

WHEN YOU GO HOME



The newsletter of the Kohima Educational Trust

NOVEMBER 2021 18th EDITION



Above: the Kohima War Cemetery, the scene of the siege in 1944, lies in the middle of what is now a bustling town.

NEWS FROM NAGALAND

After a year of almost dormant life during 2020, caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, we seem to be slowly returning to a form of "learning to live with the pandemic." As has frequently been said, "Covid-19 has made some of us "anti-social" in our behaviours, if not in our attitudes." This is especially so in a country like India where the evil practices of "untouchability" are well known. Covid-19 Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) like "social distancing" tended to stir up old memories, particularly in the rest of India. And for a community-based society like the Naga people, these procedures tended to cause major disruptions in the daily lives of the people.

As the pandemic raged during 2020 - particularly following the emergence of the Delta variant - and the SOPs curtailed, even prohibited, travel and the assembly of people, almost all activities came to a stop as the focus for everyone became all about how to overcome and survive the pandemic. Overall, the Covid-19 situation in North East India remained much better than across the rest of the country. Much of the time, Nagaland stayed in the Green Zone but even here, many lost their lives. The situation in Nagaland is now much improved, with a high percentage of the population vaccinated, particularly with the Covishield (Astra Zeneca). And with prohibitions removed, most activities are now returning to normal. Churches are back to full capacity attendance and, except for the primary schools sector and some private institutions, all educational institutions are holding offline regular classes again.

The Naga Peace Talks have picked up again, after a gap of about

two years. All political parties in Nagaland have also come together and formed an opposition-less United Democratic Alliance (UDA) Government in order to facilitate the Peace Talks by bringing together the various factions of the Naga National Political Groups and the Government of India. And the Naga civil society groups have been pressing for early settlement of the Naga Political Issue. So at the moment, all eyes have been turned to Delhi where the groups are congregated.

Meanwhile, with the improvement of the Covid-19 situation in 2021, we at the KET/KES have re-started most of our activities. But like last year, we have had to send the scholarships to the bank accounts of the scholars, rather than have a ceremonial presentation. The KES manager, Mhasisalie Solo, spent several months working extremely hard to ensure that the money reached the children for whom it was intended. (See article on page 3)

The fifth Mind Your Health programme took place in the first week of November. We felt it would be better to hold it again in Kiphire district (near the Myanmarese border) in order to consolidate the process of reconciliation among four Naga tribes whose members attended the programme last year. (Read more on page 2)

After a gap of one year, we have re-launched the Gordon Graham Prize for Naga Literature (GGPNL) for 2021. The response this year has seen a good increase in participation. This year too, we have added several activities around the GGPNL and broadened the audience participation. (Read more on page 4).

KES President Charles Chasie

War | Memory | Gratitude

MIND YOUR HEALTH WORKSHOPS



The fifth Mind Your Health programme (devised and conducted by Dr Phyobemo Ngully, Chairman of KES) was held on 2nd-6th November at Arehintre Thuyo, Kiphire district, for the male church leaders from this remote area of Nagaland. It was held at the request of the church leaders – in total 25 attended the workshop from 25 different villages. The Mind Your Health programme is based on the principle that 'prevention is better than cure' and was taught using SMART objectives. The aim is to teach church leaders the basics of good health and healthy living. They are made aware how the various systems in the body function to keep them hale and hearty. The programme focuses on recognising commonly prevailing illnesses and diseases. The goal is for attendees to be able to help needy persons access the right medical treatment, and at the earliest possible opportunity. The workshop was conducted using the adult learning method in an interactive and participatory mode. The programme was spread over four days, encouraging discussion and interaction. Challenging traditional ideas and encouraging acceptance of new thoughts, Dr Ngully included a number of two-hour sessions on the basic functions of the human body: digestive, excretory and circulatory systems. This was followed by respiratory, skeletal, muscular and dermal systems and finally the nervous and reproductive systems.



Day three included discussions on general and mental health issues. The medical kits were handed out on day four, which was then devoted to learning about their contents, their usage and practice sessions. Each kit contains a Digital Blood Pressure Monitor, an Accu-Chek Digital Monitor for screening blood sugar and diabetes, a Digital Thermometer and a Weighing Machine. These kits cost £108 and are given to every attendee of the course to take back to their village. Each attendee is also given a KET/KES certificate confirming them as Wellness Ambassadors.



SCHOLARSHIPS 2021

Even though Covid-19 restrictions meant that we were unable to hold our usual awards ceremony, we are delighted to confirm that 399 scholarships were handed out over the summer months thanks to the generosity of our supporters.

92 of these students were receiving their scholarship for the first time as they entered year 8, whilst 137 and 136 scholars went on to years 9 and 10 respectively. 35 students are being sponsored in their further education in years 11 and 12.

In January each year our sister organisation KES reaches out to schools and churches inviting applications for our scholarship programme, with the intention of offering scholarships to children entering year 8 who otherwise may struggle to continue with their studies. Once the applications are in, KES assesses each application and awards the scholarships to those most in need. Last year we had over 750 applications and thanks to the generosity of our supporters we were able to award 92 new scholarships. The money donated pays for entrance fees, annual school fees, uniforms and in some cases books. This year alone we have scholarship students in 56 different schools across Nagaland all of which have different pricing structures so our participation will vary from school to school.



The educational situation over the last year in Nagaland has not been easy. As already reported, all schools were closed in March 2020 and many are only now reopening. For the last year the children have had to study online either from a mobile phone or from the radio where some classes have been broadcast. Families have scrambled to buy phones and most will only have one phone per household where several children will be competing for time. In addition, the mobile phone and internet service is not reliable in the more remote villages in Nagaland so attendance has been difficult for many.

Classes for years 8 to 12 resumed this September when children returned to school, albeit on alternate days to alleviate crowding. The University has also reopened but the kindergartens and primary schools remain closed at the time of writing.

We are in the process of writing individually to all of our supporters who have sponsored a child, despite not having been able to receive any letters and photographs from the children themselves. We know how important these students' letters are to everyone so will be doing our utmost to resume normal service next year.

We have set the date for next year's scholarship awards which are now scheduled to be held on Friday 25 March 2022. We hope very much that all the children and their families will once again congregate and we will be able to bring you their news first hand.

If you are interested in sponsoring a child and would like to know more, please visit www.kohimaeducationaltrust.net or write directly to Sylvia at sylvia@kohimaeducationaltrust.org who will be pleased to send more information. Scholarships cost £125 per annum and we ask for a minimum of three years to be covered.



Above photographs are courtesy of the Head Administrator of Northfields School in Kohima attended by some of the scholarship students.

GORDON GRAHAM PRIZE FOR NAGA LITERATURE 2021

After a gap of one year, we have re-launched the Gordon Graham Prize for Naga Literature (GGPNL) 2021, and are delighted to see another increase in submissions. This year too, we have added several activities around the GGPNL, and broadened the participation of people with all sorts of expertise.

There are ten shortlisted titles across a wide range of topics and subjects. All are of an extremely high standard. Four novels will compete for the Fiction Award, while the judges will be hard-pressed to decide between the six non-fiction shortlisted titles. The full list can be viewed on our website www.kohimaeducationaltrust.net/news-and-events

There is a week's programme planned starting on 27th November when there will be an interactive session with the GGPNL independent judges and Naga scholars at the North East Christian University (NECU) in Dimapur. They will speak on different topics but broadly on the theme of policy-making in North East India. Participation from four universities and other educational institutions are expected.

The programme continues on 29th November, when there will be book exhibitions and the sale of Naga authors' books at Hotel Japfū, Kohima, with participation of publishing houses, book shops and self-published books as well as participants of the GGPNL, past and present. Simultaneously, there will be a book reading session for Naga authors and GGPNL participants, assisted by well-known Naga authors.

Among the activities we have are an essay competition which is divided into two categories (see below for further detail). This is all part of the policy of trying to encourage the writing abilities of young Naga talents. The prizes will be awarded to the winners during the GGPNL award week in last week of November. They will also get a chance to interact with senior writers and authors.

A LITERATURE AWARD TO STAND OUT FROM THE REST

Our KES President, Charles Chasie, was one of five Nagaland Governor's Award winners, invited to meet with the Vice President of India, Mr M. Venkaiah Naidu, during this recent visit to Nagaland in October. The Governor's Award for Distinction in the field of Arts, Music and Literature was instituted in 2003 to become an annual State event of Recognition to be conferred on eminent practitioners, teachers, or promoters of Art, Music and Literature. Between two and six such awards are given out annually on Indian Independence Day (15th August) each year. In 2019, our very own President, Charles Chasie, was one of two to receive this honour.



Above: Charles Chasie presents Vice President Venkaiah Naidu with a copy of his book, *The Naga Imbroglio*, copies of which may be purchased from our website. Left: Governor Dr Jagdish Mukhi.

There will also be other academic sessions relevant to Nagaland and Naga society, interactions between essay competitors and senior authors, as well as interviews with judges, authors and the media. There will also be participation by school children and the Music Academy in Kohima.

This year we have decided to have our own full prize-giving ceremony so that we can give complete focus to the GGPNL and the participants, with the prize winners also giving their acceptance speeches and with the media in full attendance. The award ceremony on 1st December will be the culmination of all these other programmes, and we hope that the GGPNL will one day become the event of the year in the literary calendar of Nagaland.



Above: 2019 Fiction category winner Dr Neikehienuo Mepfhu-o receiving her prize from Nagaland Chief Minister Shri Neiphiu Rio.

ESSAY COMPETITION

"Verbavolant, scriptamanent" a Latin proverb meaning "spoken words fly away, written words remain" which captures perfectly the essence of the essay writing competition.

Traditionally, Nagaland is an oral society and this competition is to encourage Nagas to write their stories and that of their communities. The written word amongst Nagas was introduced in the 1880s with the arrival of the missionaries. "Morungs", the Naga village boys' dormitory which kept the oral traditions alive with the narration of folklore and folk music, were replaced with classrooms.

Nagas learnt to read and write several generations ago, but it is only recently that the transition of a community that preserved its history through an oral tradition has begun to record the same in letters.

The Essay Writing Contest hopes to encourage this journey for Nagas to introspect and weave together the past and future in the present with words.

This year we have received 72 entries across both topics: **Influence of Social Media on Naga Youth** and **Affinity of Naga Youth with Land, Water, Forests and Wildlife**.

There are two age categories: under 16 years and 16 plus. The winners will be announced on November 24th.

More information, and the winning essays themselves, will be available to read on our website in due course.

WEBINARS

A new initiative this year has been the series of webinars which KET launched in March. In the first, Robert Lyman and Harry Fecitt MBE TD discussed *The Road to Kohima*, a title KET published during lockdown. Written by Charles Chasie and Harry Fecitt, it recounts the battle of Kohima from the Nagas' viewpoint.

In the second, Steve Snelling was in conversation with Robert Lyman discussing the two VCs awarded at Kohima, to Captain John 'Jack' Randle VC and to Lance-Corporal John Pennington Harman VC.

The third webinar focused on another equally brave man, Captain John 'Jock' Young, whose actions went unseen at Kharasom where he followed orders to hold until the last man. Roy McCallum is in conversation with Robert recounting his efforts to bring Jock Young recognition.

We then moved to Pangsha, the scene of several historical events and, more recently, the village where KET has built a hostel for children attending school there. High up on the border with Myanmar, it was also witness to a plane crash in 1942 where all but one of the 22 people on board survived. The whole story can be read in Robert's book *Among the Headhunters*.

AN EVENT HOSTED BY THE KOHIMA EDUCATIONAL TRUST

Dr Robert Lyman in conversation with Robert and Sylvia May

AMONG THE HEADHUNTERS: THE STORY OF A NAGA VILLAGE



NEW PUBLICATION AND FREE GIVEAWAY!

A War of Empires: Japan, India, Burma and Britain: 1941-1945 by Robert Lyman

Just out from Osprey Publishing is Robert Lyman's latest book, which draws on over 30 years of ground-breaking research. Robert expertly re-examines what we know as the "Forgotten War", and reveals the ferocious clash of competing visions of Empire which would irrevocably change the future of both Britain and the Indian sub-continent forever.

By 1942, the British and Indian armies had been brutally defeated and Japan reigned supreme in its newly conquered territories throughout Asia. But change was coming. New commanders were appointed, significant training and restructuring took place and new tactics were developed. In *A War of Empires*, Robert Lyman recounts these coordinated efforts in gripping detail and describes how a new volunteer Indian Army, rising from the ashes of defeat, would fight fiercely to turn the tide of war.

Osprey Publishing have kindly offered a good discount to KET so that we can offer copies for sale at full price with the profits all going to our work in Nagaland. The profit from every 10 copies sold can assist with a child's education in Nagaland for one year. In addition Robert has kindly signed a number of copies especially for our supporters, one of which we are giving away free!

AN EVENT HOSTED BY THE KOHIMA EDUCATIONAL TRUST

V FORCE: Defending the Gates of India 1942-1944

A talk by Dr Robert Lyman introduced by Sylvia May



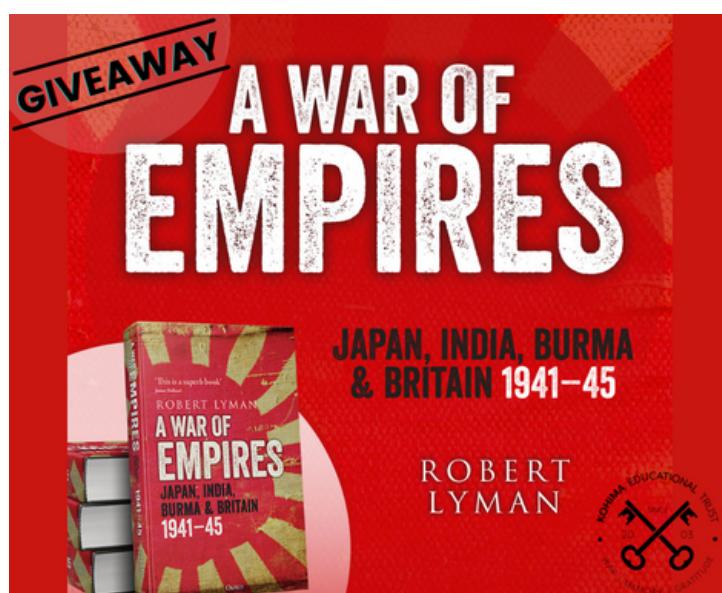
In the last webinar of this year, Robert Lyman treated us to a magnificent talk on V Force which, judging from all the wonderful feedback that we received, you all found immensely compelling.

We are enormously grateful to Robert for all the time he has freely given to KET to bring us this series, and I am delighted to say that he is willing to do more next year.

The first one for 2022 will be on 27th January entitled 'Kohima: A War from the Air'. In this new webinar, we are delighted to introduce Terence O'Halloran, Curator of 31 Squadron RAF Association, who will be in conversation with Robert.

If you missed any of these events, or wish to watch any of them again, they are all available on our website: www.kohimaeducationaltrust.net/news-and-events

If you wish to purchase any of the titles discussed, or any of Robert Lyman's titles, they are all available from our KET shop www.kohimaeducationaltrust.net/shop. Robert's new book *A War of Empires* is available and reviewed below.



Find KET online, "like" our "giveaway" posts and follow us for a chance to win! Twitter @KohimaEdTrust

Facebook & Instagram @kohimaeducationaltrust

The winning name will be drawn out of a hat on 10th December and sent in time for Christmas!

FUNDRAISING

PUSH-UP CHALLENGE

A Royal Signals Corporal, Surendra Kambang, of 2nd Signal Regiment, has raised nearly £550 for KET. Starting on 1st June he completed a total of 4999 press-ups throughout the month - one for each mile between York and Kohima!

In total for the three charities (KET, The Kohima Museum and The Gurkha Welfare Trust - all charities that are central to the history of 2nd Signal Regiment) he raised £1,642.79 - one third of which will be donated to KET - a really significant amount which will support the work we do in Nagaland.

Our CEO Sylvia says: "What a splendid achievement, huge congratulations from us all here at The Kohima Educational Trust! You have raised £547.60 for our work in Nagaland, assisting young Nagas with their educational support. You must be very proud. Well done and a massive thank you from us all."

This was an extremely arduous challenge for Cpl Kambang. It tested his strength, commitment and his powers of recovery to the limit. Keeping hydrated, and taking on sufficient nutrition to prevent physical collapse were all part of the challenge too.

Corporal Kambang is pictured below at Imphal Barracks, York after completing the final 25 press-ups, with KET Treasurer Andrew Hunter, and Lt Col Jamie Balfour of 2nd Signal Regiment.



VITALITY HALF LONDON MARATHON



KET secured places in this years' Vitality Half London Marathon which took place on 22nd August. This half marathon run in London follows a stunning 13.1 mile closed-road course, starting by Tower Bridge and finishing at the Cutty Sark in Greenwich. Three wonderful people, Jon, Clare and Terry (pictured left, guess who ran the fastest!) all turned out for what was a terrific day, completing the course in around 2 hours, and raising just over £900 in the process. Our huge thanks to them and to all those who supported them in their superb endeavour. (Clare beat both men by around 15 minutes!)

We also had three runners in the Virtual London Marathon who did an amazing job of running a full marathon on their home turf without the support of a crowd! We thank Chris, Jael and Gareth for their fantastic achievement, and for raising nearly £500. Thanks to all six of them and to all of you who supported them. It means another three scholarships can be awarded to young Nagas. THANK YOU!

RIDE LONDON-ESSEX 100 CYCLE CHALLENGE- 29TH MAY 2022

The Ride London-Essex 100, which passes through some of London's most iconic landmarks and the neighbouring Essex countryside on a traffic-free route is a brand new 100-mile cycle challenge. Starting and finishing in the heart of the capital, the full route will be announced in early 2022.

We have just been told that we have 3 places in the Ride London-Essex 100 for next year. One of our wonderful supporters has already volunteered for a place, so we have two spaces available for anyone who would like to take on this challenge and fundraise for KET! It's on 29th May 2022 we would be enormously grateful to hear from you!

THE HARRY MAY AWARD

The Sergeant Harry May Award is an annual presentation made to the Senior Non-Commissioned Officer within 2nd Signal Regiment who best demonstrates all-round qualities of leadership. It is not intended to reward performance on a single occasion or incident but across a full year whether in barracks, on exercise or on operations.

The nominee must have demonstrated a commitment to the education of their subordinates whether through mentoring, training or by encouraging them in their personal development goals. They must always epitomise the Values and Standards of the British Army.

We are delighted, this year, to present this award to Sergeant Turnbull - pictured right with KET Chairman Steve White (L) and Lt Col Jamie Balfour of 2nd Signal Regiment.



KOHIMA COMMEMORATION SERVICE – YORK 1ST JULY 2021

We were thrilled to be able to host the Kohima Commemoration Service again this year, ably assisted as always by the 2nd Signal Regiment. Despite all the restrictions imposed at the very last minute, WO1 (GSM) Brian Kiernan ensured that 150 supporters and friends of KET were still able to gather in the Dean's Garden for another memorable service. There is no doubt that being able to gather together in person and in such an appropriately wonderful place is a very special occasion and a marvellous opportunity for families and descendants of veterans to come together.



As always, it is a time to meet old friends and to make new ones. This year, once again, the weather was extremely kind to us and we were treated to a particularly poignant Address given by Bishop Nigel Stock (pictured above), himself a descendant of a veteran of the Durham Light Infantry killed in action in Kohima in 1944.

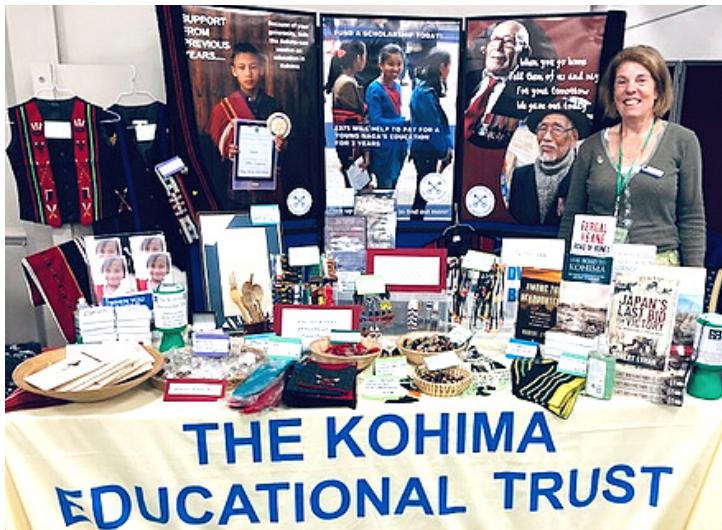


Above: Wreaths were laid by The Lord Mayor of York; by the Chairman of KET Mr Steve White; by the (then) CO 2nd Signal Regiment Lt Col Jamie Balfour, and Sergeant Scott Turnbull laid a wreath on behalf of all veterans.

The British Army Band Tidworth was magnificent and a key part of the event that made for a most moving service. Although we were unable to have any hymn singing, we were more than compensated by being able to listen to their superb playing of wonderful music.

Our continued thanks to The Dean and Chapter and all at York Minster for hosting us on another most memorable day. Our thanks to Lt Sam Beckett of 2nd Signal Regiment for his expertise in filming the service which can be [viewed on our website](#). We look forward to welcoming you all next year and will be in touch with the date as soon as possible in the New Year.

ROTARY CLUBS



KET is fortunate to have many Rotary clubs as supporters and this year we were delighted to be able to attend the Rotary South conference which took place in Brighton in early October 2021.

Our CEO Sylvia May was thrilled to have the opportunity to take along our KET Shop and set up our stand alongside other charities sharing news of their fantastic work. It was a brilliant event, very well attended and we were very glad to learn more about the excellent work done by Rotary South. We were equally delighted to have so much interest shown in the work that we do in Kohima and more widely across Nagaland. Our Rotary friends in Hawaii partnered with Kohima Rotary and KET to build seven latrines in the Naga village of Rusoma.

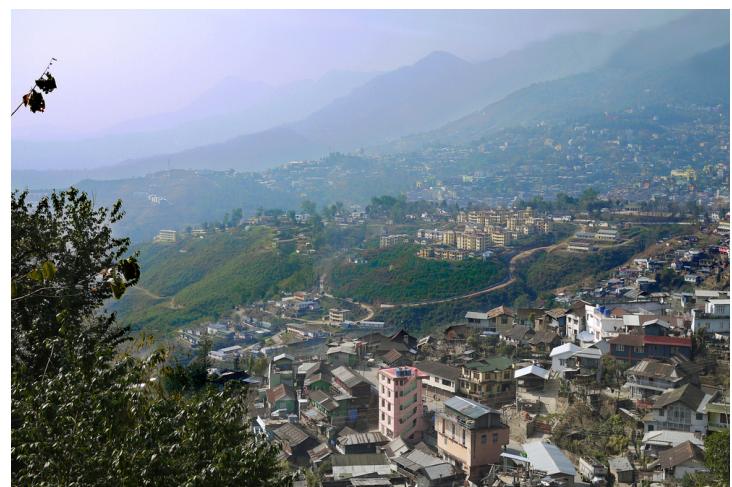
After so long without being able to meet friends and supporters face to face, it was a breath of fresh (sea!) air to visit Brighton and have the chance to meet and talk with the Rotarians from the

Southern region, some of whom have donated scholarships for Naga children. There was lots of interest in the books and items of jewellery from our shop – all available on our website – and we are very grateful for all the support we received.

Should your Rotary Club be interested in donating a scholarship please write to Sylvia at sylvia@kohimaeducationaltrust.org or refer to our website: www.kohimaeducationaltrust.net/scholarships-and-children

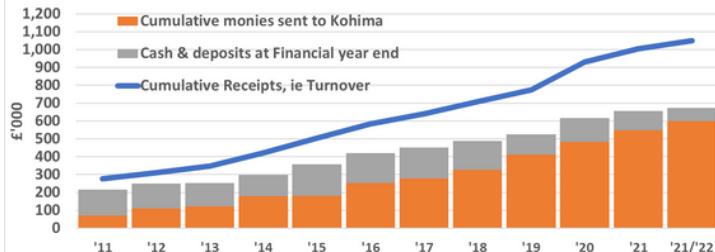
TOURS TO KOHIMA

Indus Experiences will be operating another tour in 2023, to be led by Bob Cook from the Kohima Museum in York. The 2022 tour is sold out but if you wish to book a place for 2023, do contact Bob at holidays@indusexperiences.co.uk or go to Indus Experiences website for full details of dates and itinerary: www.indusexperiences.co.uk



FINANCIAL UPDATE

Our history of cumulative charitable receipts (blue line: £1,049k), cumulative monies sent to Kohima (orange columns: £598k) and amounts available for further transfers (grey portion: £76k @11/11/21)



Here is the latest chart depicting our achievements, with detail on the last decade of our 18 year history. The blue line shows that our cumulative receipts have now comfortably passed the £1 million mark over the past year. The grey and orange segments of the columns indicate how we have been quicker, than in the past, to send money to our Naga friends at the Kohima Educational Society.

In part this is to take advantage of the strength of the pound and partly to enable them to earn more interest on bank deposits in India than we can in the UK. In total we have been able to transfer £115,000 in the last 12 months.

More importantly, it also reflects the increased success of the Scholarship programme, for which, alongside other long-standing projects, we are remitting as much as we feel we can safely afford. Indeed, we have become increasingly mindful of the several years of schooling for which beneficiary students hope to achieve awards and have needed to tailor awards numbers to a level that we believe we can safely honour. To that end, the growing number of donations specifically for scholarships is a most welcome feature of our recent financial performance.

So, as total monies sent to Kohima approach the £600,000 mark, we are sitting on fewer spare funds here in the UK than for many years. These figures encapsulate your collective generosity in giving so much for so long – thank you! If you would like more detail, our annual accounts, as submitted to the Charities Commission can be found on our website (under 'About' and 'Our Finances) at the bottom of: www.kohimaeducationaltrust.net/about/our-finances

KET ONLINE SHOP

We have a range of books about Kohima, including those written by our trustee Dr Robert Lyman. We have beautiful items of jewellery and clothing available – all handmade in Naga homes – and perfect for Christmas presents! We have a new line of handmade Christmas cards – available while stocks last. Specially commissioned Battle of Kohima Poppy Pins are also available – [order now in time for next year!](#)



HANDMADE IN NAGA HOMES

**VISIT OUR
ONLINE SHOP!**



Finally, this year we are pleased to be able to offer for sale on our website a rather special Christmas tree decoration – a golden 3D-printed Dakota DC3 – the aircraft used by 31 Squadron RAF that flew supply drops over Kohima in 1944. These replicas (wingspan 18cm) have been created by Wg Cdr Jim Furness who flew with 31 Squadron when it became, many years after the battle of Kohima, a Tornado Fast Jet Squadron. Jim also knows his way around a Dakota, having flown with the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight for 8 seasons. A limited number are available. All proceeds to be donated to KET. KET are extremely grateful to Wing Commander Furness for the time and effort he has so freely given to the Trust.

Printed and published by the Kohima Educational Trust, a registered charity (No 1188382) devoted to helping the people of Nagaland through educational activities.

Communications and donations to:
Sylvia May, Chief Executive Officer
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
[Facebook @KohimaEducationalTrust](#)
[Twitter @KohimaEdTrust](#)
[Instagram @kohimaeducationaltrust](#)

Edited by Val Hudson Layout & design by Melissa Furness
York Commemoration photos by Ravage Productions