobi, in Kenya where their two daughters Diana and Tessa were born.

After five years, and returning to England and qualifying as a Chartered Secretary, he joined a Merchant Bank and two sons, Anthony and David, joined the family. During his time in Merchant Banking, he instituted "factoring" and established an office in New York becoming a frequent flyer in the early days of transatlantic flying. In retirement in 1987 he acquired a house in Spain and they spent three to four months a year there but in later years settled in Petworth, close to his sister. He was a voluntary Treasurer for many years and continued his daily routine of solving crossword puzzles.

Once asked what life lessons he would pass on, he said, "Life lessons? Live it as you find it. If you want to be daring and courageous, do so. Don't always take the easy way because if I had done that, I'd have done nothing. And enjoy it." He was above all a happy and courteous man, always appreciative of help and grateful for kindness.

His dear wife Stella, predeceased him in March 2009, which distressed him, and he left four children, 11 grandchildren and lessons that will pass on through the generations.

Bruce Roberts

Charles E Ross (9 GR)

Charles Ross who served with the 9th Gurkha Rifles and who was a keen member of the Regimental Association, died in Melbourne, Australia on 7 July 2012 aged 91. He was born at home in London on 17 September 1920 to his mother Jess, and father, Alfred.

In the 1920s, his father was employed by the Canadian Government and National Railways and was transferred to Poland with his family. Charles was then eight years old and they lived in Marszarlkowski Street in the centre of Warsaw. He enjoyed the years in Poland and with a friend Reg Garrard, enjoyed exploring Warsaw as well as holidays spent in a resort town, called Zakopane at the foot of the Tatra Mountains. When the family returned to Britain, Charles completed his education at Eltham College in Kent where Eric Riddell, a Scottish athlete and gold medallist in the Paris Olympics, the inspiration for the film *Chariots of Fire*, had been a pupil.

After school, in 1937, Charles started work with Lloyds of London, at the time when war clouds were gathering, which led Charles to join Princess Louise's Kensington Regiment, a Territorial Regiment with headquarters in West London. This Regiment was raised in 1860 as 4th Middlesex Rifle Volunteer Corps, changed its name and the Colours were consecrated and presented by King Edward VII at Windsor in 1909. Princess Louise, daughter of Edward VII, gave her name to the Regiment and took a close interest in the Regiment.

The Regiment was sent to France with the British Expeditionary Force in 1940 and was part of the 51st Highland Division. They were allotted the defence of the Maginot Line in the Saar Region at St Valerie en Caux. The 51st Division became engaged in heavy fighting and had to withdraw towards Le Havre. Outnumbered 4 to 1, the Division surrendered. However, two companies of the Kensingtons managed to avoid capture and came out through Dunkirk. The first his mother knew about his safety and whereabouts was when he arrived on the doorstep.

Charles was then engaged in coastal defences but applied for a commission, elected to join the Indian Army and joined the 9th Gurkha Rifles. He was posted to join the 1st Battalion which at the end of 1944 was sent from Italy to Greece as part of the force to prevent civil unrest from the depredations of German occupation and the uprising of communism. Landing at Piraeus at the end of December, the Battalion was engaged in fierce house to house clearance throughout the town described as a nerve-wracking business and the Battalion lost 10 killed and 60 wounded. Through the rest of 1945, the Battalion continued with peacekeeping assignments but in the latter part and in the winter, in addition to peacekeeping and disarming, they gradually assumed a widening range of civic duties and assistance to the International Red Cross relief mission in the mountainous region of Macedonia where living had sunk to a brutal level as reported in the Regimental History. The Battalion was widely dispersed over the mountainous region and the Red Cross was

deeply grateful for the assistance in distributing food and other supplies to remote areas without which, the head of mission reported, it would have been impossible for us to get even a small part of our programme over in Western Macedonia.

It was at this time that Charles met his future wife, Elaine Giblin, nick named Cotchie, a Tasmanian girl and Australian Red Cross Nurse, also based in northern Greece with the United Nations relief and Rehabilitation Administration, to assist refugees.

Charles returned to India with the Battalion consisting of 8 Officers and 687 Gurkha ranks, embarking on 02 February and arriving at the Regimental Centre in Dehra Dun on 21 February 1946 after four years and four months of overseas service in the Middle East, North Africa, Italy and Greece. Charles was then released from Army Service. He always admired the Gurkhas with whom he served, their good humour and songs, their enjoyment of life and their courage.

However, back in London and returning to employment with Lloyds of London, he continued to keep in touch with Elaine who worked in Berlin in 1946 and 1947 with the Australian Military Mission until they married in 1947 and decided to emigrate to Australia. They were later joined by his only family in England.

Charles followed a number of occupations. After settling briefly in Melbourne where Marion was born, they moved to Tasmania and bought an orchard at Seven Mile Beach and later acquired further skills in dairy farming and pig husbandry in the cold wet climate of southern Tasmania where they had moved to a mixed farm on Eaglehawk Neck, on the Tasman Peninsula. Judy and Pip were born about this time in Hobart. In 1959, the family moved back to Melbourne with another career change for Charles managing production at Arthur Vale where his planning and organising skills, eye for detail and finding solutions to practical problems stood him in excellent favour.

After retirement, he developed and enjoyed other interests, his passion for woodworking, the University of the Third Age, and with Cotchie, the Australian Ballet, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, and the cinema and became a friend of the Botanic Gardens. Later, after moving to an apartment he became active in the Residents' Committee and until his final months was always thinking of solutions to problems. Traditional Gurkha songs were played at his funeral.

Charles and Cotchie were always a close team and if, on that day in 1945, there was a big day in World History, it was a much more significant one for Charles. Elaine, or Cotchie survives him as well as Marion, Judy and Pip who will greatly miss him.

Bruce Roberts

Lieutenant Colonel Laurie JV West OBE AMN PJM (9 GR)

Laurie West was born on 26 August 1914 and died at the grand age of 98 in the year 2012 at home in Australia. His father served in the Royal West Kents and in World War I, was involved in Mesopotamia and was lucky not to be captured at Kut el Amarah, a place well known to the Regiment from that time. It is believed that Laurie was the remaining British Officer who served with the 2/9th Battalion in Malaya in 1942 and, in the subsequent captivity, was among those few who survived the inhuman treatment, described as primordial bestiality in appalling circumstances of deprivation, disease and injury, in the Regiment's History Volume 2 and in Laurie's own account.

Laurie joined the 2/9th at Landikotal in March 1940 on the NW Frontier where it was engaged on Garrison duties but was preparing to move to Secundrabad to train for operations in the Western Desert. The Battalion was quite unprepared and untrained for the entirely different warfare of Malaya in August 1941 and when the Japanese opened hostilities in December. The consequences of the Allies being unprepared to defend Burma, Malaya and Singapore have been well documented but Laurie has written graphically about how it affected him. Laurie was appointed Divisional Liaison Officer with the rank of Captain reporting to the Commander of the 11th Division in Malaya, tasked to provide liaison with the battle units and the Division. He therefore saw a great deal of the action by many units over the subsequent catastrophic retreat to Singapore. He reports the many instances where but for the grace of God he survived by a hair breadth. He was very conscious of the trials of the Regiment and their part in the bleak tragedy at Slim River, but pays tribute to the Gurkhas unfailing good humour and welcome in their adversity whenever he came across them.

As has been documented, when Singapore fell to the Japanese, the British Officers were separated from all Gurkha Ranks and stripped of their ranks. On May 17th 1943, Laurie West, with 260 other officers, was forced to work, as heavy labourers, on the construction of 240 miles of railway between the Thai Ports and Lower Burma under revolting conditions and in virgin jungle for six months; they were tested to destruction, and many perished. On completion of the railway, Laurie, with other survivors, was returned to Singapore and housed in the Sime Road Camp. It was in this camp that he discovered the names of the 2/9th Gurkhas written on a wall, virtually a nominal roll, complete with army numbers and ranks, which he copied and retained. (Eventually he sent the lists to army records to provide positive confirmation of the 2/9th Gurkha Ranks entitlement to compensation.) In February 1944, the Japanese required working parties for work in the Singapore Docks. Laurie volunteered to be in charge of one as it represented an opportunity to meet Indian Army POWs since there had been no opportunity after capitulation and his knowledge of Urdu and Gurkhali would be useful. He was able to meet Jemadar Bhim Singh of the Battalion which proved an emotional occasion. They later met again in Dehra Dun and Laurie was sad to learn that Bhim Singh was subsequently killed

in the Indo-Pakistan Wars. In his role in charge of the Working Party, Laurie was able at times to divert brutal punishments by Japanese Guards by mock displays of anger and threats for transgressions.

The writer has retained a residing and clear recollection of the return of the 2/9th to Dehra Dun, under their magnificent Gurkha Officers, and what a splendid disciplined force they remained after their years in captivity and the attempts to make them break their allegiance. Laurie led a Victory Parade of all units at Dehra Dun as the only 2/9th Officer then available, but shortly after was diagnosed with amoebic dysentery and was hospitalised. He had hoped to continue with service in the 9th Gurkha Rifles but, as a result the Regiment continuing in the Indian Army, this was not possible. It is clear that he looked back to his time with the 9GR with a great deal of nostalgia, and with enormous respect and affection for the Gurkhas. His granddaughter has provided a photograph of him in hospital towards the close, wearing his 9GR Gurkha Cap and Badge. He kept in touch with a great many friends made during those desperate days in Malaya and wrote an engrossing account of his life in a book entitled *From Darjeeling to Down Under* (a journey through the years to the end of an era), which will be placed in the Gurkha Museum. It has been used extensively for the purpose of this tribute.

Laurie West was educated at St Josephs, College, Darjeeling and in 1931/32 was a Cadet with the AF (I) Battalion, Chittagong when employed there as a Marketing Assistant with the Burma Oil Company. After not being able to continue service with the 9GR in 1947, he rejoined the Company. However, after a period and on his first leave in Britain in 1949, he resigned and migrated to Australia with the help of two friends he made in Changi jail.

During the Communist Emergency in Malaya in the 1940/50s, a Home Guard was raised and ex-Army Officers were encouraged to join to help organise and train and Laurie volunteered. In 1957, after the Emergency was over and Malaya became independent, Laurie became the Senior Staff Officer to the Inspector General and was then asked to stay on to help with the forming a Territorial Army on British Lines. At the close of this service, he held the rank of Lt Col and was awarded an OBE and the Malayan award of AMN (The most Distinguished Order of the Realm) for which the citation includes "Throughout his service, in every type of position he has occupied, he has displayed ability and zeal of an outstanding quality" He returned to Australia in 1959 at the age of 45.

Laurie met his wife in 1935 at Chittagong but she went to England with her father and it was not until she returned in 1940, and after Laurie was commissioned with the Regiment, that they were married at Secundrabad in April 1941, and she became a "Bride of the Regiment". After just 5 months of marriage, they were then separated for 4½ years. Whilst he was on active service, and with no knowledge of his whereabouts,

she gave birth to their first son. Further sons followed in 1946, 1949 and 1951 and a daughter in 1957. Daphne sadly died in 1997, after 56 years of marriage, through a testing but very strong and loving marriage and the creation of the West family dynasty. Laurie sums it up in his book, "...the good Lord has favoured me, blessed as I am, with four sons and a daughter, seventeen grandchildren and three great grandchildren".

Laurie West, as the last British Officer of the 2/9th Battalion engaged in the 1940's Malayan conflict, is an outstanding example of all the British and Gurkhas who were there and whose deeds and bravery may not have been recorded. They will not be forgotten.

Jai 2/9th

Bruce Roberts, March 2013

James M Connochie (QOGLR)



James (Jim) Connochie died peacefully at home on 01 March 2011 at the age of 73 years. As a second lieutenant, he was one of the first British officers to be posted to the Gurkha ASC when it was raised in 1958. Having attended the Gurkhali language course at the Depot Brigade of Gurkhas in Sungei Patani, North Malaya, Jim was attached to 10GR at Majide Barracks, near Jahore Bharu prior to joining 30 Company Gurkha ASC forming up in Kluang, in June 1959.

Jim was a transport platoon commander, committed to training his Gurkhas in their new role. In August 1960, Jim was posted to 28 Company in Batu Pahat, Malaya and promptly departed on the Advance Party with Bill Godwin to Whitfield Barracks, Hong Kong. His first tour with the Gurkha ASC ended in October 1961.

After three months leave and whilst waiting for 30 Company to arrive in UK in 1962 to become part of 51 Infantry Brigade Group at Tidworth, Jim was attached to 14 Company RASC at Winterbourne Gunner, near Salisbury. By this time Jim had elevated his personal transport to a Minivan and was in

much demand. This continued at Tidworth, where Jim was again a platoon commander. The Company returned to Singapore in March 1964 without him. He was short-toured having less than six months of his tour remaining.

Jim passed the army flying aptitude test and went to Middle Wallop where he duly qualified as a Beaver pilot. He returned to Singapore in 1965 and joined 130 Flight RCT. Here he met with many old colleagues from the Gurkha ASC. Flying in the Far East was not without its perils and Jim admitted that he had been too near his maker on occasions, persuading him to resign his commission and to enter the church (something he had always vowed to do).

By 1972, at the age of 35, Jim was ordained and became a missionary priest in Peru for several years. Later, whilst teaching at California State University, Los Angeles he came to realise that he was unable to reconcile Christianity with his experiences, reasoning and feelings. He left the priesthood in 1979. Jim subsequently met Roberta Carradine at the postgraduate department of Durham University and they married a year later. Their only child, Jack Connochie Carradine was born in Worcestershire in 1982.

As a hands-on father and househusband Jim embraced a new simple, domestic life with his family in Worcestershire, becoming a prolific writer of poetry – he also sculpted and painted. He later became a member of the Rainbow 2000 and Unicorn camps and he and Roberta began running their own campsite on a smallholding in Carmarthenshire. With Jim's mobility steeply declining due to a bad hip, the family relocated to Bristol in 2005. There, Jim began to sing bass in three local community choirs and had a long overdue hip replacement in 2007.

Memories of Jim: playing rugby for the RASC Malaya team, beer on Kuala Lumpur railway station, nasi goreng, his scooter in Hong Kong, rugby again, bumboat adventures, Macau, the 4 Aces Night Club in Hankow Road, Kowloon and the Royal Navy, his Morris minivan in Tidworth, being an excellent best man, his total commitment to his Gurkhas and his enduring sense of adventure and fun.

MET

Lieutenant Colonel Charles William Wilson (QOGLR)



Colonel Charles Wilson, who died on the 06 September 2012 at the age of 81 years, commanded 34 Squadron GTR in the mid 1960s in Kluang, Malaysia. He was also Secretary of the Gurkha ASC/GTR Association during the 1970s, as well as being a lifelong member of the Association.

Charles William Wilson was born on 22 October 1930. On leaving school, he went into banking until called up for National Service and was commissioned into the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). On completion of his National Service in 1950 he transferred to the Territorial Army and returned to banking until the following year when he was granted a commission in the RASC.

On assuming command of 34 Company in February 1965, Confrontation with Indonesia was at its height, although the tempo of operations on the Malay Peninsula had decreased. Nevertheless, the Company continued to provide a reinforcement platoon in support of 30 and 31 Companies serving rotational tours in Borneo. During his first year in company command, the Gurkha ASC was re-designated The Gurkha Transport Regiment with companies and platoons

becoming squadrons and troops. At the same time there was a growth in regimental identity and an increasing healthy rivalry between the Squadrons, largely brought about by the formation of the Regimental Training Wing within 34 Squadron. During his time in Squadron command, the Training Wing continued to expand to meet the demands for driver and MT training from all units within the Brigade and education courses for soldiers of the Regiment.

On first joining 34 Company, it is recorded that Charles was initially reluctant to play basketball on account of his height until it was pointed out that he was in fact slightly taller than the average Gurkha soldier! However, in spite of his hesitation to play sport, the Squadron's skill at arms and sporting prowess flourished under his leadership, with notable successes in shooting, cross-country running, basketball and hockey. Towards the end of his tour major cuts to the Brigade and Regiment were announced. This was to lead to a reduction in size of the Squadron, its re-designation to 34 Training Squadron just before he handed over and its eventual disbandment and absorption into 31 Squadron as the Gurkha MT School in 1971. Charles left the Regiment on posting in August 1967; this was to be his only tour with the Regiment and Gurkha troops.

He subsequently served on the Staff at Headquarters United Kingdom Land Forces in Wilton and South East District in Aldershot until 1973 when he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and selected to command the Depot Regiment RCT based in Buller Barracks. He went on to serve at the Army School of Transport as a SOI, during which time he was the Secretary of the Regimental Association. His next appointment was Commander RCT North West District and promotion to Colonel in 1979. Command of 2 Group RCT in BAOR followed in 1981. He returned to the Army School of Mechanical Transport in 1983 as Chief Instructor of the Driver Training Wing for his final tour in the Army until retirement in 1985.

Charles retired to Dumfriesshire where he took an active interest in his church in Moniaive and was the Session Clerk for ten years. He was particularly admired and respected by the local community for his organisational skills and administrative ability and his "cheery" outlook on life. He was married to Elna, who accompanied him during his tour with the Regiment in Malaysia, who survives him.

JRC

Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Robert Price (QOGLR)



Lieutenant Colonel Bob Price, who died on 27 October 2012 at the age of 84 years, commanded 34 Company Gurkha ASC in Kluang in the early 1960s. This was during the Company's formative years as it increasingly assumed responsibility for individual MT training courses for both the Gurkha ASC and units of The Brigade of Gurkhas. He was also a lifelong member of the Regimental Association.

Bob assumed command of 34 Company fifty years ago on the 1st July 1962, shortly after the Company had taken over Balaclava Lines in Kluang from 30 Company following its departure to the United Kingdom. On completion of his language course at the Training Depot Brigade of Gurkhas, he set about adapting and expanding the driver training syllabus for Gurkha soldiers and gearing up the recently created driver training wing for the 200 Gurkha recruits that arrived later the same year. This was to be the largest recruit intake in the Regiment's history. With his technical skills and know-how, Bob laid down the foundations for the training of Gurkha drivers that were to become the cornerstone for future Gurkha MT training.

In addition to its increasing commitment to MT training for the Gurkha ASC and the wider Brigade, 34 Company provided administrative transport for the Kluang Garrison and had a platoon permanently deployed in support of Headquarters 17 Gurkha Division and the Seremban Station until 1963. Following the outbreak of the Brunei Rebellion in December 1962, the Company provided a detachment for the Force Headquarters and, as a result of follow-on operations in Borneo, commenced training of supply personnel. A platoon of the Company was also committed in support of operations with the Commonwealth Brigade against Indonesian forces that had been inserted on the Malay Peninsula. Additionally, he had to contend with an outbreak of cholera in Johore State, which restricted road movement and required strict water discipline to be adopted by the unit and its families. Bob was a serious minded and conscientious officer who established a strong rapport with the Gurkha and amused his Gurkha officers with his 'party piece' of eating raw hot chillies! In February 1965, Bob handed over command of 34 Company to Colonel Charles Wilson, who died one month before him and whose obituary also appears in this Journal. Although this was to be his only tour with both the Regiment and Gurkhas he remained extremely proud of having had the opportunity to serve with Gurkhas.

Alexander Robert Price was born on 07 February 1928 and initially served in the Territorial Army. He was granted an Emergency Commission in the RASC in 1949. Following his tour with the Gurkha ASC, Bob went to Fort Eustis on an exchange posting with the United States Army Transportation Corps. He was next posted to Headquarters Gibraltar before finally returning to the United Kingdom to serve on the staff of Headquarters Army School of Transport at Longmoor in 1970. Postings to MOD and promotion to Lieutenant Colonel followed until he retired from the Army in 1982.

Bob then had a very distinguished second career for several years as a Retired Staff Officer to successive members of the Army Council in Whitehall before eventually retiring in 1990. After leaving the Army, he lived in Alton, Hampshire with his wife Kate, who pre-deceased him in 2000. He is survived by his daughter Alex.

JRC

Honorary Major Kunjalal Moktan MBE (QOGLR)

Honorary Major Kunjalal Moktan, who died on 16 November 2012 at the age of 91 years, was the Gurkha Major of the Gurkha Army Service Corps/The Gurkha Transport Regiment for nearly five years between 1963 and 1968. He was the Regiment's second Gurkha Major and held the appointment longer than any other incumbent.

Born in 1922 in Darjeeling, he enlisted into 10th Gurkha Rifles as a Rifleman Clerk at the Ghoom Recruiting Depot. His elder brother had already joined 3rd Gurkha Rifles and when Kunjalal returned home to break the news, his Father forbade him to join! It was only after the Ghoom Recruiting Officer intervened that his Father relented to Kunjala serving in the Army.

On completion of his recruit training at Quetta (now in Pakistan), Kunjala served with the 1/10GR throughout the Burma campaign during which he was wounded. After the War, the Battalion remained in Burma on internal security duties until it was announced that it would be transferred to The British Army. Kunjalal had initially opted for service with the Indian Army but having been retained by the 1st Battalion to help with the administration, he changed his mind and accompanied it to Malaya in March 1948. On transfer to The British Army Kunjalal, was commissioned as a Lieutenant (King's Gurkha Officer) and served with the 1st Battalion for much of the next decade in the Malay Emergency. During this period he was also an MT instructor at the Royal Army Service Corps Far East Training Centre in Singapore, which clearly marked him out for future service with the Gurkha ASC when it was formed in 1958.

Captain (QGO) Kunjalal Moktan formed part of the initial Gurkha ASC cadre raised in Singapore. He was the first member

of the Gurkha ASC to attend a UK course and distinguished himself with an 'A' grading at the Army Mechanical Transport School, Bordon; reputed to have been the first 'A' grading achieved by a Gurkha on a UK course. He became the Senior QGO of 30 Company when it formed-up in August 1959 in Kluang and accompanied the Company to the UK in 1962 with other Gurkha units to form part of the Strategic Reserve.

In November 1963, Kunjalal was appointed Gurkha Major of the Gurkha ASC which at the time was dispersed worldwide with companies in the UK, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Borneo and Brunei; with at least one company deployed on operations at any one time until the end of Confrontation in 1966. Midway through his tour as Gurkha Major he faced the biggest challenge of his career following the announcement of major cuts to the Brigade of Gurkhas, to include 400 Gurkha officers and soldiers of the Regiment. Advising and guiding successive Commanders on the implementation of these cuts was to be a daunting task, particularly when set against a backdrop of a Regiment that had been in existence for less than a decade; British officers with little or no previous Gurkha service; and a Regiment scattered throughout the Far East. Circumstances demanded an intimate knowledge of the Regiment and its Gurkha affairs coupled with a balanced judgement to ensure the continuation of those standards required of and expected by units of the Brigade. Kunjalal Sahib rose to the occasion and his ceaseless example and untiring work as the vital link between the British officer and the Gurkha throughout was recognised by the award of the MBE whilst on leave pending retirement in 1969. He is remembered by the Regiment as a Gurkha Major who was a shrewd diplomat with a delightful manner and who moved with the times.

JRC

Ranjitsing Rai MBE OStJ (BMH Dharan)



Ranjitsing Rai, who died aged 84 on 20 December 2011, was the linchpin of the British Military Hospital in Dharan, Nepal for virtually all the 30 years of the hospital's life. For at least 25 of those years he was the hospital's administrative officer, in which capacity he toiled with calm efficiency on behalf of all members of staff, whether British or Nepalese. Once the Army Medical Services had left in December 1989 with the closure of Dharan cantonment as the Headquarters, British Gurkhas Nepal, Ranjit, the name by which he was known by all who knew him, continued to support the Overseas Development Agency which inherited the hospital temporarily before handing the hospital over to the Nepalese Government in early 1993.

Ranjitsing Rai was born at Baragale Kaman near Darjeeling on 01 September 1927, the eldest of 15 children. His father, Dhanraj, was the assistant manager of Teesta Valley Tea Estate.

After his education in Darjeeling was completed, Ranjit enlisted into Britain's Brigade of Gurkhas at Jalapahar in October 1948. Having completed recruit training he became a clerk in 1st/6th Gurkha Rifles. He reached the rank of Sergeant but developed pulmonary tuberculosis in the early 50s and this resulted in a medical discharge from the army in 1954.

Following treatment he applied for and was accepted as a medical assistant in Lehra, one of the Gurkha recruiting centres in northern India. In the late 50s British recruiting depots for Gurkhas were established in Paklihawa in South West Nepal and in Dharan in the East of the country. After initially working as a medical assistant in Paklihawa he transferred to the new 80 bedded British Military Hospital in Dharan as the wardmaster. His administrative skills were soon recognised and he became the hospital administrative officer in 1962, a post that he filled for the rest of the hospital's existence as a military establishment.

As the administrative officer he was primarily responsible for the smooth running of all hospital activity. Just as importantly he fulfilled the crucial role of welcoming successive military doctors, nurses and midwives as well as those from the professions allied to medicine, and introducing them to their Nepalese colleagues, many of whom had been trained in the hospital. For the majority working in a developing country was a completely new and potentially daunting experience. Many patients presented with very severe and untreated medical problems: grossly wasted children were a shock to many. Frequently patients took several days or even weeks to reach Dharan so poor were the transport facilities, which resulted in the onset of very severe complications before admission to hospital. Accepting such cases was very difficult for some staff members, yet Ranjit was able to calm the concerned, and encourage and counsel staff as appropriate to the point whereby all members of staff became accustomed to dealing with severely sick and maimed patients. As a result virtually all members of staff left BMH Dharan with great regret and yet full of memories of the rewarding experiences to which they had been exposed. Ranjit acted with compassion and sympathy for staff and patients alike. Some patients were so poor that they were given money, or where necessary, shoes or clothing funded by the welfare fund which he ran.

Like most hospitals BMH Dharan had a major incident plan. This was due to be practised in early 1986 as regrettably there was a major bus crash just a few miles away one Sunday evening, which meant that the plan was implemented for real and several casualties were received over a few hours. What became immediately obvious was that the hospital's small A & E department was too small as an ideal area for triage. The plan was subsequently amended to provide a triage area close to but outside the main hospital complex. This became of crucial importance in 1988 following a major earthquake in East Nepal with its epicentre about 50 miles away. The hospital could so easily have become inundated with casualties, but Ranjit's administrative skills were again to the fore, which resulted in a

well controlled system of admissions to the hospital for more formal assessment and treatment.

He was also a source of authoritative advice about social and welfare issues involving Gurkha ex-servicemen living in the hills, and, in this regard he offered support to young British Gurkha officers working in Dharan.

Ranjit was a mentor to all his staff, a man of infinite patience and kindness but who was never afraid to correct or even chasten those who shirked their responsibilities.

Ranjit was a fully committed Christian who stoically maintained his beliefs in a land within which many of his country folk might criticise him for his religious persuasion.

Outside the hospital he played strong supporting roles within the local community. He assisted the Sunsari district branch of the Nepal Red Cross Society in establishing an ambulance service and a blood bank.

Moreover he became the Nepali who provided long term support to Tom Hughes establishing his home for homeless boys in Dharan. Tom, a Senior NCO in the RAPC working in the Dharan Pay Office, had identified the need of assisting several boys living on the streets of the local community. At the end of his military service Tom returned to Dharan to establish the home for these boys whom he adopted. Ranjit played a key role in assisting in all the local bureaucracy to ensure the success of this humanitarian venture. Sadly Tom died suddenly in 2005 and the Thomas Cranston Hughes Trust was established with trustees in UK. Ranjit became the local advocate on behalf of the trustees and was of enormous benefit in the negotiations for the complex land transfer of Tom's house to the chosen society which will inherit the house in due course. His wise counsel was frequently sought by Tom, and subsequently, by Meharman, originally one of Tom's boys who subsequently inherited the control of the house following Tom's death.

His efforts within the Army's medical services in Nepal were recognised by the award of an MBE and appointment as a Brother of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in 1974. Whilst in Paklihawa he had received the Commander-in-Chief's testimonial.

He and his wife Doma had one son and six daughters. Their son joined the Brigade of Gurkhas and three daughters married Gurkha soldiers. Two of these daughters became nurses; the other is married to the Gurkha Area Recruiting Officer for East Nepal. Ranjit's eldest daughter runs a school in Kathmandu. One other daughter is married to an Englishman and the sixth is married to a Nepalese accountant and is living in Canada.

Guy Ratcliffe

The author is grateful to the many members of Ranjit's family and to all the former staff members of BMH Dharan and HQ British Gurkhas Nepal for their assistance in compiling this obituary.

BOOK REVIEWS

***Britain's Gurkha War: The invasion of Nepal, 1814-16* by John Pemble Frontline Books, 2008**

Ochterlony's Men

(Published in May 2009 Issue of Himal South Asian)

Thucydides begins his monumental History of the Peloponnesian War by saying that whatever the publicly declared reasons and complaints, the truest explanation was that "the growth of Athens's power and the fear this caused among the Spartans made war inevitable". Written nearly 2500 years ago, it is a fair judgement against which to assess the causes of innumerable wars since, including the one that took place between Britain and the Gorkha state of Nepal between 1814 and 1816.

In the 60-year period after 1742, when Prithvi Narayan Shah became its king, Gorkha's growth as a military and political power was phenomenal. War with China in 1792 arrested its westward expansion; but within a few weeks of Bhim Sen Thapa seizing power in Kathmandu, in 1804, the drive westward from Garhwal resumed, with even greater energy and success. Only the failure, after a three-year siege, to take Sansar Chand's massive fortress of Kangra, denied Gorkha the possibility of seizing Kashmir, the greatest prize for which it strove.

The formidably efficient Gorkha war machine, coupled with its insatiable desire for conquest, was powered by the desire for land revenue, particularly that from the fertile and productive Tarai lands over which many of the hill rajas had control. More revenue sustained a bigger army, which in turn needed more land and more conquests. These stark linkages stemmed primarily from the fact that Gorkha was a military state. The nobility made up the bulk of the army leadership, and it was their loyalty to Gorkha and to the throne that ensured the throne of the loyalty of the army. In the most literal sense, therefore, political power rested on the army, and its loyalty had to be constantly cultivated.

The East India Company, the agent of British power in India, was well aware of Gorkha's expansion from small impoverished hill state to potential rival as empire builder. The renewal of Gorkha's drive to the west in 1804 started to harden the attitude of the Company towards Gorkha as a potential impediment to its interests and profits. To quote Edward Thornton, in his 1843 *The History of the British Empire in India*, "The Goorkhas thus acquired an extent of dominion and a degree of power which, combined with the disposition they had manifested, rendered them dangerous neighbours." A decision was thus made that Gorkha needed to be put in its place, and that place was to be the hills. The plains were to be exclusively British. This would also have the advantage of permanently weakening Gorkha, by denying it the revenue from the Tarai that it needed not just for expansion but also

to maintain itself as a unitary state. This intent was embodied in a unilaterally derived Principle of Limitation, which Gorkha was 'invited' to accept. It was, in effect, an ultimatum, and its rejection in word and deed inevitably led to war.

Securing the north

John Pemble's book is a well-written and well-researched comprehensive history of the conflict. It was first published in 1971 under the title *The Invasion of Nepal: John Company at war* (using the colloquial reference to the East India Company), and this is a more accurate description of what the book is about. With the devastating analysis of the East India Company's main military force, the Bengal Army, as an instrument for waging war, military-history buffs will also relish the vivid descriptions of the many actions of the war. Particularly memorable are the scathing characterisations of the senior British commanders, most of whom were ditherers and vacillators of a high order.

The Marquis of Hastings, the newly arrived governor-general of India, was a military man of some considerable experience. He personally drew up the invasion plan, and was confident that it would lead to a quick, perhaps even bloodless, victory. The two main objectives - Kathmandu and the army of Amar Singh Thapa in the far west - were each to be attacked with two cooperating columns of troops. Some of Hastings's confidence was based on a firm belief that it would be easier to attack a mountainous country than to defend it. This gross misperception was not his only error. Just as serious was his grave underestimation of the fighting capability of the enemy, as well as an overestimation of his own forces.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the war, which began in October 1814, started badly for the Company's forces. The impetuous Rollo Gillespie, the most experienced and famous of its commanders, was killed in the first main action. The commander of the force intended to capture Kathmandu deserted. Another was paralysed into inaction, and his successor also fell into the same torpor. Only Colonel David Ochterlony, the commander of the westernmost column, in Garhwal, showed the acumen and patience to work out what was required: tactics adjusted to the terrain and full exploitation of his powerful artillery. His brilliant generalship led to the surrender of Amar Singh Thapa and his much-depleted army at the Malaun fortress on 15 May 1815, thus effectively ending the war. After delays caused by reluctance to accept all British stipulations, and a second brief phase of hostilities, which threatened Kathmandu, the Treaty of Sagauli was ratified in March 1816. This confined Nepal between

the Mechi and the Mahakali rivers. All the Tarai lands were also to be lost, but substantial tracts were eventually handed back by the British in order to achieve a secure border.

Pemble, a historian with the University of Bristol, is very fair in his judgements on the conflict. Fulsome tribute is paid to the fighting spirit of the Gorkhas. Particularly moving and memorable are his descriptions of the scene of slaughter found when the British entered the Nalapani fort, near modern-day Dehradun, where Bal Bahadur Kunwar's forces had bravely offered prolonged resistance to sustained British attacks; and the successive charges against the British guns before the Malaun fort (in present-day Himachal Pradesh), led by the aged but valiant Bhakti Thapa, in a vain attempt to save the day for Gorkha.

Two subsidiary chapters are also worth commenting on briefly. It is unfortunate that the section on the causes of the war perpetuates without question a singular British view. For Pemble, "the war was made acceptable by the need to define and secure the northern boundary of the East India Company's possessions and to vindicate the Company's *raison d'être* as a government by defending the subjects under its protection." With regards to Hastings' motives, he does write that "it would be wrong, probably, to discount entirely love of imperialism for its own sake". But the probably here is revealing, as is the acknowledgment that Hastings was delighted when the Kathmandu court reacted to his ultimatum in the way that it did.

Second, a long chapter on Himalayan trade goes into impressive detail to prove that, by 1814, trans-Himalayan trade was commercially unimportant for the Company. But while Pemble makes a persuasive case, a great deal of this chapter is taken up explaining away the evidence that the main actors on the Company's side - starting with the governor-general himself - were motivated by a view quite to the contrary.

In contrast to the attention paid to Britain's "fears" and "necessity", there is scant mention of Gorkha's equivalent concerns. Although Pemble acknowledges that the Gorkha empire would have proved viable if the war with Britain had not intervened, and that "its great strength was the army by which it had been won and by which it was held, for no rival among the Himalayan states had a force more efficient and more loyal", nowhere does he analyse the basis of that loyalty or the dynamics that drove the army on to further conquests. In this, it should be pointed out that Pemble's research was done in the 1960s. Originally, he did not therefore have the benefit of reading Ludwig F Stiller's *The Rise of the House of Gorkha*, published in 1973, many of whose ideas I have referred to earlier in this review. With its extensive references to Nepali sources, Stiller brought out, in convincing detail, the fact that the land-military nexus was fundamental to the successful growth of Gorkha.

In the event, despite the great cost, and the loss of the lands west of the Mahakali River, Nepal emerged from the war still in possession of large tracts of Tarai lands. This gave it the capacity to remain a unitary state, something that might

not have been possible if it had merely accepted the Principle of Limitation as a means of avoiding war. After the conflict, the army continued to be indulged and pampered. Indeed, it increased in size and, with the loss of revenue from conquered land, the ordinary peasant had to be squeezed, many to the point of impoverishment, to produce the money needed. Their unheard, anguished appeal for some relief was *The Silent Cry* of Stiller's 1976 book. There is a contemporary echo here, as well. The Maoist conflict ended nearly three years ago, but an untouched and bloated Nepal security sector, plus the Maoist combatants in the UN supervised cantonments, still has to be paid for. About this, few in authority seem concerned, at least so long as ever-pliant donors continue to produce the funds required to preserve the status quo.

Serving the crown

One other significant outcome of the war is briefly but accurately covered. On 14 April, as part of the actions around Malaun, Lieutenant Peter Lawtie, Ochterlony's aide-de-camp and field engineer, led a volunteer body of deserters and prisoners from the Gorkha army into action against their former masters. They immediately impressed. Even before this first use, Ochterlony had adopted them as very much his own. After the conflict, he masterminded the recruitment of some 4700 men of Gorkha's western army into British service as an irregular corps. The best estimate (from A P Coleman *A Special Corps*) is that about 1500 of these were Chhetri, Gurung and Magar soldiers from the Gorkha heartland. The rest were hillmen of Kumaon, Garhwal and Sirmur.

It is beyond the scope of this review to describe the endless twists and turns that have led to some 3400 citizens of Nepal serving under the rubric of the Brigade of Gurkhas in today's 100,000-strong British Army. But serve they do, and with great distinction, as a valued and integral part of the army. Their recent and current service in operational theatres, particularly Afghanistan, has added even greater lustre to their reputation as soldiers of the very highest quality. One of the original 40 demands of the Maoist rebels was that all recruitment of Nepalis into foreign armies must cease. But Maoist Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal (aka 'Prachanda') recently told some visiting British MPs that recruitment would in fact not be stopped. However, changes are taking place that could well revise Nepali attitudes in years to come. New terms and conditions of service introduced in 2007 put Gorkha soldiers on full British rates of pay and pensions, and gave them the right to settle in UK after discharge, a right that can lead to citizenship. This right was also extended to those who retired after 1997, the year of British withdrawal from Hong Kong. The courts are currently considering appeals to extend this right to an indeterminate number who retired before that year.

Since 2007, remittances to Nepal from serving Gurkhas have come down by 97 percent. This indicates that just about everyone now serving intends to settle in the UK. There is clearly no further need to buy land and a house for a future back in Nepal. Pensions will also be paid in UK. Thus, the direct value to Nepal of the UK's right to recruit Gurkhas will rapidly

diminish to zero. Capital flight and loss of pension revenue are already underway. Since 2004, some 6000 former Gurkhas have been granted settlement in the UK, a figure that includes 3500 who retired before 1997 and have been granted the right under existing discretionary rules.

In the UK, the extensive and sympathetic coverage that has been given to Gurkha court cases seldom refer to Nepal or its interests. It is as if Gurkhas have mysteriously materialised from a Gurkhaland, somewhere. In Kathmandu, meanwhile, the media seldom mention the trend highlighted. Justification for the huge number of young Nepalis who leave each week to search for work overseas is accepted on the grounds that Nepal gains through remittances. Yet comment is scarce on the fact that this no longer pertains to British Gurkhas, who arguably constitute Nepal's most privileged and richly rewarded

group of 'expatriate workers'. Allowing citizens of Nepal to be recruited into the British Army has traditionally been based on the principle of mutual benefit. Clearly, thought must now be given to finding new ways of making certain that this continues to be the case. It cannot become a one-way street.

All of this is a far cry from the days of Ochterlony and Lieutenant Lawtie. But they would be proud to know that the direct descendents of the Special Corps they formed remain special in every sense, and far exceed in bravery and loyalty even their lofty expectations. Long may it be so!

Reviewed by General Sir Sam Cowan

Sam Cowan is a retired British army general and former Colonel Commandant of Britain's Brigade of Gurkhas.

Gurkha Tales From Peace and War, 1945-2011

by Lieutenant Colonel J P Cross, OBE, FABI, MCIL, BA

It may be said with some authority, that John Cross' knowledge on matters Gurkha, their language, customs and history remain unsurpassed. Not only has he served some 39 years in the army, mostly with Gurkhas, but has seen much active service during the war, the Malayan Emergency and the Indonesian Confrontation in Borneo. Now retired he resides in Pokhara, Nepal, where his total association with Nepal and its Gurkhas extends to some 67 years. He has been prolific in the writing of fictional historical novels, in addition to many autobiographical publications, reviewed and published in both past 'Kukri's' and the 7 GR Regimental Association Journals.

By common cause his command of Nepali will very probably never be surpassed by any non-Gurkha. John has a penchant for both writing and recording various incidents of military interest during a remarkable career. A few may yet be awaiting publication but the majority have been published, over the past years, in the Kukri.

These include:

'Last Days of Empire,' a sad reflection of the division of the existing British/Indian army Gurkhas to the British and Indian army ORBATS

The Emergency in Malaya

The Jungle Warfare School

The Confrontation against Indonesia

For this reviewer, a highlight was the extraordinary event of the surrender of the Japanese Yamagishi Butai unit to John's battalion, I/I GR, in Cochin China, November 1945. A rare hitherto unpublished photograph recording the event is

included. The British officers are shown standing to left and right of the Union flagpole and the Gurkha officers are seated in front. The Japanese swords were surrendered to the latter, Asian to Asian, on purpose, thus making the surrender more compelling and of greater significance.

Together with the aforementioned, there are no fewer than a total of 31 separate 'mini-tales' of equal interest within 'Gurkha Tales.'

The book's foreword is written by Field Marshal Sir John Chapple and is described to perfection by the words: 'There is so much to enjoy in these Gurkha Tales, and so much to learn about these superb soldiers to whom we have been privileged to serve.'

Gurkha Tales is interesting, amusing and represents an anthology drawn from a kaleidoscope of events during John's unique military career. Highly recommended as a 'must-read' for anyone connected with, or interested in Nepal and its very special fame, the 'without-equal' Gurkha.

Reviewed by Peter Quantrell

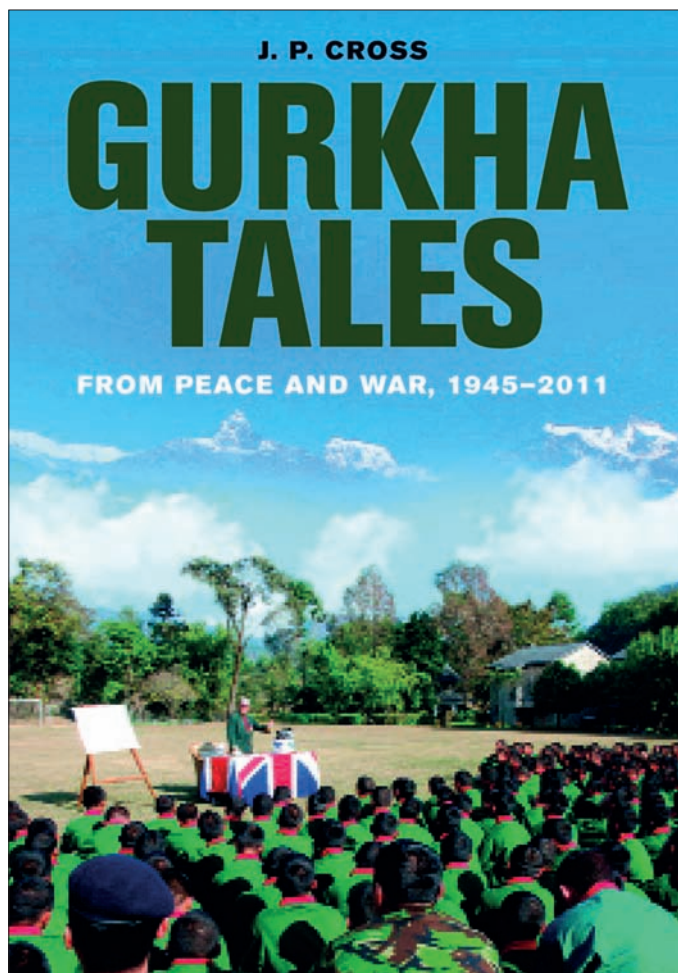
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Gurkha Tales

From Peace and War 1945-2011

J.P. Cross

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J. P. CROSS has spent 67 years among the Gurkhas, first as a serving officer and then as a resident of Nepal, being the only foreigner in the history of the country to be allowed to be both a house- and land-owner. His language ability is such that, even after 90 minutes of being interviewed on the radio, only those who recognised his voice knew he was not a Nepali.

With this unparalleled knowledge and experience, the author has produced a unique series of articles, written over the past fifty years. These cover events in his own career, including the time he found himself in command of a Japanese battalion fighting nationalist guerrillas in Indo-China in 1945, and jungle warfare in Malaya during the Emergency, as well as descriptions of the nature of the Gurkha soldier and his relationship with the British, first as part of the army of the Raj, and later in the modern British Army.

Informative, amusing and often moving, this anthology gives an insight into one of the most enduring cross-cultural relationships in British military history, one of the few surviving from the age of Empire.

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Gurkha Tales is an eclectic and fascinating collection of autobiographical stories by the legendary "JPX". Ranging from the strategic and tactical, to the whimsical and occasionally spiritual, this anthology provides unique, first-hand insights into service in the Brigade dating from the end of WW2, through Malaya, Borneo and the people's revolution in Laos. There is as much in it for Brigade and South Asia fanatics as there is for casual military historians, particularly those who have served in the Brigade and know the author, either personally, or if only by reputation. He writes in his characteristically pithy and wry style, but the detail of his experiences on operations is written with great clarity and contemporary relevance, and is both refreshing and candid. All of the stories provide a rich window into his career and the Brigade of Gurkhas. Although drawn from articles written largely for the Kukri Magazine, they are as graphic and relevant today as they were then, and in one book, allow the reader to dip in and out of the Brigade's history, and into one of the Brigade's charismatic and mercurial characters.

Reviewed by Lt Col Elton Davis (DComd/COS, HQ BGN)

The Age of Rage - Gurkhas, Gorkhas and Nepal in the post War World 1947 - 2008

by J P Cross

The people of Nepal were not immune to the upheavals caused by the 1947 partition of India.

The Age of Rage, virtually three books in one, tells firstly of a cloak and dagger operation that foils Soviet-inspired efforts to penetrate and bring about the disbandment of the Gurkhas fighting in the Malayan emergency - a cold war in a hot climate. Then after the Sino-Indian border war of 1962 - a hot war in a cold climate - the Chinese 're-educate' a group of Indian Army Gorkhas taken prisoner with a view to infiltrating them back into Nepal for an eventual rising. A daring attempt to rescue them is mounted. However this is only partially successful and those not rescued do eventually return to Nepal to wait until conditions are ripe for a people's war. Finally the British officer who took a leading part in the two earlier operations has to deal with the subsequent political jockeying of foreign intelligence services in Nepal as they try to outwit each other and take control of the country.

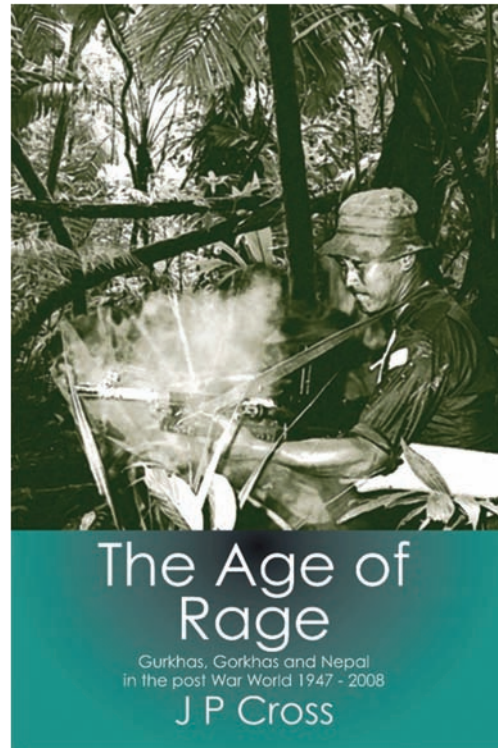
J P Cross served with the Gurkhas for all but three of his 39 years in the British army and since retirement has lived permanently in Nepal with his surrogate family. He speaks Nepali as if it were his mother tongue and is the only foreign permanent resident allowed to own land and a house. An expert on Nepalese history who has been awarded both the MBE and OBE, he is a prolific author. This is the last in this series of five historical novels.

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The Age of Rage is JPX's fifth and final historical novel on Nepal.

JPX's fertile and active mind has produced, in many ways, an astonishingly telescopic view of post-war Nepal and its Gurkhas. Backed by painstaking research, the novel dwells on the political struggle to dominate the Kingdom, intertwined with the murky world of intelligence as Soviet influence in 1947, was surpassed by Chinese influence, with both nations seeking to overthrow the existing Nepalese monarchy and establish a communist regime, hence establishing a 'Gateway to India.' The situation is aggravated by the latter, who consider Nepal to be within her 'sphere of influence.'

Central to the plot is the elimination of the post war British Gurkhas and future recruitment by means of communist subversion aimed at creating, from within, ill-discipline and mutiny that would result in the disbandment of the Brigade. This, in turn, would give the communists in post war Malaya, a realistic chance to gain control.

Thwarted by a British Gurkha officer and a small band of selected Gurkhas, the fight against communism continues, at pace, in Nepal and Tibet.

All is not fantasy, rather the acquisition of hitherto unknown source material to back the ingenious plot.

Great insight is shown describing Indian partition and the selection of regiments that were to serve with Britain. For example not many readers would be aware that future recruitment for Indian army Gorkhas was based on only 40% selection from within Nepal with 60% being Indian domiciled.

Sensitive issues include India's 1962 disastrous 'Forward policy,' caused by its interpretation and acceptance of the British created Tibetan/Indian McMahon boundary line that resulted in a dispute, followed by war, with China. Total humiliation and defeat of the Indian army by the Chinese PLA was the outcome. The 1/8th Gorkha Rifles at Chusil, western front, suffered virtual annihilation. All Gorkha wounded, on direct orders from the tactical Chinese high command, were executed. All able bodied survivors were captured and held by the Chinese in Tibet. In due course, duly 'brainwashed' with many converted to communism, these 'sleeper' prisoners found their way back to western Nepal and were the direct cause of the rise of Maoism and the fight against the monarchy that would eventually prove successful. The potential Nepalese 'People's Army' was also targeted to support Afghanistan's Pathan Taliban.

(Reviewer's note: The aforementioned paragraph is fact not fiction.)

In retaliation, the King of Nepal, backed by India, authorised overt military action against the Chinese in Tibet, all adding to the pace of the novel.

JPX, now living permanently in Pokhara, has a first-hand insight into the nation's political problems, together with a unique and intimate knowledge of Nepalese customs, culture and folk-lore, all of which are expressed in his inimitable style in the text.

Maps, character references together with detailed primary source notes to support the text are added for ease of reading.

For those interested Nepal, its politics and the indomitable Gurkhas, the book is an excellent yarn and a 'must read.' A remarkable literary work from JPX, now in his 88th year.

JPX's first four novels, prior to his final novel reviewed above are:

- 1479-1559 The Throne of Stone (Published in 2000.)
- 1746-1815 The Restless Quest (Published in 2010.)
- 1819-1857/8 The Crown of Renown (Published in 2009.)
- 1857-1947 The Fame of the Name (Published in 2011.)
- 1947-2008 The Age of Rage (Due for publication 2013.)

Reviewed by Peter Quanttrill

"'The Age of Rage' brings to an end a series of excellent historical novels, covering Nepal's internal struggles and its interaction with (principally) the United Kingdom and British India and then India from 1479 until 2008. Reflecting John Cross' intimate knowledge of Nepal and, indeed, the Brigade of Gurkhas, the book has an authenticity and believability which makes it immensely readable. Aficionados of Nepal and the Brigade will recognise the three major strands that run through the book - a book, which it has transpired, that is a cracking good read."

**Reviewed by Colonel Mark Dowdle
Former Commander BGN and Defence Attaché Nepal**

Operation Four Rings by Lt Col (Retd) JP Cross OBE

(This book is only available by contacting JP Cross via e-mail: jpxpkr@wlink.com.np. Cost £12 (incl P&P)).

“I read the original ‘Operation Four Rings’ some years ago and the re-written tale - much the same as a fine wine - has improved with age and a masterly touch on the tiller. John Cross’ wealth of experience - not least his highly successful command of the Jungle Warfare School and his time as the DA in Laos - have added a ring of authenticity to this intriguing story which engages the reader to the extent that this becomes one of those sought after books that, despite the hour, is very hard to put down! This book is believable, absorbing and, above all, a cracking good read”.

***Reviewed by Colonel Mark Dowdle
Former Commander BGN and Defence Attaché Nepal
(1998 - 2001)***

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