

Beyond the Lens is an exciting photography project that celebrates our Nepali community, Gurkha heritage and local cultures.

Jib "I moved to Aldershot in 2001 from Nepal, where I was a sub-inspector in the police force. Aldershot is an historical town, and nowhere is quite like Aldershot. It is a town where you have easy access to every corner of the UK, but most importantly, the people are kind and help each other." Jib is the current Conservative Councillor for Wellington Ward in Aldershot and a previous president of the GRNC.

Netra "I was proud to be a Gurkha soldier and serve the Queen and I am now proud to be a British citizen."

KJ Limbu "I joined the Army in 1981 and was a soldier in the Second 7th Gurkha Rifles for 17 years. When I was stationed in Hong Kong, I didn't get any leave to go home and see my wife for 3 years. I am now a driver for the NHS." KJ Limbu is wearing traditional dress which represents the Eastern Region of Nepal where his family originate from. It is worn for special occasions such as weddings.

Binesh "My Dad was in the Gurkha's and I might train to be an officer once I have completed my exams. Aldershot is a good community and we all stick up for each other."

Misan "Aldershot is a friendly place where people are willing to help you."

Chandan "There are people from lots of different cultures in Aldershot and I really like the community aspect."

Uttar "When I first came to Aldershot we were shown around the town by our commanding officer. People came out of the shops and smiled and clapped as we walked around the streets. I was so happy to get such great respect from the community and was so proud to be part of the British Army." Uttar is currently the Chairman of Tamu Dhee Hampshire.

Bhawana "As the daughter of a Gurkha soldier, I feel privileged to have this opportunity to live and work in the UK. I work as a Nepali speaking Support and Recovery Worker in the NHS mental health service. I have seen the struggles that our Nepali elderly people are facing in the community. The language, cultural and digital barriers have made them isolated and lonely, especially after the pandemic. I also volunteer with Project Together, which aims to reduce social isolation and improve their well being by bringing them together virtually where they can connect with each other. I love the community here. Rushmoor has one of the highest Nepali populations in the UK and it feels great to be a part of this community that makes me feel at home and connected to my roots."

Bachaspati "I was in the Nepal Police Force before coming to the UK and won the Nepali Victoria Cross which was presented to me by the King of Nepal. I have also won an award for poetry."

Retired Captain Bishnu Shrestha "I was a member of the 7th Gurkha Rifles and served for 26 years, retiring in 1990. My platoon was one of the first to go to Queen Elizabeth Barracks in Fleet. I am proud to live in the home of the British Army.

Sulav "I have been living in the Rushmoor area for more than 15 years. Although I studied for four years at Liverpool University and currently work in central London, I chose to live in this local area as it feels like home. I like living here because of the great transportation links, multi-cultural cohesion between the communities, attractions, great events and family and friends settling around the area too."

Ram Dhan Rai "My wife and I are from the Sagarmatha zone near Mount Everest. I used to be a cattle farmer until I joined the British Army in Hong Kong. I served in the regiment for 15 years, reaching the rank of Corporal. I then joined the GRU in Brunei, an elite force of ex Ghurkhas whose function is primarily to protect the Sultan. I came to the UK in 2003 and now work as a civil servant. Aldershot is seen as the capital of the Nepali community in the UK. My role as President of the Greater Rushmoor Nepali Community means I really enjoy being involved with Rushmoor Borough Council and the community."

Hit Kaji "It's great to see all of the communities working and living in harmony and I feel very proud to be able to witness this."

Krishna "I was born and raised in the Okhaldhunga district in Unbu village. The majority of the Rai people inhabit and are native to the eastern part of Nepal. Amongst the Rai people we are Wambule Rai. We have our own cultures, traditions and our own language and there are roughly fifty thousand Wambule Rai people around the world. I joined the Brigade of Gurkhas in 2000 from Pokhara in the western part of Nepal. As a Gurkha soldier, I have served and been deployed in different parts of the world. I am honoured and very proud to be a Gurkha soldier."

Captain Dawanuri Chawa Sherpa "I joined the British Army in 1996 and completed my recruit training at Church Crookham, Fleet. On intake, I was the only Sherpa who joined the Brigade of Gurkhas. I used to take five months unpaid leave after every 3 years of service, so that I could see my wife and family. I am currently a Unit Welfare Officer of the 10 Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment in Aldershot, supporting soldiers, officers and their families when they need help."

Chandra Rai "I am originally from Khotang Diktel in the Sagarmatha zone of Eastern Nepal. I joined the British Army in 1986 and served for 17 years, reaching the rank of Corporal. I am the acting chairperson of Kirat Rai Yayokkha UK, an organisation for the Rai community. I am also an executive member of the GRNC and undertake community work for Rushmoor Voluntary Service."

Funded by the Re-opening High Streets Safely Fund and Rushmoor Borough Council



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रुश्मूरमा भएको नेपाली समुदायको लागि एउटा उत्सव।

जीब “अल्डरसट एउटा एतहासिक शहर हो र अल्डरसट जस्तो कुनै शहर छैन, यो एउटा यस्तो शहर हो जहाँ तपाईं यूके को हरेक कुनामा सजिलो संग प्रस्थान गर्न सक्नुहुन्छ। तर सबैभन्दा महत्त्वपूर्ण कुरा, मानसिहरु दयालु छन् र एक अर्कालाई मद्दत गर्छन्।”

नेत्र “म एउटा गोरखा सैनिक हुनुमा गर्व गर्थे र रानीको सेवा गरे र अब म एउटा ब्रिटिश नागरिक हुनुमा गर्व गर्दछु।”

के जे लम्बु १९८१ मा सेनामा भर्ना भए र १७ वर्ष सम्म गोरखा दोस्रो सातौं गोरखा राइफल्स मा एक सपिही थिए। जब वहा हंगकंगमा तैनाथ हुनुहुन्थियो वहालाइ घर जानु र आफ्नी श्रीमतीलाई भेट्न ३ वर्ष सम्म बिदा पाउनु भैना।

बनिश “मेरो बाबा भूपू गोरखा सैनिक हुनुहुन्थियो र मैले मेरो पढाई पूरा गरेपछि एउटा गोरखा सैनिक हुन को लागि प्रशिक्षण लिन प्रयास गर्छु। अल्डरसटमा राम्रो समुदाय छ र हामी सबै एक अर्का को लागि रहन्छौं।”

मसिन “अल्डरसट एउटा मलिनसार ठाउँ हो जहाँ मानसिहरु तपाईंलाई मद्दत गर्न इच्छुक छन्।”

चन्दन “अल्डरसटमा सबै बभिन्नि संस्कृतिका मानसिहरु छन् र मलाई समुदायको हिससा हुन मनपर्छ।”

सेवानवित्त कप्तान वषिणु श्रेष्ठ सातौं गोरखा राइफल्सका सदस्य थिए र २६ वर्ष सम्म सेवा गर्नुभयो। वहा १९९० मा सेना बाट सेवानवित्त हुनुभयो। वहाको पलटन फ्लीट मा रानी एलजाबेथ ब्यारेकमा जाने पहिलो पलटन थियो। “मलाई ब्रिटिश सेनाको शहरमा हुनुमा गर्वति छु।”

उत्तर “जब म पहिलो पटक अल्डरसटमा आए, हामीलाई हाम्रो कमाण्डिगि ओफिसिस् ले शहर देखाउनु भाको थियो। जब हामी सडकमा हडिदै थियौं बासनिदाहरु पसलबाट बाहिर आए र मुस्कुराए र ताली बजाए। म समुदाय बाट यति ठूलो सम्मान पाए धेरै खुसी थिएँ र ब्रिटिश सेना को हिससा हुन पाएकोमा धेरै गर्व लाग्यो।”

हति काजी “समुदायमा मलिन काम गरेको र संगै मलिजिली बसेको देखेर खुशी लाग्छ र यो देख्न पाउँदा म धेरै गर्व महसुस गर्छु।”

सुलाव “मँ यहाँ बस्न मन पराउँछु कनिभने यातायात को सुभधा राम्रो छ (मध्य लन्डन ३५ मनिटमा), समुदायहरु बचि राम्रो मेलमलाप छ, आकर्षण/क्षेत्रहरु को वरपिरा मेरो रुचि (मोटरबाइक भेट, फुटबल, राम्रो रेस्टुरेन्ट) र परविर/साथीहरु पनयिहबिसोबश गर्नु हुन्छ।”

भावाना “एउटा गोरखा सपिहीको छोरी भएर, मँ युकेमा बस्ने र काम गर्ने अवसर पाउँदा गर्वति छ। म NHS मानसिक स्वास्थ्य सेवा मा एउटा नेपाली बोलने र रकिभरी कार्यकर्ता को रूप मा कार्यरत छु। मैले हाम्रो नेपाली वृद्धहरुलाई समुदायमा संघर्ष गरिरहेको देखेको छु। भाषा, सांस्कृतिक र डिजिटल बाधाहरुले उनीहरुलाई एकलो बनाएको छ, वशिष गरी महामारी पछि म प्रोजेक्ट टुगेदरको साथ स्वयंसेवक पनी छु, जसको उद्देश्य सामाजिक एकलोपन कम गर्नु हो र उनीहरु एक अर्का संग जोडनि सक्नु भनी उनीहरु लाई एकसाथ ल्याएर उनीहरुको भलाईमा सुधार ल्याउन कोशिश गर्दै छु।”

राम धन राई “अल्डरसट यूकेमा नेपाली समुदायको राजधानी को रूप मा, साथै ब्रिटिश सेना को घरको रूप मा देखीन्छ। ग्रेटर रुश्मूर नेपाली समुदाय को अध्यक्ष को रूप मा मेरो भूमिका को मतलब मँ वास्तव मा रुश्मूर बरो काउन्सिल र सामुदायिक पक्ष संग संलग्न हुनुको आनन्द लनिछु।” पहिलो लकडउनमा वहाले प्रत्येक दनि २ जना स्वयंसेवकहरुलाई रुश्मूर स्वैच्छिक सेवाहरु संग काम गर्न को लागि व्यवस्था गर्नुभयो।

कृष्णा “म २००० मा नेपाल को पश्चिमी भाग, पोखरा बाट गोरखाहरुको ब्रिगिड मा सामेल भयो। मँ एउटा गोरखा सैनिक हुनाले, मैले वशिषको बभिन्नि भागहरुमा सेवा र तैनात गरेको छु। म एउटा गोरखा सैनिक हुनुमा धेरै गर्व र सम्मानति छु।”

कप्तान दवानुरी चावा शेरपा १९९६ मा ब्रिटिश सेनामा भर्ना हुनुभयो र चर्च करूकहम फ्लीटमा भर्ती प्रशिक्षण पूरा गर्नुभयो। उनको इन्टेक मा, उनी मात्र शेरपा थिए जो गोरखा को ब्रिगिड मा सामेल भए।

The Gurkhas and Aldershot

BY PAUL H. VICKERS

For over 200 years the Gurkhas have given outstanding service to the British Army with a reputation for courage, loyalty and military skills.

1814 Great Britain has gone to war with Nepal to secure the northern border of India. During the war both sides gain respect for the other, with the British being impressed by the courage and martial prowess of their opponents.

1816 Following the peace treaty of 1816 which concludes the war, the British begin to recruit Nepali warriors into regiments to serve alongside British forces.

1971 The 1st Battalion of the 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles moves into Queen Elizabeth Barracks at Church Crookham, beginning the association of the Gurkhas with the Aldershot area.

2001 The Gurkha base moves to Shorncliffe, near Folkestone, temporarily ending their local presence.

2003 10 Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment (10 QOGLR) moves into Aldershot's Normandy Barracks. From this base the regiment are deployed on numerous operations, including Kuwait, Cyprus, Bosnia, Kosovo and Iraq.

2009 10 QOGLR are deployed on operations in Afghanistan, and when they return in March 2010 they move to new accommodation in Gale Barracks, where the regiment remains to this day.

2009 The British government grants Gurkha veterans the right to settle in the UK. Many veterans take the opportunity to live in Aldershot, an area they knew from their time serving in the Army. The town welcomes the veterans and respects them for their service. Joined by their families, in only a few years a vibrant Nepali community is established, becoming an integral part of modern Aldershot.

2016 2016 marked 200 years of Gurkha service with the British Army. Rushmoor honours the service of 10 QOGLR by awarding the Regiment the Freedom of the Borough.

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