



When you go home

The Newsletter of *The Kohima Educational Trust* November 2017 • no 14



Top left: Sixty new scholars starting Year 8 after receiving their first year's scholarship from KET.

Top right: Tomugha Awomi, a recipient of a scholarship for the last three years makes a speech at the recent Convergence.



Bottom left: KET Chairman David Shaw hands out this year's scholarships, watched by Dr Phybemo Ngully, our chairman in Kohima.

Bottom right: David Shaw with the four scholars who received the first new awards under the name of 'The Duke of York Family Scholarships'.

Scholarships 2017

WE were delighted to have a record number of new scholarships to award this year, with sixty new ones having been donated from supporters. The ceremony took place in March and it was wonderful to be able to hand over 188 scholarships in total, including to those students going forward to years 11 and 12.

The students arrived in Kohima, along with a parent or teacher, from all over Nagaland – some having taken nearly two days to get there.

This year, our chairman David Shaw was able to attend, and he along with our KES chairman, Dr Ngully, handed out each of the scholarships (a year's scholarship money).

We were also delighted to award four new scholarships this year in our Patron's name. The Duke of York's charity has generously donated the scholarships, now known as 'The Duke of York Family Scholarship'. He has asked us to award them for five years, so taking the four scholars through to complete year 12.

Of the sixty new scholarships, eighteen of them were awarded to descendants of Naga veterans, some of whom were able to attend the ceremony. It was as heart-warming as always to catch up with the students and to hear about their progress.

Convergence

Our team in Kohima organised a Convergence of the scholars who successfully passed out of year 10, the final year of their three-year scholarship. Twenty-nine students attended from the thirty-nine who went through the programme. The students come from all over Nagaland – ten were unable to travel to Kohima due to the heavy rains.

Our chairman in Kohima, Dr Phybemo Ngully, welcomed everyone and congratulated them on their success. He spoke of 'building bridges across the sky' to widen their horizons and maintain strong ties and relationships with the families and descendants of the veterans.

One of the students Tomugha Awomi made a speech as follows:

"My name is Tomugha Awomi. I recently passed my HSLC examination with distinction in all the subjects, getting 93.5%. Unfortunately, I could not achieve what I had been expecting, but by the grace of God and with the blessings of the KET, I got through the entrance exam in one of the top schools in northeast, DPS, Numaligarh, Golaghat, Assam.

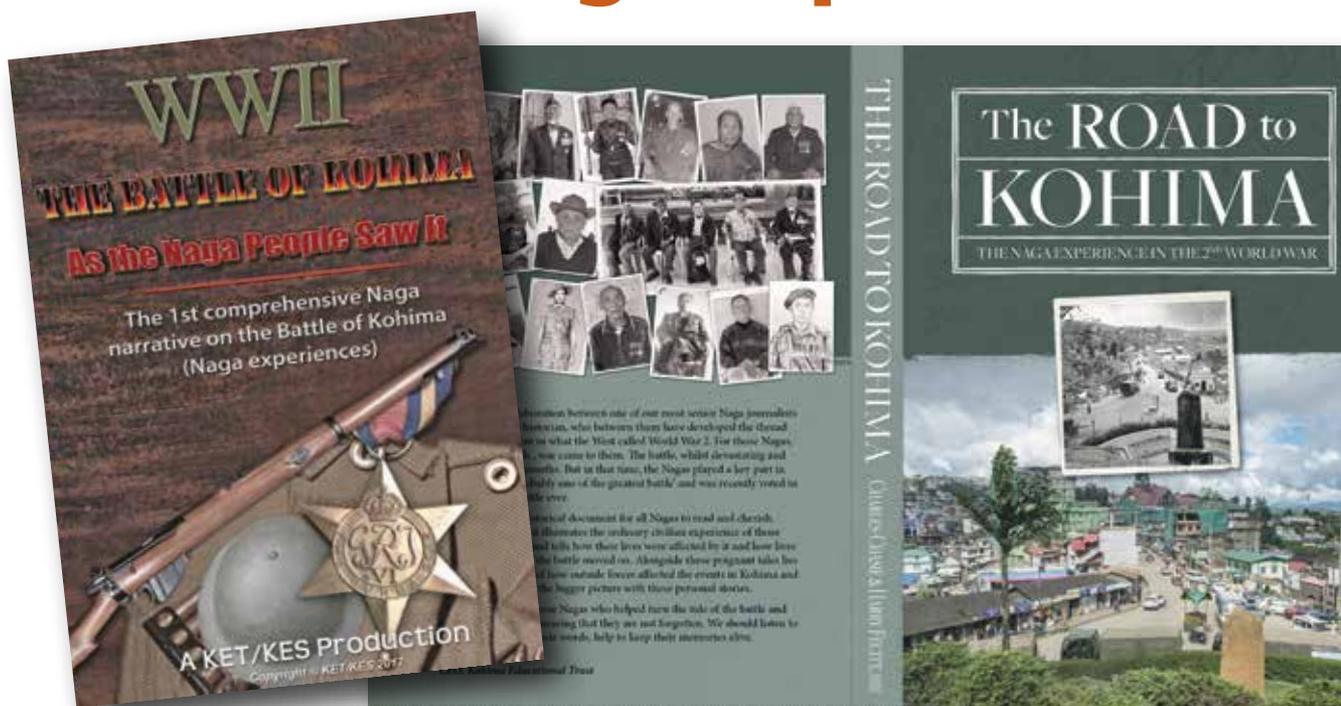
Currently, I am studying in class-XI, Science. My ambition in life is to become a cardiothoracic surgeon.

I am very grateful to the KES for providing me with the three-year scholarship, which encouraged and supported me to strive towards my studies. It really motivated me to work more in my studies. I am sure that all the students who received and are receiving the scholarship from the KET are also being encouraged just like myself. One of the main unforgettable values I have learned from the scholarship is from where and from whom are we getting this. This help comes from a very unexpected source, not because of the deeds I have done or what my parents have done. But by the little deeds of our forefathers, done way before even when our parents were not yet born. The fruits of their toil which we are now enjoying.

Therefore, if by the grace of God, I achieve something in future, I would like to contribute my part in helping and encouraging the poor Naga students of the next generation. As of right now I am not sure as to how my relationship with the KES would go about, but I wish that my relationship with it grows deeper."

Each of the students will be going into years 11 and 12 with KES/KET scholarships. In December, KES is planning a get together for Alumni who have passed out from Year 12 during 2017 to record their achievements and to follow their progress. The event will be advertised in all the local media and social media.

Now the Nagas speak



AUGUST saw the launch of our new documentary, *World War II – The Battle of Kohima as the Naga People Saw It*. It contains personal stories from those Nagas who played a part in the battle or were simply caught up in the fighting. Produced and directed by renowned journalist, author and researcher, Charles Chasie, it presents the voices of the last remaining Naga veterans who were involved directly or indirectly in the Battle of Kohima.

Charles spent many months travelling around Nagaland, interviewing these veterans and recording their stories. There are many books written about the Battle of Kohima from the British perspective, but this is the first time the Nagas have had the opportunity to tell the story from theirs. For them the 'war' lasted only months but their homes were destroyed and many lost their lives, caught between two nations clashing on their hillside.

Though the war was fought on their soil, it was not their war, and yet they

were put in the position of having to take sides. Many helped the British, and many British veterans feel that the Nagas helped them win the battle.

At the launch of the film on 14 August 2017, Dr Ngully said, 'The Nagas were innocent victims and suffered the ravages and traumas of war, resulting in deaths; many were wounded and all suffered privations of some kind.' He added, 'The war affected the Nagas so profoundly that the traditional society was gone forever.'

Encouraging everyone to watch the documentary, Dr Ngully was of the view that through sharing, 'Nagas can understand, learn more and strengthen relationships among ourselves and build a bridge across the world to reach out to people everywhere.'

Charles has also teamed up with Harry Fecitt MBE and together they have written the accompanying book entitled *The Road to Kohima*, which will be published in November.

The book is a unique collaboration – between them, the authors have analysed and expanded on the story of the Nagas' involvement in this great battle. Alongside the poignant tales lie the deeper historical facts of how outside forces affected the events in Kohima, and the book brilliantly weaves together the bigger picture with these personal stories.

KET is proud to be the sponsor of both the documentary and book. The idea originated from one of our supporters, Amanda Shapland, who whilst visiting Kohima, mentioned how good it would be to have these stories recorded. Little did she imagine the complex chain of events which began from there. We are all indebted to those Nagas who helped turn the tide of the battle, and through KET/KES we are ensuring that they are not forgotten. We should listen to their stories, and through their words, help to keep their memories alive.



Flute presentation

KET and Northfields School in Kohima were overwhelmed this year to be gifted with a flute, along with a music stand and sheet music. The gift was donated by Isabel Davies, daughter of Donald Eyles, a veteran of the campaign and a long-time supporter of KET, who sadly passed away in August 2015. Isabel has generously continued with Donald's scholarship and in addition, donated a flute which had been in the family many years but is no longer played, and Isabel wanted it to go where it would be used.

I visited India last February and carried the flute and music stand in my hand luggage, to the enjoyment of many airport security gentlemen. Kohima was our last port of call, so I think I must have unwrapped it eleven times before finally unveiling it in the Northfields School in Kohima.

Sylvia May

Shaping the future

The British Council

AT the start of the Year of UK-India Culture, we are delighted to announce we have been offered a five-year partnership with the British Council. The Council has supported us enormously by giving all the recipients of a KET Scholarship a year's membership to their online library, which has a repository of unique premium online services that the scholars can access anywhere, any time.

Two other initiatives are currently under development: the first is that KES should be involved with the British Council Scholarship program when it is brought to the North East; the second is the training of Naga teachers in English Teaching methodology. KET has already trained one teacher, but by incorporating KET into the British Council program, we would be able to train many more, including, we hope, students who have already gone through our scholarship program.

These are major advances, and we look forward to announcing more details as the partnership with the British Council develops.

The Kohima Essay Competition

A new initiative is being launched in North and East Yorkshire by KET to engage with sixth-form students from schools and colleges in the area by inviting them to participate in an essay competition on the subject of the Battle of Kohima. This initiative is inspired by the fact that Kohima was recently voted 'Britain's Greatest Battle' at an event held at the National Army Museum.

This area has been selected because of the historic connection between Yorkshire and the British 2nd (Cross Keys) Infantry Division which was located there after its repatriation from Dunkirk in 1940.

We are offering a 1st prize of £250 and a 2nd prize of £100. The winners will be presented with their prizes at the Kohima Memorial Day Lunch in July 2018, and they will also be invited to lay a wreath at the Kohima Memorial in the Dean's Garden of York Minster.

The competition will be judged by a panel of three, drawn from the University of York and the Kohima Educational Trust.

Honouring the past

The Kohima Museum

SINCE its formal opening in 1992, the 2nd Division Kohima Museum has developed from being a museum to commemorate the deeds and actions of the 2nd Division during the Battle of Kohima to becoming the only museum in the UK to focus entirely on the Burma Campaign.

Fully accredited under the Arts Council of England, it commemorates the longest-running campaign of World War II with the careful display of artefacts and memorabilia donated by the veterans of the battle and their families. Such items range from the medals, honours and awards of Brigadier (later Major General) John Dee Shapland CB, DSO, MC, to a ticket for a Tea-Dance held in Calcutta, and the hotel bar bill of a Japanese officer from Rangoon. The collection also includes the medals of Captain Fosbury MC, a Chindit from 77th Indian Infantry Brigade, together with operational orders and combat reports from his 52 Column. Our latest acquisition of an authentic Japanese field uniform from the period and area also helps to tell the story of this campaign – a campaign which involved men and women from the whole of the Empire and Commonwealth, as well as from the United States and China.

Lundy Island, September 2017

Ben Brownless, KET Trustee

FIVE YEARS AGO, in October 2012, I was lucky to have the opportunity to visit the beautiful island of Lundy. I was supervising a school group, and was able to introduce the children to the island, explain the Battle of Kohima, and visit the memorial there to John Pennington Harman, who lived on the island, and died at Kohima, for which he was awarded the Victoria Cross.

This September, I was delighted to be able to visit Lundy Island again. Courtesy of the island manager, I gave a talk on the Battle of Kohima to an audience of visitors and staff at the island pub, the Marisco Tavern (the place where we formally presented a history of the Battle of Kohima to the local library on my last visit).

John Harman's father, Martin Coles Harman, bought Lundy Island in 1925 when John was twelve years old. It was the beginning of an idyllic childhood, full of adventure and independence for the young boy, and I'm sure contributed to John Harman's individualism and initiative.

After my talk, with a group of friends, I went to the Harman memorial and laid crosses on the rocks below the tablet. The memorial was erected by John's father in 1949 and commemorates the staggering bravery his son showed on two successive days, taking out Japanese machine-gun posts single handed. On the second morning, having killed the five Japanese soldiers manning a post, he was hit by enemy machine-gun fire on his way back to his troops. As he died soon after reaching his own trenches he said, "I got the lot. It was worth it."

The memorial is in a very peaceful deserted quarry, now called VC Quarry, which was one of the places John Harman enjoyed playing in as a boy. On the east of the island, it has views of Devon in the distance and is unusually sheltered from the westerly winds. It is a fitting place to remember John Harman.





Roy Welland, a veteran from the Royal Berkshires, meets Group Captain Richard Davies, station commander at RAF Marham, on the occasion of the screening of *Kohima: An Exploration of War, Memory and Gratitude* at Greshams School, Holt, Norfolk.

Kohima Day 2017



We had another hugely successful day in York this year when over 200 people attended the service. Despite terrible weather forecasts, the day remained sunny and warm, and the congregation enjoyed another open-air service.

York Minster has confirmed the date for next year, which will be **Thursday, 5 July 2018**, and we look forward to welcoming you and your friends and families.

A Norfolk View

We had a very successful and enjoyable evening in Holt last April, hosted by Greshams School, who invited us to hold an event in their Auden Theatre. Over sixty people attended, including long-time supporters of the Trust, local dignitaries and new supporters of our work. Everyone enjoyed the film, *Kohima: An Exploration of War, Memory and Gratitude*, and lingered afterwards to enjoy some light refreshments and the company of fellow film-goers.

The station commander at RAF Marham joined us, along with OC 31 Squadron, Wing Commander Matt Bressani, who gave a wonderful speech. 31 Squadron played a crucial role at the Battle of Kohima, dropping supplies throughout the battle, so it was a wonderful addition

to the evening to have them so well represented. Roy Welland, a veteran from the Royal Berkshires, was also present along with two other veterans, which gave the evening a very special feel. The event contributed to raising £1000 for KET, and we are grateful to David Bailey of the CCF who made the whole evening possible.

KES's own office in Kohima



Thanks to one of our KES members in Kohima, we have been given a small space from which we can manage our operations locally. Situated bang in the middle of Kohima, the office is also home to books about the battle which have been donated to KET.

2017 Fundraisers



Phin Lyman spent his twenty-first birthday running the London Marathon on behalf of KET. His magnificent effort raised £3100. Phin along with his brother, spent a month in Kohima helping our team there and was thus inspired to raise money for the children of Nagaland.



Charles Barclay undertook the Prudential London-Surrey cycle ride on behalf of KET this summer raising over £4000. The ride began in the Olympic Park (in the pouring rain) and then through Esher, Forest Green, the Surrey hills, then back through Weybridge, Kingston and finally finishing 100 miles later on the Mall. Charles's full story of the day can be seen on our website.

Charles rode for KET in memory of his grandfather, Charles Barclay who was a Royal Norfolk and who died on the Aradura Spur on 5 May 1944.

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