

WHEN YOU GO HOME



The newsletter of The Kohima Educational Trust

15th EDITION

The Gordon Graham Prize for Naga Literature.

We are delighted to announce the launch of the inaugural Gordon Graham Prize for Naga Literature.

This was the last project which Gordon worked on before his death in 2015, and it is thanks to Charles Chasie, our President of KES, that this idea is now being made a reality.

Gordon was always interested in the intellectual health of the Naga people, and was sad that there was not more in the way of Naga literature. Nagas have always been a people with an oral tradition and history, the combination of that and a lack of widespread education and decades of conflict

have left the Naga world barren in the area of literature.

The prize is being launched to promote good writing, and to raise the profiles of Naga writers. The award is aimed at recognising and rewarding the knowledge-keepers and idea-givers of Naga society and is intended to encourage reading and writing within the Naga community.

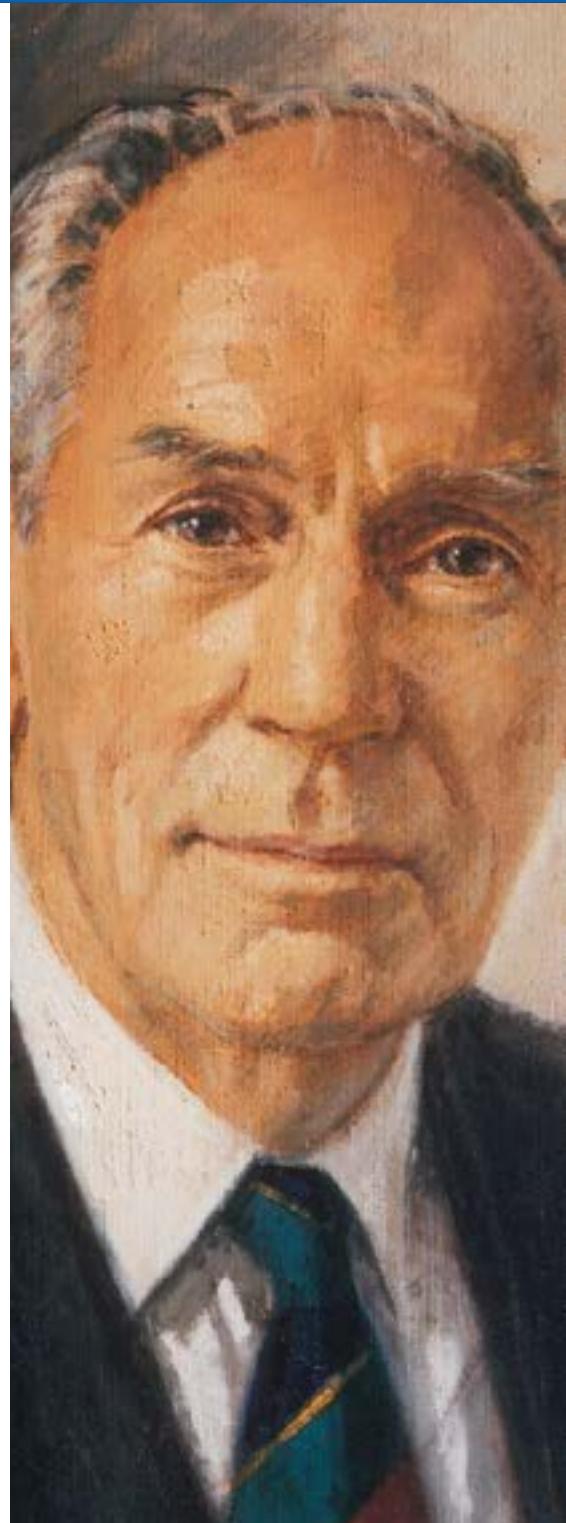
We are inviting entries from Nagas wherever they may live in the world, the only proviso being that their book should be published in the English language. In this inaugural year, there is no time limit on when the book was published but future awards will be given to books published in the year of the award. This will become an annual feature to promote Naga writers and their works;

There will be two prizes, one for fiction and one for non-fiction and we are hoping to have announced a shortlist by the beginning of December 2018. Members of KES and KET will be deciding the shortlist, after which the shortlisted books will be assessed by three eminent judges in Nagaland all of whom will be well-known authors, publishers, media figures and intellectuals. They will decide on the overall winners.

We plan to announce the winners during the 75th Anniversary events in Kohima in April 2019.



Charles Chasie
KES President



Gordon Graham

75TH ANNIVERSARY PLANS

2019 is the 75th Anniversary of the battle of Kohima and KET and KES are planning a variety of events which we hope that many of you will be able to attend.

In Kohima, events will take place from Thursday 4th April to Wednesday 10th April, beginning with a commemoration service to mark the 75th Anniversary of the start of the siege and subsequent battle.

During the following days we will be holding our annual Scholarship awards; presenting the prizes to the two winners of the Gordon Graham Naga Prize for Literature; and thanks to the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Servicemens' League we will be able to present replicas of long-lost gallantry medals to the descendants of Naga veteran soldiers who fought alongside the British and Commonwealth soldiers.

It promises to be a packed week with much to look forward to. In the UK we are planning our annual Kohima Memorial Service in York which will be held on Thursday 4th July.

The event will be bigger than ever, and in anticipation of many more of you wishing to attend we have booked the Assembly Rooms in York for the occasion. This is a short walk from the Dean's garden where the service will be held as usual - our thanks as always to the Dean of York Minster, for allowing us to use this fitting and beautiful location. We will also be hosting a dinner on the evening prior to the service. Details of all the events and how to apply for tickets will be sent to you in March. We look forward to welcoming you.

We are also planning to have events at the York Festival of Ideas in June and will be holding a small exhibition at SOAS, the home of the Burma Campaign Memorial Library, in April/May.

If you would like to know more about attending Kohima for the 75th, please contact Bob Cook at kohimamuseum@yahoo.co.uk. For information on all the events please contact sylvia@kohimaeducationaltrust.org



SOLDIER POETS OF THE BRITISH 2ND INFANTRY DIVISION

The Second Division Museum & Memorial Trust is to publish a book of poems, composed for the most part by soldiers of the 2nd Division, whose greatest achievement was to overcome the onslaught of the Japanese Imperial Army at Kohima in 1944, thereby thwarting the Japanese ambition of invading India.. The poems themselves have been donated directly to the Kohima Museum by the veterans and their families, or have been discovered amongst the many items presented to the museum over the years.

The poems reflect the feelings of the soldiers after the battles as they tried to come to terms with the slaughter, chaos and mayhem that ensued after the hand-to-hand fighting - the kind of savage fighting that was a common aspect of combat against the ferocious Japanese soldier.

Some poems have been written by young men who died in the service of their country so far from home.

Young men whose remains lie forever in a foreign land, and who are remembered with honour in perpetuity.

Other poems have been written by old men who survived the maelstrom of war and who took up their pens to try to clear their minds of the memories that flood back in their twilight years. We remember that they, too, were young men once.

While not all of the poems might be regarded as works of great literary merit, they were nevertheless written with true depth of feeling by the young men in 1944, or by the old some 50 - 60 years later.

They describe often with humour, but mostly with sadness, just what they went through in the humid dense jungles of India and Burma from 1942 – 1945.

With a foreword by HRH Prince Andrew, it will be published in November this year at a price of £14.99 + P&P. Orders of 10 or more copies are just £10.00 + P&P, with all proceeds going to the upkeep and maintenance of this small museum - the only museum in the UK that focuses entirely on the Burma Campaign of WW2.

To reserve a copy of the book, please email kohimamuseum@yahoo.co.uk with your name, address and contact telephone number.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

Two separate award ceremonies were held this year, the first in March when we awarded 205 scholarships to students in years 8 to 10.

KET Trustee Bob Cook attended the ceremony and handed out the scholarship bursaries. 85 of these scholarships were brand new this year and awarded to students in year 8. This is the highest number of new scholars awarded for the first time.

In April, the second award ceremony welcomed all those students in years 11 and 12 and were given their bursaries for the next year of their education. 38 students have passed out of year 10 in our programme and will continue through to years 11 and 12.

We have been very moved by many of the letters received from scholars this year.



"thank you for this wonderful opportunity.....I promised that I will work harder with my studies and become a successful person in the future and help the students like you are doing"



"it is an honour and a privilege to be a part of this family, thank you for letting me be a part of it"

The Scholarship programme - whereby scholarships are donated by KET supporters in memory of a particular person - began in 2007, since when we have awarded 689

scholarships. Our aim in the 75th Anniversary year is to reach 750 scholarships.

On the 19th October we awarded the scholarships to the students going on into years 11 and 12. Thirty four students attended the meeting, where our Chairman of KES, Dr P Ngully congratulated them on their achievement in passing out matriculation. He warmly welcomed all the parents, one uncle stood to thank KES for the three years of scholarship which had helped his nephew abundantly, having lost his parents at a young age, and was honoured that he would receive a further two year scholarship.

There will be a gathering of all the alumni on 18th December.

KOHIMA DAY 2018

We were delighted to welcome 220 people to our annual event at York Minster in July this year. Once again the weather was fantastic, if a little too warm, but thanks to the thoughtfulness of GSM Kiernan, chilled water bottles were on hand for all.

As always, we are indebted to 2nd Signal Regiment for hosting us all on this special day. We are very grateful to them for their continuing support, with a special thanks as ever to GSM Brian Kiernan for helping to make the day so memorable.

We were especially pleased to welcome many new faces in addition to all of you who attend every year. It was a very special day: six veterans laid wreaths, and the readings were beautifully given by descendants of veterans of the battle. We were also very pleased to welcome five serving members of 1PWRR, two of whom travelled from Germany to attend the event. 1PWRR were there to represent the Royal West Kents as their antecedents.

Please do join us and bring your friends to next year's very special 75th Anniversary event. We look forward to welcoming you all.

FROM THE SCHOLARS

"I have done better than last year.....this is all because of your grace and support.....you have reduced my parents' financial burden"

"....a life saving opportunity for me"

"Being a science student is not an easy task....but through your help I was able to shape my future. KET sponsors urged me to do better in life.....this is my greatest challenge..."

"Words cannot say how thankful I am to the sponsors. I hope one day I will become someone like you and do the same for others like you do for me"

"it is the greatest opportunity... to write this letter to thank you for what you have done for me.....how can I and my parents forget your braveness and kindness for what you have done"

"I remember KET in my prayers. I am so grateful to KET "



Six veterans enjoyed the sunshine in York this year after laying wreaths at the service at the Minster. John Giddings, Roy Welland, Ron Davis, Edwin Benjamin, Dennis Joseph Durkin and Richard Day are seated here along with serving personnel of 1Princess of Wales Royal Regiment, 2nd Signal Regiment and York Garrison.

NEWS IN BRIEF

LILY DAS

We are very sad to announce that Lily Das died this year after a very long battle with cancer. Lily had been a Trustee of KET since the beginning and was an invaluable source of knowledge for the Trustees, having been raised in Kohima as a child. We shall miss her very much. She is survived by her husband Smo and their two children Leiba and Mo.

NEW TRUSTEE

Following the resignation of our treasurer this year, we are delighted to announce that Andrew Hunter has joined as both a Trustee and our Treasurer. Andrew is the son of Colin Hunter, whom historians of the battle of Kohima will recognise as the CO of D Company Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders who gained that all important foothold on Hill 5120. Andrew will bring his years of experience in the financial sector to bear and we are very pleased to have him on board.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are delighted to say that we will soon have a brand new website which we hope you will enjoy and find a useful source of information. Together with our very active facebook page and twitter account we are endeavouring to reach as many people as possible.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Once again, we had a place in the Prudential London-Surrey 100 bike ride and Charles Barclay took to his saddle in aid of KET once more. But this time he was on a tandem riding in front of Haren Thillainathan who completed the ride despite the fact that he is blind. Our congratulations to them both and our huge thanks to them for raising over £2500 for KET. If anyone is interested in taking the place in next years event, please let Sylvia know.



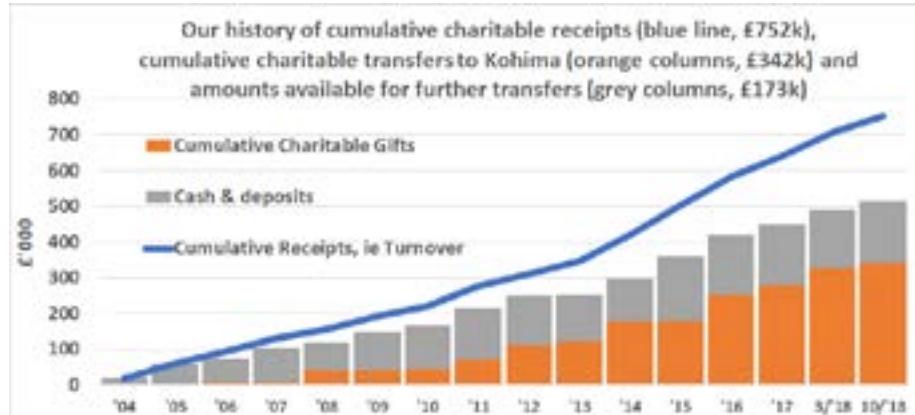
Charles Barclay and Haren Thillainathan.

FINANCIAL

KET was set up by means of a Trust Deed in the spring of 2003, as the 60th anniversary of the battle approached, in part taking advantage of the contacts maintained through the post war Veterans' Dinner Club. Now, as we approach the 75th anniversary, it is rewarding to see how much has been achieved.

In fifteen years, supporters of the Trust have generously just topped three quarters of a million pounds in accumulated donations. After deducting all costs of operating, two thirds of that, ie half a million pounds, has either been transferred to India for educational causes in Kohima or is ready to be allocated to specific needs as they are identified, as the chart shows.

Increasingly, KET's transfers to India include the sponsorship of scholarships which, by their nature, create an ongoing need for continuity and expansion. Thus, we hope that the 75th anniversary will give a boost to our fund raising and enable us to move that £500,000 of net monies for Kohima so far, towards an appropriate £750,000 of accumulated funds for the Nagas, if not beyond.



Printed and published by the Kohima Educational Trust, a registered charity (No 1102045) devoted to helping the people of Nagaland through educational activities.

Communications and donations to Sylvia May, Chief Executive KET, The Thatched Cottage, Newbury Road, East Hendred, Oxon OX12 8LG

Tel: 07990 887287 Email: sylvia@kohimaeducationaltrust.org

The KET policy on Data Protection can be found on the website. For further information about the many KES/KET activities in Nagaland in operation and planned, please visit:

www.kohimaeducationaltrust.net
www.facebook.com/KohimaEducationalTrust
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