

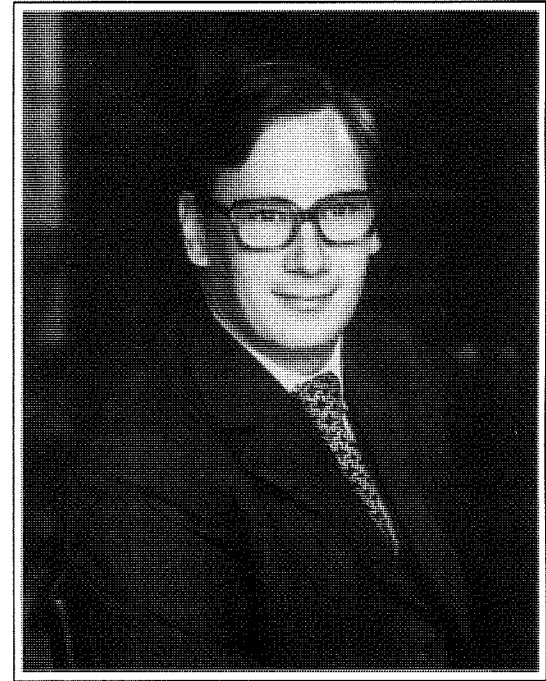


THE BRITAIN-NEPAL SOCIETY

J o u r n a l

Number 13

1989



Our President

**His Royal Highness
The Duke of Gloucester, GCVO**

WE'VE TAKEN TIME OFF
FROM OUR
INVESTMENT PROGRAMMES
TO INVEST IN THIS ONE.



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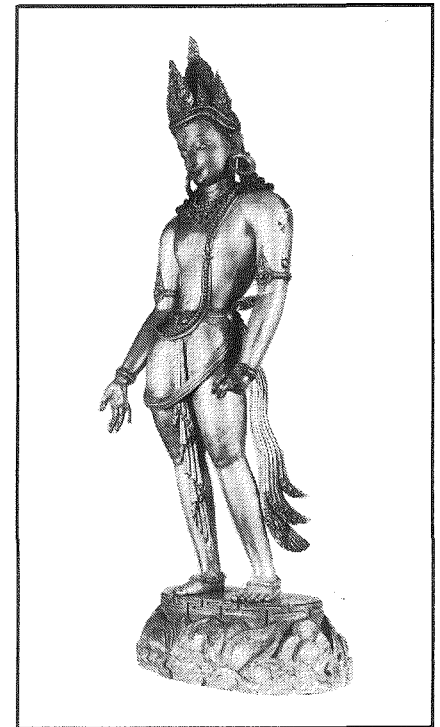
THE BRITAIN-NEPAL SOCIETY

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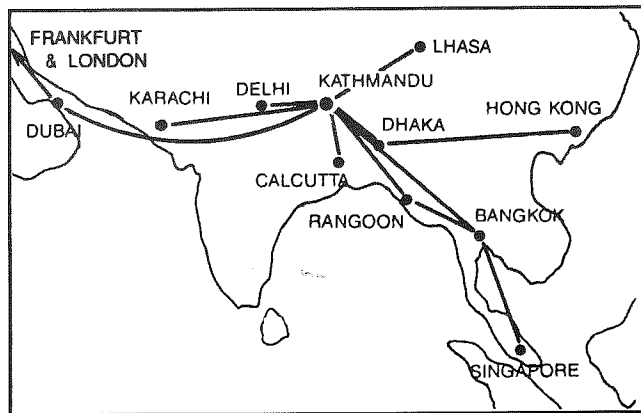


*Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara
Circa 14th century
See article "Nepalese Art at the
Victoria and Albert Museum"*

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EDITORIAL From Strength to Strength

Lectures given at the Alpine Club by members of the Society have always provided some excellent articles for the Journal and this issue is no exception. Mr. William Crawley, Assistant Head of the B.B.C. Eastern Service, follows up his well-attended talk with the contribution on broadcasting to South Asia ("Bush House and Nepal") and Colonel M.G. Allen, now busy at his new post in Kathmandu, has summarised most readably his talk on "Insects of Nepal", a subject on which he is now a recognised authority.

Our thanks to them and to all our contributors, notably Mrs. Mayura Brown for drawing our attention to the excellent display of Himalayan Art, including some very fine pieces from Nepal, in the new gallery at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The authorities of the Victoria and Albert have very kindly provided the illustrations which accompany her article.

Colonel Lowe has again drawn attention to the latest publications of special interest to our members, in his reviews and book list. To those he has listed we would here add two titles and the first must be "A Himalayan Ornithologist" by Mark Cocker and Carol Inskipp (Oxford University Press) which besides telling the life story of Brian Houghton Hodgson, a remarkable life that extended over very nearly the whole of the 19th Century, describes in seven fascinating chapters his extraordinary achievements as a naturalist and orientalist, and provides 49 colour plates selected from his collection

of paintings of birds of Nepal now in the possession of the Zoological Society of London. Many members will recall the talk on "Changes in Nepalese Avifauna" given to the Society at the Alpine Club by Mrs. Carol Inskipp in 1985 (see Silver Jubilee number of this Journal) and also be aware of her book "A Guide to the Birds of Nepal".

The other book to which we feel compelled to make reference here is one which is not easy to put down once opened. It is the story told by herself of a fifty-eight year old American lady who volunteered to become a Peace Corps science teacher in a village on the east side of Kathmandu. Her very frank and vivid narrative describes conditions prevailing some twenty years ago and how much changed but her courage and genuine admiration for the people she lived and worked with, which enabled her to carry out her undertaking when many others gave up make "A Classful of Gods and Goddesses in Nepal" by Ruth Higbie (The Boxwood Press, Pacific Grove, California) a fascinating book as much for those who know Nepal well as for those who have not yet ventured there.

A third book which has not yet come our way but which we are happy to announce to our readers is "Samraj" by Elaine Aron (New English Library), the first of a trilogy based on the Mahabharata. The book has evidently been well researched and comes out not long before the B.B.C. will be showing a "nine-hour dramatization" by Peter Brooks of the great epic.

It remains only to draw attention to the many interesting activities of the Society which are described in detail in "The Society's News" and also to let it be known that the move of the Gurkha Museum to Winchester is progressing well and the museum should be ready to welcome visitors in April next year. In the meantime the important King Mahendra UK Trust for Nature Conservation is appealing for more support from members and from the public (see The Society's News). As for our Society, it continues to progress and to go from strength to strength.

...

The King Mahendra UK Trust
for Nature Conservation,
103, Mount Street,
London
W1Y 5HE

BRITISH SERVICES EVEREST EXPEDITION 1988

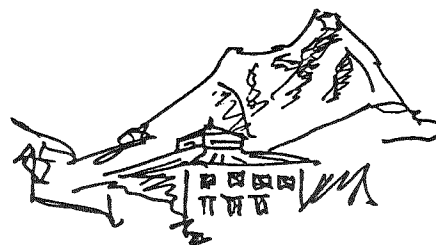
A Situation Report by
Lieutenant Colonel HRA Streater OBE

It will be recalled that in 1988 three determined attempts to reach the summit by members of the Services Everest Expedition were turned back by appalling weather and snow conditions. Application was immediately made to the Chinese Government for permission to make a further attempt in 1991 or even sooner if this could be arranged. The Chinese were unable to grant permission before 1991 and recent troubles there have now also put this out of the question. It is hoped that the situation will stabilise and that an attempt in 1992 might be possible. This time the team would not attempt the route by the long West Ridge but would try by the North Face direct. As a result of the delay in time much work will be involved in selecting a new team and in finding sponsors.



Everest - The View from the North - Summit (left), West Ridge (right)

THE SOCIETY'S NEWS



In February the following announcement appeared in the Court Circular "The Duke of Gloucester has become President of the Britain-Nepal Society for three years".

His Royal Highness is no stranger to the Society. Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess were invited to join the Society as Honorary Life Members when Lieutenant Colonel C.G. Wylie was Chairman of the Society (1969-73) since when His Royal Highness has taken an active interest in the Society. In July 1981 the Duke attended a dinner given by the Society at the Royal Over-Seas League in honour of TRH Prince Gyanendra and Princess Komal and he has also attended talks given by Professor Haimendorf, Prince Peter of Greece, Sir George Bishop and John Sanday at the Alpine Club.

We are delighted and honoured that His Royal Highness is to be the new President and we look forward to welcoming him at the Annual General Meeting to be held, by kind permission of His Excellency Major-General Bharat Keshar Simha, at the Royal Nepalese Embassy on 23rd November.

The Society is twenty-nine years old

and it has had three Presidents. The first and longest serving was Lord Hunt who guided the Society through its early days. He was succeeded by Mr. Arthur Kellas formerly Ambassador to Kathmandu. He relinquished the Presidency when he and his wife retired to Argyll. In 1979 after a successful career in the Civil Service and in business Sir George Bishop agreed to become President. For ten years he and Lady Bishop have diligently attended the Society's functions and the monthly meetings at the Alpine Club.

Earlier this year Sir George announced his intention to retire in his seventy-fifth year and in May members had the opportunity of thanking him and Lady Bishop at a well attended party held in the lovely Cambridge Cottage Garden at Kew. On behalf of the Society Lord Hunt thanked Sir George warmly and presented him with a Kukri made in Kathmandu. In his speech HE The Nepalese Ambassador also thanked Sir George and took the opportunity of mentioning the trade and transit problems of Nepal and India and he hoped the Society would help to solve this dispute.

Lady Bishop was presented with a set of cut glass sherry glasses by Mrs. Mayura Brown. The glasses were inscribed with the Society's crossed flag motif.

Sir George is now busy planning a trek in October through the Tamur Valley to Kangchenjunga; this walk, there and back, should take about 28 days. On his return we look forward to seeing him and Lady Bishop at many of the Society's functions.

■ *Monthly Meetings at the Alpine Club*
On Thursday 20th October Mr. George Band, President of the Alpine Club, gave an illustrated talk on "Kangchenjunga - First Ascent".

Colonel M.G. Allen's illustrated talk on "Butterflies, Moths and other Insects of Nepal", took place on Thursday 19th January.

Mr. Peter Knowles's illustrated talk on "The First Kayak Descent of the Karnali - Western Nepal's Largest and Longest River" took place on the 8th March.

At short notice, on Wednesday 26th April, Mr. William Crawley and colleagues from the BBC Eastern Service gave their talk about broadcasting to the Nepalese and their South Asian neighbours entitled "Bush House and Nepal".

The Committee would like to thank all those who so kindly gave these much appreciated talks.

■ *Alpine Club*

Sadly the Society will be holding its last meeting at this venue in October. Peterborough in "The Daily Telegraph" of 19th August explained the reasons for the move. "The World's oldest mountaineering club is preparing to hike across London in search of a new home. To the dismay of art dealers who use it for exhibitions, the Alpine Club is leaving its trophy-filled Mayfair home long before its lease expires and years before the completion of a new subterranean clubhouse in Kensington.

After 30 years in South Audley Street, the club has accepted an offer from its landlords, Western Heritable, to surrender

the lease in return for substantial funding for new headquarters.

"We were pretty unprofitable for them," explains the Alpinists' President George Band, the youngest member of the 1953 Everest expedition. "They made us a good offer".

Band admits, however, that the deal leaves the club homeless for several years until the opening of an underground clubhouse in the Royal Geographical Society's garden in Kensington Gore. "We're looking for a temporary home," he says. "It's nerve-racking, but mountaineering is a nerve-racking business".

So your Committee is now looking for an alternative venue.

■ *The Earthquake fund-raising Project*

In his appeal letter the Chairman, Colonel J.M. Evans wrote the following: "Prior to the AGM in November, I was asked by your Committee to write to all members saying that it was proposed to devote our fund-raising in 1989 to some specific project in the area devastated by the earthquake in Eastern Nepal. By the time of the AGM we had been advised by Kathmandu and the Embassy in London that any help we could give would be more appreciated for the relief of general distress rather than for one project out of so many that needed help. It was decided at the AGM to proceed accordingly."

Subsequently this appeal raised a magnificent figure of £5,300 and a cheque for this amount was handed to HE The Nepalese Ambassador by Sir George Bishop at the party held at Kew in May.

The Committee would like to thank all those who so generously donated money for this very worthwhile cause.

■ *The Pestalozzi Children's Village, Sedlescombe.*

Mr. Paul Broomhall, a former Chairman of the Society has for many years invited the Nepalese House Mothers as his guests to the Annual Nepali Supper. Three years ago Miss Lakshmi Thapa was one of his guests; she spoke enthusiastically about her work at the village and her every day experiences of English life. After six and a half years in England she returned home to Balkot Village in the Bhaktapur District of Nepal to become Head of her new school for children aged 4-6. Before she left she talked about her five year plan to the Editor of the Pestalozzi News Sheet. She first explained the desperate need for a school in this very poor village of about 2,000 families. "In the past children had to travel on foot to the nearest school, a route that took them across a stream which in the rainy season, flooded. Every year several children were washed away and drowned," she said. Whilst back home in 1985 and with the help of the villagers, she bought a piece of land and drafted plans for the school. Two years later, enough money had been raised to lay the foundation and by the Summer of 1988, she was able, during a two month holiday, to see the completion of the first four classrooms. The furniture, curtains and basic equipment were installed by the end of January last in readiness for February 15th, the day the school welcomed its first 45 children.

"My brother, who is retired, and some of my friends, have cared for the project while the villagers themselves have built it," Lakshmi explained. "I am hoping

each year to extend the school so that the children will be able to stay and be educated up to 16 years but first, now that the school is running, I am waiting for the District School Inspector's visit so that I can obtain my licence," she added.

At the moment Miss Thapa will have to travel daily the 15 miles from her home to the school. This can take up to 2 1/2 hours by public transport but eventually she hopes to live at the school. And if funds permit, she will one day have boarding facilities to help children in other villages.

The Chairman Colonel Evans and Mrs. Evans took the opportunity of visiting this school during their recent visit to Nepal.

■ *The Nepal-Britain Society*

In July, Mr. Dhruva N. Shrestha, Senior Vice-President of the Nepal-Britain Society was a guest of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. During his visit Mr. Shrestha was entertained to lunch by the Chairman, Colonel Evans. Mr. Brian Smith the Honorary Treasurer and Mr. Alan Durston, a Committee Member, were also present.

Mr. K Thapa, President of the Youth Activities Co-ordination Committee also visited London and was entertained to dinner by Mr. Anthony Wieler.

■ *Departure - Mr B.P. Arjwal*

Mr. B.P. Arjwal, Attaché at the Royal Nepalese Embassy and his family will be departing for Kathmandu in October. Special thanks go to Mr. Arjwal for the help he has given to the Society during his stay in London.

■ *Nepalese Parliamentary Delegation*

Between the 4th and 9th September a Parliamentary Conference was held at Westminster and attended by delegations from over 120 countries. Nepal was represented by six Members of Parliament, led by the Hon'ble Mohan Raj Malla, Speaker of the Rastriya Panchayat and three Clerks. In honour of their visit the Committee organised a reception at the House of Commons sponsored by Mr. Neil Thorne MP, Chairman of the Anglo-Nepalese Parliamentary Group. The reception was attended by Members of Parliament, Mr. B. Khanal, Chargé d'Affaires and Mrs. Khanal, Vice-Presidents and the Committee of the Britain-Nepal Society.

■ *King Mahendra UK Trust for Nature Conservation.*

The first phase of the Annapurna Conservation Area is now complete and significant progress has been made towards the Project's ultimate aim of halting and reversing the ecological decline of one of the world's most beautiful and important mountain regions. The generous contributions to the Trust's appeal for £50,000 in 1986 have been applied to an intensive and successful programme of training, reduction and practical improvements.

The Trustees of the King Mahendra UK Trust have now undertaken to raise a further £150,000 to extend the programme over the next four years. The Overseas Development Administration has agreed to match £1 for £1 the funds the Trust is able to raise in voluntary contributions. If you would like to support the Project, please send your donation to Miss Jane

Lee, King Mahendra UK Trust for Nature Conservation, 103 Mount Street, London, W1Y 5HE.

■ *Yeti Nepali Association in U.K.*

At the Annual General Meeting of the Association held in London in April Dr. Raghav Dhital was voted President; Mr. Hari Bibhar Karki - Vice-President and Mr. Uttam Amataya - General Secretary.

■ *Messages*

A message of congratulation was sent to His Majesty the King of Nepal on his birthday on 28th December.

A message of congratulation was also sent to our Patron HRH Prince Gyanendra of Nepal on his birthday in July.

■ *Society Tie and Ladies Scarf*

The price of the Britain-Nepal Society tie is £5 including postage, and the ladies scarf £6 including postage. The Secretary holds a large stock of these ties and scarves.

Finally I would like to mention that the Editor of this journal, Lieutenant Colonel H.C.S. Gregory, has accepted the Chairman's invitation to become a Vice-President. Colonel Gregory has over a period of twenty years taken a very active interest in the Society and has been Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Honorary Treasurer, founder and Editor of the Journal and Life Member of the Society.

Celia Brown
Honorary Secretary
1 Allen Mansions,
Allen Street
London W8 6UY

■ *Footnote*

A note about Cambridge Cottage Garden from the Souvenir Guide of the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew. This charming walled garden is also known as the Duke's Garden, after the Duke of Cambridge who lived in Cambridge Cottage. When he died the Cottage and Garden were presented to Kew by Edward VII. A collection of the more ornamental herbaceous plants are grown here in the side borders and island beds in the main lawn. In the far corner a large area of paving has been used to house a collection of bulbs and this is backed by a border of plants demonstrating the different types of variegation. The bulbs also have an historical link in that the present Queen's Garden is on a site known in the late nineteenth century as the Duke of Cambridge's bulb garden. Some species of irises are also displayed here and around the sheltered footings of the "cottage" are several different forms of the beautiful winter flowering *Iris unguicularis* which comes from the Mediterranean region.

Iris enthusiasts will also wish to note the moisture-loving irises that are grown in the Woodland and Rock Gardens, and the special raised beds made for Juno, *Oncocyclus* and *Regelia* irises near the Jodrell Laboratory - which also hosts some rare bearded irises against its south face. Trees grown here include the Iron Tree, *Parrotia persica*, native to Persia and the Caucasus. It is a member of the Witch Hazel family, and has dark crimson flowers which appear from mid-January to early March, and later in the year the tree produces good autumn colour. *Eucommia ulmoides*, an unusual tree from Central China, is interesting on account of the rubber produced in its leaves (the only

tree hardy in this country to do so); in China it is also valued for its bark, which is believed to have medicinal properties.

A number of magnolias may be seen including several specimens of the evergreen *Magnolia grandiflora*, native to the southern United States, which produces deliciously scented large creamy white flowers in late Summer and early autumn.

Cambridge Cottage

For the last ten years of his long life, Cambridge Cottage was the home of Adolphus, Duke of Cambridge, Queen Victoria's uncle and Queen Mary's grandfather. In old age Adolphus, eccentric and by then very deaf, made things difficult for the curate of Kew Church, the front pew of which the Duke occupied regularly on Sunday mornings. 'Let us pray!' said the curate; 'By all means,' replied Adolphus, amiably and all too audibly. When the sixth commandment, 'Thou shalt do no murder' was read, the Duke observed with evident self-satisfaction, 'I don't. I leave that to my brother Ernest'; and when, one very dry summer, the curate prayed for rain, the voice of the familiar commentator rang out, 'Amen! - but you won't get it till the wind changes.' The curate, no longer able to bear the strain, eventually resigned.

After the Duke's death in 1850, Cambridge Cottage continued to be occupied by his widow and their family, and in later life Queen Mary recalled the penance of compulsory visits made as a child to the formidable and ailing old Duchess, her 'stingy' teas of buns and rusks, and her insistence on her grandchildren singing 'Les Trois Anges' and 'God Save the Queen' to relieve her boredom.

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NEPALESE ART at the Victoria & Albert Museum by Mayura Brown

It was interesting to hear that the V. & A. was to open a gallery devoted to Himalayan art which would include some Nepalese pieces from their collection. It was launched with a Reception on June 26th, generously sponsored by the S.E. Asia Trade and Advisory Group and the Britain and South East Asian Trade Association, and was attended by many distinguished guests including His Excellency the Nepalese Ambassador. Apart from the Himalayan regions, the exhibits also include those from S.E. Asia. A study Seminar was held a week before the opening of the gallery, thus establishing the educational value of the exhibition.

The gallery is not large but the variety of artefacts on show is stimulating. Nepal, our main concern, gives the public an insight into the traditional creative work of the Nepalese artists and craftsmen who served faithfully both Hinduism and Buddhism, religions that have lived harmoniously together for decades in Nepal.

An elegant Avalokitesvara (14th century) stands among the exhibits from Tibet. Through this statue came from Shigatze, possibly from the Tashilhunpo monastery, the workmanship is Nepalese. A number of Newari craftsmen from the Nepal Valley plied their trade in Tibet where their skills and artistry were much in demand. These image-makers as well as traders resided in Lhasa for many years, as the connection between the two countries had existed from ancient times.



*Sitatara c.14th century Nepal
Painted and gilded copper inset with
semi-precious stones, turquoise,
imitation rubies and lapis lazuli*

On the Nepal side of the gallery stands a Tara, (also 14th century), with the same graceful curve that distinguishes the style of this early period. E. V. Havell, who did so much to interpret the iconography of this area to the West, gave a perfect description of these two statues. "The attenuated waist and generalisation of the anatomy carried much further than the Greeks ever attempted, producing an extreme simplicity of form and contour,

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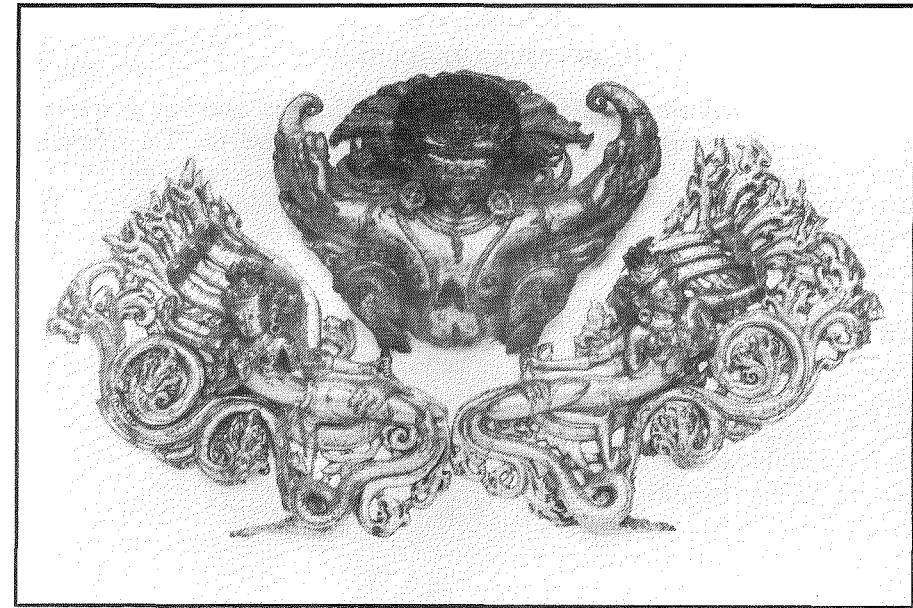
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*Torana with Garuda attacking a Naga and Nagini
Repousse copper with gilding and paint, set with turquoise,
rock crystal and semi-precious stones
Nepal 16th century*

are part of a deliberate intention of suggesting a type of abstract, spiritual beauty, far removed from worldly passions or desire”.

After the 15th century the figures became more ornate with elaborate decorations. Another Tara on view, (which took the Museum a whole year to clean and restore), is richly embellished and comes from this later period. Many of the images are made of copper overlaid with gilt, but there is a beaten copper head of Garuda above a Naga and Nagini - an attractive arrangement, probably 16th century.

Two unusual items come from Bhatgoan (Bhaktapur) and will be shown alternately. One is a painting (1670) of a

vehicle resembling the famous Jagger-nath Car of South India, the other is an embroidered textile depicting scenes from the Ramayana.

Besides a 12th century Vishnu, a 17th century Indra and the goddess Vasudhara, there are some small figures in the glass cases. The large head of Bhairav (17th century), fierce and splendid, is extremely impressive and contrasts with the beauty and delicate dignity of the Crown of Bhattacharya (1677) nearby.

It would require unlimited space to describe all the items in detail. Let us hope that our members will make an effort to visit the V. and A. to admire the art of Nepal, a poor country financially but rich in her artistic achievements.

BUSH HOUSE AND NEPAL: Broadcasting to South Asia

On 26 April William Crawley, Head of the Eastern Service in the BBC World Service, and Heather Bond, Producer, talked to the Society about the BBC's Nepali Service, which marks its 20th anniversary this year.

The BBC World Service broadcasts in thirty-seven languages for more than 750 hours a week. For listeners who are at home with the English language broadcasts in English are an important part of the daily link between Britain and Nepal, and for all the countries of the Indian subcontinent. And as Hindi is widely understood and spoken in many parts of Nepal, the BBC Hindi service, (broadcasting principally to India with 4 transmissions of a total of 2 hours a day), reaches a good audience there. But the BBC Nepali language service is special to the country and to the people of Nepalese origin living in India, Sikkim and Bhutan. It is the smallest of the BBC's foreign language services with a programme of 20 minutes going out 5 days a week.

The decision on which languages we broadcast in and for how many hours is made by the British Government - specifically the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The decisions are made in close consultation with the BBC, which is fully responsible editorially and operationally for implementing what is known as the FCO Prescription.

The BBC's fundamental objective is to broadcast a service of news and information which is fast, accurate and impartial, and to make programmes which

people listen to because they want to, not because they have to. We accept an obligation to broadcast, in the broadest sense, in the national interest. The foundation of this is our ability and commitment to reporting things as they are and not dressed up to look palatable or to carry some persuasive but inaccurate message; we are not in the propaganda business.



*William Crawley, Assistant Head of
the BBC Eastern Service*

By Asian standards the Nepali language is not one of the most widely spoken. But it is the national language of Nepal, and with the exception of Sinhala, the national language of Sri Lanka (in which BBC transmissions were discontinued 13 years ago for reasons of econ-



Bush House, the home of the BBC World Service

omy) we broadcast in all the *national* languages of the Indian sub-continent - not of course all the *major* languages. The close contacts that Britain has had with Nepal over nearly 200 years - the aid, co-operation and trade that exist today, the established place of the Gurkhas in the British army, were all key factors in the decision to start a Nepali language service, and to its being continued and extended over the years.

It was in 1969, at a time when the Foreign Office had agreed to increase BBC broadcasts in Hindi, Urdu and Persian, that the decision was taken to introduce one half-hour weekly transmission in Nepali. The only available slot was on Saturday mornings - not an ideal time

either for listeners or broadcasters, but it was a start. So on June 7th 1969 staffed by a dentist, an accountancy student and Heather Bond we went on the air for the first time. The programme included a message from the Nepalese Ambassador, Sirdar Ishwary Raj Misra and a ten-minute Review of the Week's News, written by Evan Charlton. Programme prospects took an upward turn with the arrival of Yadav Kharel in early 1970. He was in London to attend a film course but this seemed to leave him plenty of time for our fledgling service and he swung into immediate action. Yadav was a 'fixer' par excellence. His greatest coup was perhaps to interview His Majesty King Mahendra in 1970 and this was

followed by an interview with the then Crown Prince Birendra. Meanwhile, a series of trainee broadcasters were arriving from Radio Nepal and, as part of their BBC course were attached to the Nepali Service so we had rather more personnel to 'play' with than many new services. New programmes were added to the basic current affairs output. We recorded interviews with Nepali VIPs in London, we made tapes of visiting musicians and Yadav introduced Ishwar Manandhar into the BBC and coached him into writing and presenting a Listeners' Letters programme. He's been there ever since together with Sabitha and Binod. In the first six months the Service received 97 letters from Nepal - almost all complaining that the transmission time was too short. It wasn't until 1974 that we advanced to 3 x 15'00" programmes a week, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Programming was easier because we only had to look back over two or three days of news instead of seven. But there was an added problem because we now clashed with the BBC's well-established Hindi Service which was very popular in Kathmandu. By then we had a second string to our bow because our broadcasts were being taken by BFBS Hong Kong.

Heather Bond was seconded to British Forces Broadcasting as a trainer. The station used to compile news bulletins from the latest edition of the South China Morning Post, and she immediately saw the opportunity of sharpening their accuracy and effectiveness through a link with the BBC Nepali service. This has remained a feature of our broadcasting in Nepali ever since.

Ten years later, the Foreign Office

agreed to increase the Nepali service further to three thirty minute programmes a week. This meant we could add the occasional drama to our output. We had recruited Khagendra Nepali, the present Chairman of Yeti, who not only writes plays, but produces and acts in them as well. This period also included special programmes on development in Nepal, on mountaineering - interviews with Lord Hunt, Chris Bonnington and Colonel Wylie and of course, Sherpa Tensing. Khagendra and Heather Bond together recorded Nepali poets and broadcast their work from London. The biggest step for the Nepali Service came earlier this year when the transmission time was expanded to 20 minutes five days a week. For the first time in its twenty years existence, the Nepali Service could take a proper daily bulletin from the Bush House newsroom.



Messrs. Mani Rana and Khagendra Nepali at action stations

Any enterprise of this nature has to justify the money that is spent on it, and some of the benefits are these:-

Firstly, the Nepali service provides direct contact potentially with a larger audience in Nepal than any other Media.

We are broadcasting to people at large, some influential, some quite ordinary people. We are not setting out to promote British policies or to sell British products, though indirectly there can be an influence here in creating an understanding and awareness of Britain as a whole. But open information is an important element of the relationship between countries and the people who live in them. In the long term it is almost the only basis for a real understanding and dialogue.

Secondly, the Nepali service has encouraged personal and professional links with the development of broadcasting in Nepal itself. A significant number of broadcasters and broadcasting engineers in Nepal have been trained by the BBC. Radio Nepal broadcasters have gained professional experience with the BBC Nepali Service, benefiting both the BBC and themselves and carrying skills and a broader outlook on international broadcasting with them on their return to Nepal.

Thirdly, BBC English by Radio and Television have been of value to Nepal both through transmission on the BBC World Service in English and the availability of BBC English by Radio and Television series to the Nepalese broadcasting media. The contribution of the BBC Nepali Service in this field is relatively recent and has been interrupted by the schedule changes last year when we moved to 5 days a week. However there is no doubt that bi-lingual English by Radio series are of great value in promoting the learning of English and we are hoping to get further time on the air to enable us to broadcast a bi-lingual Nepali-English series that we have already

recorded, and to make others.

Fourthly, within the BBC, the Nepali service contributes to an interest in and undertaking of Nepal. You cannot broadcast regularly to another country without sensitivity and understanding of attitudes and opinions in that country. You have to have an awareness of the different perceptions of Nepal to its neighbouring countries. The feedback from listeners to the Nepali service has an educational value, which helps the journalistic and professional requirement to understand and explain events in a country that geographically is quite a long way away.

Lastly, it is an indication of the importance attached to a language and a country - especially a small country - in incorporating it as part of a major world broadcasting network, such as the BBC is. It promotes knowledge of the country, disseminates information about it and underlines its cultural and political distinctiveness, highlighting it on the linguistic and political map.

It would be foolish to pretend that broadcasting is without risks. The scope for misunderstanding may be as large as the scope for enlightenment. But the BBC's professionalism and standards forged over many years are the best guard against that. News is often hard to get and expensive. News values as they may be understood in the western media may not always reflect real values. There is plenty of room for discussion; the BBC is open-minded to criticism and prepared to correct mistakes. But the overwhelming response from our listeners is a positive one and in Nepal I believe there is a strong appreciation of our commitment to continuing it.



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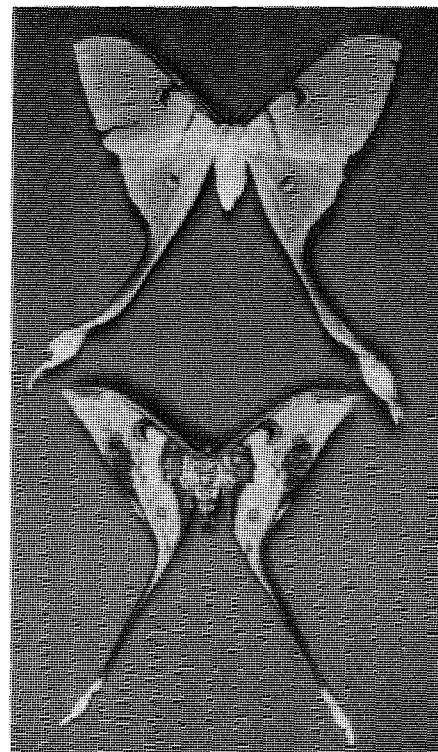
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INSECTS OF NEPAL

Talk to the Britain-Nepal Society by Colonel M.G. Allen, FRES, FRGS



Moon Moth (Actias Maenas)

Colonel Michael Allen gave a talk on 19 January at the Alpine Club. The talk was illustrated by slides and insects in display cases from Colonel Allen's collection.

Colonel Allen's interest in Entomology stemmed from his childhood in the forests of North-East Assam and this interest has continued ever since. Whilst commanding the 10th PMO Gurkha Rifles in Brunei 1989 to 1980 he organised three expeditions jointly with the British Museum (Natural History) and the Brunei Museum to study the flora and fauna of the

Temburong Valley, with particular reference to insect diversity and their role in the rain forest eco-system. Colonel Allen is a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and of the Royal Entomological Society. He served as Defence Attaché with the British Embassy Kathmandu from July 1982 to February 1985. Whilst in Nepal he continued his study of insects and made major collections on behalf of the National History Museum, including sponsoring two collecting expeditions.

Colonel Allen explained the importance of insects as man's greatest competitors for the world's biological resources, since insects comprise over 90% of all living creatures. Whilst many species compete with man, many more are essential to man's survival on this planet as pollinators of the trees and plants.

Nepal was a fascinating place to study insects, not only because of its altitude range from 300ft in the Southern Terai to the Northern Himalayan peaks of 20,000 feet plus, but because the Himalayas marked the transition zone between two major zoo-geographical regions; the Palearctic and the Oriental. Colonel Allen had carried out a North-South collecting transect with Panch Pokhari at 14,500 ft as the northern point (almost exclusively Palearctic), the Kathmandu Valley and its surrounding hills as the centre, and Chitwan Royal National Park as the southern point (almost exclusively Oriental).

Colonel Allen spoke of the immense diversity of insects, which included many endemic or very rare Himalayan species, that were to be found in the 5,000 ft to



Colonel Allen at work on his hobby

9,000 ft range of forested hills around Kathmandu, and in particular the forests of Godaveri and Phulchok Peak. These rich habitats, like many others in Nepal, were threatened by the impact of deforestation.

He commented that he was following in a long line of British Naturalists and Entomologists who had served with the British Embassy in Kathmandu. This link had started with the First Resident, E. Gardner (1816 to 1842), continued with B.H. Hodgson, FRS (1829 to 1842), and Lt. Col. F.M. Bailey (1935 to 1938), who had produced the first full checklist of Nepal's butterflies, including a number of new species.

Amongst the insects taken in Nepal by Colonel Allen was a Swift Moth. This was first taken by Gardner in 1820 and sent to an entomological friend, General Hardwick of the East India Company in

Calcutta. It was described as a new species *Hepialiscus nepalensis* and subsequently deposited in the Natural History Museum collection in London, but was not taken again. Colonel Allen rediscovered this species alive and well in the rim of the Kathmandu Valley, including the first known female specimens. The insect only flies during the first two weeks of the pre-monsoon rains in late May-early June, and then only at dusk for some 15 minutes. Colonel Allen took a considerable number of insects, particularly moths, beetles and parasitic wasps which proved to be new species. One moth of a rare genus which was previously known from only two species, the first to be found in Europe and the second in the Far East of Russia was taken within the grounds of the Embassy. It was described as *Cephimallota densoni* by Dr. G.S. Robinson of the Natural History

Museum, in honour of the Ambassador, His Excellency John Denson CMG.

To conclude, Colonel Allen expressed his concern at the impact on Nepal's rich and often unique fauna and flora resulting from deforestation. HMGN recognised the need to conserve and protect wild habitats as National Parks and this should receive strong international support.

At the conclusion the President Sir George Bishop thanked Colonel Allen for a most entertaining and interesting talk, and wished him every success when he returns to Nepal later this year as Defence Attaché and Commander, British Gurkhas Nepal.

Afternote

The restrictions imposed on Nepal by India and the consequent fuel shortages

have sadly speeded up the process of deforestation as more timber is cut down to use as fuel in place of kerosene, particularly around the major population centres such as Kathmandu and Pokhara. This degradation of the environment will in due course damage India too through siltation of the rivers and canal systems and flooding.

For those who might be interested, both Colonel Allen and Colonel Baily feature in an exhibition "Butterflies and Bayonets - the Soldier as Collector", at the National Army Museum, next to the Royal Chelsea Hospital. This interesting exhibition which portrays the role of the military as collectors in every conceivable field over the past two centuries, is well worth a visit. It will be open until January 1991.

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THE NEPALI SUPPER

by Mayura Brown

One of the most popular events in the Society's calendar is the Nepali Supper in February which always attracts a large gathering. The charming and friendly atmosphere of New Zealand House where it is held ensures a truly enjoyable evening.

After an excellent Nepali meal, our President, Sir George Bishop, spoke of the year's interesting and successful programme. He thanked the Chairman, Colonel Evans, the Honorary Secretary, Mrs. Celia Brown and all members of the Committee for their hard work and dedication.

He reminded us of the brief visit to London in December of our Patron, H.R.H. Prince Gyanendra, who is also Chairman of the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation. The Prince has given his strong support to Sir Arthur Norman for his untiring work on behalf of the Annapurna Project which had made good progress. It impressed the (then) Minister for Overseas Development, Mr. Chris Patten, when he visited Nepal last year.

Sir George warmly welcomed the Nepalese Ambassador, Lt. General Bharat K. Simha and Madame Simha, very popular and staunch friends of the Society from their previous stay in London, (1964-67), when he was Military Attaché at the Embassy. Not long after his arrival in London there was an earthquake in East Nepal in the Dharan area. He set up a relief appeal immediately. This was followed by a personal appeal by Colonel Evans. (The Ambassador was presented with a cheque for £5300 towards the

earthquake rehabilitation fund by Sir George on behalf of the Society in May.)

Next to receive a special welcome was H.E. the High Commissioner for New Zealand, Mr. Bryce Harland, Sir George expressed the Society's gratitude for the privilege of holding their Suppers at New Zealand House, and we were all delighted to have the High Commissioner and his lady at our dinner.

Finally Sir George welcomed our Guest of Honour, Group-Captain Leonard Cheshire, V.C., DFC, DSO, OM, His is a household name, the older generation remembering his remarkable wartime exploits, while people today are familiar with the Cheshire-Ryder Mission for the Relief of Suffering and the numerous "Homes" that exist in several countries.

The Cheshire Home at Jorpati in Kathmandu houses 32 disabled people whose ages range from 15 to 30 years. This venture has been so successful that Group-Captain Cheshire hopes to open another Home in Nepal which will be a welcome addition to the excellent work that is being done already. We heard how the idea for these Homes came about. At the end of World War 2 Group-Captain, Cheshire met an ex-serviceman, seriously ill, with no home and nobody to care for him. Though Leonard Cheshire himself was ill, he took the dying man into his own home and nursed him. It was a very moving story told with gentle humility. There must be countless people who owe much to this selfless, kindly person. He has done a great deal to alleviate suffering and continues to give dignity and a

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purpose in life to the disabled. While our admiration for him is unbound, we must spare a kind thought for all his helpers and especially for the General Secretary, Mrs. Ann Sparkes.

I have a particular interest in the Jorpati Home as I had the pleasure of presenting Group-Captain Cheshire with a cheque for £100 (donated by the De La Rue Company through the kind offices of Sir Arthur Norman), as early as the 18th April 1978 when the idea for a home in Nepal was first discussed. This time a cheque for over £1000 was presented to the Group-Captain.

The Ambassador said he had visited the Cheshire Home at Jorpati and was immensely impressed by the humanitarian work being done there for which he offered his grateful thanks to Group-Captain Cheshire.

After expressing his delight and that of Madame Simha at being back in London among so many friends, General Simha spoke of his happiness at the genuine affection shown by the members towards Nepal, and the trust that existed between the two nations. Britain, of all the countries in the world, was best known in Nepal even in the remotest areas because of the Gurkhas who had fought shoulder to shoulder with their British comrades, and many heroic tales have passed into the folklore of the Nepalese bards. The institution of Monarchy that exists in both countries also binds them strongly together.

Though geographically far apart, with different cultures and faiths, British and Nepalese friendship is unique, and foundation stone of this friendship that has existed now for nearly 175 years. In

conclusion the Ambassador said how pleased he was to see not only ex-Ambassadors to Nepal present who had contributed much to maintaining close friendship between the two countries, but also other friends of Nepal, among them the Chief of the General Staff General Sir John Chapple and Mr. Neil Thorne M.P., Chairman of the Anglo-Nepal Inter-Parliamentary Group. He also thanked the Committee for organizing such a delightful evening.

All the floral decorations as usual were very kindly supplied by Mr. Antony Wieler. Our thanks are due to the Commanding Officer of the 6th Queen Elizabeth's Own Gurkha Rifles for the Gurkhas Orderlies and the Piper.

...

The Britain-Nepal Medical Trust

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The secretary will be glad to send information or an annual report on request and also leaflets for distribution to others who may be interested.

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BOOK REVIEWS

by Lieutenant Colonel T.M. Lowe

Trekking in Nepal, West Tibet and Bhutan by Hugh Swift.

Hodder and Stoughton £9.95

360 pages Paperback

There is no shortage of books which will tell you something about trekking in the Himalayas. Alas, not all have been good, but some have been a lot better than others. The publishers of this book are amongst the leaders in the field and this is certainly one of their best. Its size (210mm by 130mm) in a soft cover suggests that it will not weigh you down, if you can't find a porter. Incidentally, four of its pages are devoted to the selection of suitable porters for the trek.

Each of the countries which figure in the title of the book has a chapter to itself. Nepal, of course, is well-trodden ground; the other areas less so, but they are not skimmed in any way. It doesn't matter where in the three regions you decide to trek, there is something in the book which you will find more than helpful.

Apart from all the detail with which you should familiarise yourself before setting off to the Himalayas, you will find three appendices which could be of more than passing interest: they are the "Glossary of Foreign Words" used in the text, an "Introduction to spoken Nepali" and a "Tibetan Glossary".

The book contains one appendix which provides details of outfitters who can help you. One only is in this country, the others are in Kathmandu. If you are a woman, then there is some good advice for you entitled "Making the most of being a woman trekker".

Himalayan Natural History has a chap-

ter to itself and will enable you to understand something about the fauna of the Himalayas.

Unlike so many books, this work has not only a clear list of contents, but also a first-rate index. If you intend to trek, find a tenner from your budget.

All 14 Eight-Thousanders

by Reinhold Messmer

Crowood Press £19.95 248 pages

Mountains are climbed by men (and women too). The stories about their climbing achievements which follow the climb usually reveal something about their obsessions. Messmer is no exception in this respect. Everest, alone and without the help of oxygen, and Nanga Parbat which he climbed with his brothers, who died during the descent, are just two of Messmer's achievements.

An exciting book, beautifully produced and well illustrated "The Eight Thousanders" is the story of Messmer's climbs of the top fourteen mountain peaks in the world. Of his conquests, Messmer says there was no heroism, or conquest, merely the satisfaction of having realised a complex idea, a target I had set myself. If Messmer comes through as a man who is obsessed with climbing high, then so be it. Like him, or hate him - you can't do both.

A previous book about Messmer, "High Ambition" by Ronald Faux, has already been reviewed in the Journal.

An interesting four pages in the Appendix are the bar charts which show in simple diagrams some facts about expeditions on the Eight Thousanders Trail.

Honey Hunters of Nepal

by E. Vali and D. Summers.

Thames & Hudson. £16.95 104 pages.

Large paperback

This is not just another book about Nepal and Gurkhas. It is a very large paperback and tells the story of the Honey Hunters not only in words, but also more dramatically in superb photographs. The main tribe from which the hunters come are the Gurungs. Few officers of Gurkha Regiments will have heard of the activities of Manilal and his fellow hunters who set out to rob the hives of the giant black bees in southern Nepal, so now they can read all about it.

The script which precedes the photos is informative and the photos themselves have been enlarged many times. The photographer used a Leica R4 for the purpose. As a publication, the book will fill a gap in what most of us know about Gurkhas and their ways. Not all Gurkhas were soldiers.

Some Other Books of Interest

Everest - Kangshun Face S. Venables
Hoddes £14.95

On The Big Hill M. Anderson Faber
£12.95

Trekking - Great Walks of the World
J. Cleare Unwin £14.95

Kailas - Sacred Mountain of Tibet
R. Johnson & K. Mohan Thames £18.00

The Trekking Peaks of Nepal
B. O'Connor Crowood £14.95

High Asia Jill Neate Unwin £25.00

The Kathmandu Valley
J. Sanday Collins £8.95

Footloose in the Himalaya
M. Harding Joseph £15.95



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NOTES ON THE BRITAIN-NEPAL SOCIETY

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President: H.R.H THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, GCVO

Our aim is to promote and foster good relations between the peoples of the United Kingdom and Nepal. The Society was founded in 1960, under the patronage of His late Majesty King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Deva of Nepal during his State Visit to London: Lord Hunt became the first President.

British and Nepalese subjects, and business firms or corporate bodies resident in Britain or Nepal are eligible for membership.

Members include serving and retired Gurkhas, mountaineers, members of the Diplomatic Service, schoolmasters, doctors, nurses, businessmen and scholars.

Ordinary members pay a subscription of £7 per annum. Life members - a single payment of £100. The Journal is sent free to all members.

The “Yetis” - a Nepalese studying or resident in Britain - are welcome at all functions. They are eligible to join as full members in the usual way. They have a flourishing organisation of their own and publish their own attractive journal.

The Society's programme includes:
Monthly lectures at the Alpine Club and elsewhere, meetings and films;

A Spring or Summer outing to a place of interest;

Receptions and hospitality for visiting Nepalese;

An AGM in November and an annual supper party in February or March.

We keep in touch with the Nepal-Britain Society in Kathmandu which the late H.H. Field Marshal Sir Kaiser, a Life Member of the Society, founded shortly before his death.

The Britain-Nepal Society has a growing membership and there is tremendous enthusiasm for Nepal. Our Meetings, which are usually attended by about one hundred people each, provide an excellent opportunity for members and their guests to get together. Our membership, not counting Honorary Members and Corporate Members, is now well over five hundred.

The new President of our Society (in succession to Sir George Bishop, CB, OBE) is His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester, GCVO.

The Committee welcome new members amongst people with a genuine interest in Nepal. The address of the Honorary Secretary is:

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