

# WHEN YOU GO HOME



The newsletter of the Kohima Educational Trust

NOVEMBER 2025



Above: students in Waoshu, Nagaland

## OUR WORK RECOMMENCES IN NAGALAND

We are thrilled to announce a new initiative enabling the Kohima Educational Trust (KET) to resume our work assisting young Nagas living in Nagaland with their education, fulfilling the aims and ambitions of our founding veterans.

Ever since the Kohima Educational Society's necessary licence to allow receipt of overseas funds failed to be renewed, we have been looking for alternative ways to support education for the Naga People. We first established the Overseas Naga Bursaries programme for tertiary level study outside India (see page 3). We have also been seeking an alternative approach for supporting education in Nagaland.

We are very happy to announce the agreement we have made with a local NGO in Nagaland, The Eleutheros Christian Society (ECS). Using the money entrusted to us by our many donors, we will be funding a Mobile Teaching Unit (MTU) which will work with ten village schools in the poorer and more rural areas of Nagaland.

The Mobile Teaching Unit will supplement the teaching of mathematics and science - under the Indian national curriculum - in remote villages where there is a dearth of teaching availability and where children often fail to make the required progress in these subjects.

The aim is to reach 900 to 1,000 children in middle schools - ages eight to fourteen. The focus will be on building numeracy, logical thinking and developing the basic understanding of mathematics and science, ensuring they develop the confidence to pursue higher-level learning.

Based in Tuensang, the MTU will consist of a team leader, three trainers and ten part-time village tutors. In each cycle the MTU will spend three to five days in each targeted village school, working alongside local teachers, equipping village teachers with methods to continue the work after the MTU has left.

We have agreed to run this programme for an initial period of three years. The necessary funds are in the process of being transferred to the ECS. The MTU is presently being set up and will start operating in February 2026 when the new academic year begins.

We look forward to bringing you updates. If you would like to have further information, please don't hesitate to contact us at: [sylvia@kohimaeducationaltrust.org](mailto:sylvia@kohimaeducationaltrust.org)

War | Memory | Gratitude



# MOBILE TEACHING UNIT: NEW KET PROJECT IN NAGALAND

With huge thanks to The Eleutheros Christian Society (ECS), we are now able to re-commence our work in Nagaland and are extremely excited to announce our new project which will start in February 2026.

Initially, the project will run for three years and will reach ten Government middle schools in eastern Nagaland. The aim is to strengthen the educational outreach in villages which have limited teaching resources. Rural schools in eastern Nagaland face persistent shortages of subject teachers, especially in mathematics and science. In some areas, across 48 schools there are just seven maths teachers and six science teachers for over 5,000 students. Remoteness, weak infrastructure and irregular classes compound the learning gaps.



The goal is to ensure that every child in the ten targeted schools attains grade-level numeracy and science literacy. The focus will be on mid-level schools (ages between eight and fourteen) and will reach between 900 and 1,000 children.

The objectives include strengthening the basic understanding of maths and science concepts and ensuring that these topics are systematically taught in the villages which lack qualified subject teachers.

The Mobile Teaching Unit (MTU) will bridge the gap by reaching multiple schools on rotation and aligning lessons with the state curriculum. It will introduce simple, portable and low-cost laboratory setups that allow children to learn science through hands-on experiments, adopting participatory teaching methods that combine experiments, story-telling and problem-solving exercises.



The MTU will work alongside local teachers and involve the all-important village councils and, of course, the parents. Their active participation will help to build long term ownership, ensuring sustainability and relevance of the initiative. Local teachers will be trained in how to use the low-cost lab kits and co-teaching methods.



There will be three trainers who will travel as a unit along with one team leader. There will be nine cycles per village across the three-year period; each cycle is a three or five day intensive course per village as well as ongoing co-teaching, evening study circles and quarterly reviews.

Each child will be assessed at the start and end of each year to measure the success of the project and we will supply an annual report of the project's progress.



If you would like to know more and/or contribute to this new initiative, please contact Sylvia via email: [sylvia@kohimaeducationaltrust.org](mailto:sylvia@kohimaeducationaltrust.org)

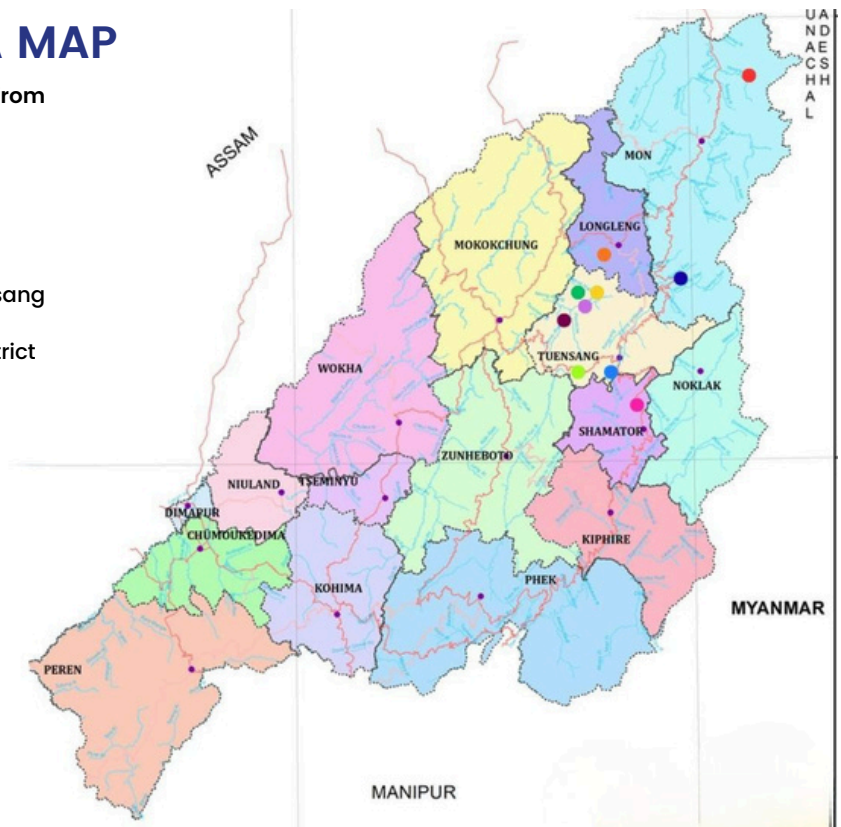


# MOBILE TEACHING UNIT: AREA MAP

The ten schools that the MTU will support over 3 years from February 2026–November 2028:

Government Middle School (GMS) Tangnyu, Mon district  
Government High School (GHS) Bumei, Mon district  
Government Middle School, Yangching, Longleng district  
Government High School Noksen Town, Tuensang district  
Government Primary and Middle School Noksen Village, Tuensang district  
Government Primary and Middle School Longra, Tuensang district  
Government Middle School Longtang, Tuensang district  
Government High School Chingmelen, Tuensang district  
Government Middle School Chendang, Tuensang district  
Government Middle School, Leangkonger, Shamator district

- |                             |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| ● TANGNYU (MON)             | ● LONGRA (TUENSANG)      |
| ● BUMEI (MON)               | ● LONGTANG (TUENSANG)    |
| ● YANGCHING (LONGLENG)      | ● CHINGMELEN (TUENSANG)  |
| ● NOKSEN TOWN (TUENSANG)    | ● CHENDANG (TUENSANG)    |
| ● NOKSEN VILLAGE (TUENSANG) | ● LEANGKONGER (SHAMATOR) |



## OVERSEAS NAGA BURSARIES: NOW OPEN TO STUDENTS COMING FROM NAGALAND

At the beginning of 2025 we commenced our Overseas Naga Bursary scheme which was originally designed to offer financial assistance to tertiary level students of Naga heritage, who resided outside of India. **We are now delighted to confirm that we can also offer financial assistance to students who normally reside in Nagaland and are coming overseas for their studies.** We are currently inviting applications for 2026

The first two bursaries were awarded in June 2025 to Anoushka Kitson and Kimaya Kitson, both great-granddaughters of Mari, a young Naga girl living in Kohima when the Japanese invaded. Mari's story can be read in her biography written by Easterine Kire, excerpts of which were read by Anoushka and Kimaya at the Evening of Remembrance.



Anoushka (pictured above) graduated in July from Cardiff University and is almost 5 months into working as a new doctor. It has been a steep learning curve, quite stressful at times but overall, she is finding it very enjoyable and rewarding. She is based on a diabetes and endocrine ward and is getting used to working night shifts! After this she hopes to specialize in Geriatric Medicine.

Kimaya (pictured below) is now a 5th year medical student at Cardiff University and studying hard to graduate next year. Her passion and desire to help others alongside her long term and growing fascination with medical science has driven her towards pursuing a career in Medicine.



The bursary support will prioritise STEM subjects and professional qualifications in the trades and services sectors and the applicant will have to show they are taking up an offer of a firm place at a UK university and be in possession of a UK visa.

Each bursary will be worth a total of £3,750 and will be paid to the successful applicant on a prorated basis across the terms or semesters of the course. It will not be paid in a lump sum.

If you would like to contribute to this new initiative or to learn more about it, please email [sylvia@kohimaeducationaltrust.org](mailto:sylvia@kohimaeducationaltrust.org)

If you are interested in applying for a bursary, the next round of applications is now open (November 2025) and the application form can be found on the KET website. Applications will close on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025 with interviews taking place from January 2026.

<https://www.kohimaeducationaltrust.net/projects/overseas-naga-bursaries>



# 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF VJ DAY

Victory over Japan is commemorated every year on 15<sup>th</sup> August and this year it was the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of the Second World War. An estimated 71,000 soldiers from the UK and the Commonwealth died fighting Japan, including upwards of 12,000 prisoners of war.

Commemoration services were held around the country beginning on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> August with a sunset ceremony at the Memorial Gates in Green Park, in central London, which paid tribute to Commonwealth personnel.

As dawn broke on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August, British military bagpipers played the lament 'Battle's O'er' at the National Memorial Arboretum and at Edinburgh Castle – as well as in Nepal, Brunei, New Zealand, Japan and aboard HMS Prince of Wales, which was then at sea in the Far East.

A piper also performed at a Japanese peace garden in West London to reflect the reconciliation that has taken place between the UK and Japan in the decades since the war ended.



On Friday evening, buildings across the country were lit up to mark this 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, including Buckingham Palace, 10 Downing Street, the Tower of London, Blackpool Tower, Durham Cathedral and Cardiff Castle – as well as the White Cliffs of Dover and Kranji War Memorial in Singapore.

## THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM

KET was honoured to be invited by the Royal British Legion who organised this magnificent and momentous commemoration service.

Some thirty-three men, now aged between 96 and 105, who served in the Far East and the Pacific, were the guests of honour at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire. They were joined by Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla.

Wreaths were laid by the royal couple before a flypast by the RAF's Red Arrows and a national two-minute silence.



The KET wreath was laid at the foot of the Burma Star Memorial

The event heard moving accounts from veterans and civilians caught up in the war. Earlier in the day, the King had released an audio message in which he hailed the courage and sacrifice of the veterans.

A particularly emotional moment occurred when veteran Yavar Abbas (aged 105), originally from Lucknow in India, went briefly off-script "to salute my brave King, who is here with his beloved Queen in spite of the fact that he is under treatment for cancer".



The service, which was also attended by Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, concluded with a flypast by Second World War-era aircraft: the Spitfire, Hurricane and the Lancaster bomber.

The full service can be watched on BBC iplayer.



Photo ©PA Media via [bbc.co.uk](https://www.bbc.co.uk)



# VJ DAY 80TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION AT NORWICH CATHEDRAL

KET Chairman Angus Barclay was honoured to attend Norwich Cathedral's service for VJ Day 80th anniversary commemorations in the presence of Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester (pictured below) Photo © royal.uk



After more than two years in the planning, Anglican FEPOW (Far East Prisoners of War) Chaplain Reverend Pauline Simpson BEM, organised this immense service; remembering not only those who did not come home but also those who returned traumatised after years in captivity in Japanese prisoner of war camps. Pauline's own father, Sidney Benson was one of the many thousands who returned home long after the war had ended.

## VJ DAY IN SIDMOUTH

KET friend and longtime supporter David Thorneley laid a wreath on behalf of KET, pictured right, as part of the VJ80 commemorations in Sidmouth which took place on 15th August 2025.

James Walker wrote:

On a splendid summer Friday morning – and later a similarly fine evening – Sidmouth paid tribute and gave thanks to those who gave up some of their best years, and others their lives, in return for 'Victory Over Japan'.

Reverend Sarah Mounoury presided over a simple, well-articulated service. Wreaths were laid at R.W. Sampson's war memorial, which with its flourishing floral boxes brimming over with natural colour, looked magnificent. Remembering our fallen servicemen should not be an entirely sombre affair, the bright flowers acknowledge the ardour and cheerfulness of young lives cut short.

Over one thousand people attended the service and wreaths were laid by the Duke of Gloucester and Lord Dannatt. Lady Dannatt was there in her role as Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk. The sermon was delivered by Bishop Peter Eagles who spoke at length on Kohima. It was the most brilliant of sermons and can be viewed on our website.



Angus Barclay (pictured above) whose own uncle was killed at Kohima fighting with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Norfolk Regiment, was invited to be part of the service and gave interviews to the BBC and ITV on his arrival at the Cathedral which can also be viewed on our website.



## DORSET COUNCIL VJ DAY 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SERVICE



Friend of KET and webinar guest speaker Christopher Jary (pictured left) has very kindly shared his VJ Day speech which he gave in Dorchester on 15th August 2025 which can be found on our website along with the webinar about the Dorsets which he and Elliot Metcalfe of The Keep Military Museum in Dorset kindly presented for KET.

The Dorsets played a key role at Kohima. For 18 days from 26<sup>th</sup> April the Dorsets held a vital position high on Garrison Hill, keeping the Japanese at bay. Finally, after 18 days holding this position, a Grant tank was winched up the steep hill. Supported by D Company of the Dorsets, the tank knocked out all the Japanese positions and the enemy began their retreat.

Originally 750-strong, the Dorsets lost 85 young lives at Kohima and three times that number wounded.

Many descendants of veterans of this battle attended the service including Patricia Firth daughter of Ezra Rhodes, the tank driver and Jerry Bird, whose uncle was killed at Kohima at just 19 years of age. He will be the subject of one of our forthcoming webinars next year.



On the 4<sup>th</sup> October, a day of talks to commemorate the 80th Anniversary was organised by Jules Wooding at the Cumbria Museum of Military History.

Home of the Borders Regiment, it was fitting that the day began with a talk from Stuart Eastwood about the 2nd, 4th & 9th Battalions of the Border Regiment, followed by Simon Sole, who gave a fascinating talk about Britain and Japan becoming enemies, once allies a few short years before.

In the afternoon, John Sadler gave a highly illustrative talk about the battle of the Admin Box and the crucial role this victory played in the overall outcome of the war. The day concluded with Dr William Spencer who shared a few of his research insights into finding records of POWs.

KET was delighted to be invited to have the opportunity to attend, showcase some handmade Naga items and speak briefly about its work.



On 20<sup>th</sup> September, to commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VJ Day, the National Army Museum launched a new exhibition "Beyond Burma" with a terrific day of talks and displays. The exhibition runs until 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

KET was delighted to have been invited to join them for their day of events and talks to launch their new exhibition and to mark the 80th anniversary of VJ Day and the end of the Second World War.

KET trustee Dr Robert Lyman MBE (pictured below) concluded the day with a brilliant talk on the superlative characteristics of the Burma Campaign.

The day was extremely well attended, each talk filling the lecture theatre and KET was delighted to be able to showcase all the wonderful items handmade in Nagaland, which are also available from our online store.

We are very grateful to both the National Army Museum and the Burma Star Memorial Fund for hosting such a tremendous day.



Lucy Betteridge-Dyson (pictured below) gave an excellent talk on the actions and experiences of 3 Commando Brigade in the jungles of Burma and we are delighted to announce that she has agreed to give a KET webinar on the subject early next year.



David Omissi talked about the crucial role of the Indian Army in the Allied reoccupation of Burma and Dr Alan Jeffreys discussed the pivotal role played by Britain's generals in the campaign.

Paul Corden explored the role of the Chindits explaining their important role during the Burma campaign and Jeremy Archer shared first-hand accounts from veterans who served in this most arduous of campaigns.





# KOHIMA COMMEMORATION IN YORK

## SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

It is an enormous privilege and honour to organise this annual service of commemoration for the battles of Kohima and Imphal which, with thanks to the Chapter at York Minster, is held every year in Dean's Park.

This year, commemorating the 80th anniversary of VJ Day, the event was held on Thursday 26th June. York is the spiritual home of the veterans of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division as that is where the 2 DIV HQ was located and where many joined up and began their journey to the Far East in 1942. There is a Kohima memorial in Dean's Park which is where the wreaths are laid.

Over two hundred KET friends, supporters and families of veterans attended the service which was conducted by the Very Reverend Dominic Barrington, Dean of York. The excellent Address was given by The Reverend Canon Michael D Parker, KHC CF, the Chaplain General to His Majesty's Land Forces.



The service was attended by The Lord Mayor of York, Councillor Martin Rowley BEM (below left) and the Sheriff of York, Mr Paul Doughty (below centre) and we were honoured to be joined, in this 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, by Mr. Ikegami Masaki, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary (Deputy Head of Mission) of Japan (below right). All laid wreaths in memory of those who fought and died in the campaign.



DATE OF NEXT YEAR'S SERVICE IS  
2<sup>ND</sup> JULY 2026

Descendants of veterans, (below clockwise left to right) Janet Hodges, Paul Willbourn and Linda Hetherington gave the readings and Keith McIntosh, son of a veteran, recited the Kohima Epitaph.



Pivotal to the day's success is always WO1 (GSM) Brian Kiernan who read Laurence Binyon's famous lines: 'At the going down of the sun....and in the morning, We will Remember Them'

The service was followed by lunch at Imphal Barracks where all the guests enjoyed a two course lunch, took part in the annual John Skene Raffle, and congratulated the winner of the Harry May Award for Leadership, which this year went to Sgt Crawthorne (below centre with Angus Barclay KET Chairman, left and Lt Col Thomas Skinner) of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Signal Regiment.



The music was provided by the Band of the Royal Yorkshire Regiment, by kind permission of Commanding Officer 4 Royal Yorkshire Regiment. The Piper was Andrew Paton.



We at KET continue to be enormously grateful to the Chapter of York without whose support we would not be able to organise this service. We would also like to thank the soldiers of the 2nd Signal Regiment for their unstinting help, ensuring the organisation of this event goes smoothly. Above all, it is all the families who support the event whom we thank most warmly. We are joined by more and more families and friends every year for this very special event and we look forward to welcoming you all again next year when the service will be on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2026



# AN EVENING OF REMEMBRANCE

As part of the VJ80 anniversary commemorations we launched our online Book of Remembrance on the evening prior to the service in York.

It was a memorable and emotional evening. Our host for the evening was Dr Richard Duckett (below) who told the story of the campaign from arrival in India in 1942 to VJ Day in August 1945. Richard will be familiar to those who watch our series of webinars. He is an historian and author and has taught history and politics for the last 20 years. His most recent book is *Jungle Warrior* which is available to buy at the KET online shop.



As Richard said in his opening preamble, we are all historians and indeed, our wonderful speakers who contributed to the evening proved his point by sharing many more personal and lesser known aspects and stories of fighting a war, perhaps not recounted by the 'official' historians.

KET Trustee Dr Ron Clayton introduced the evening (below).

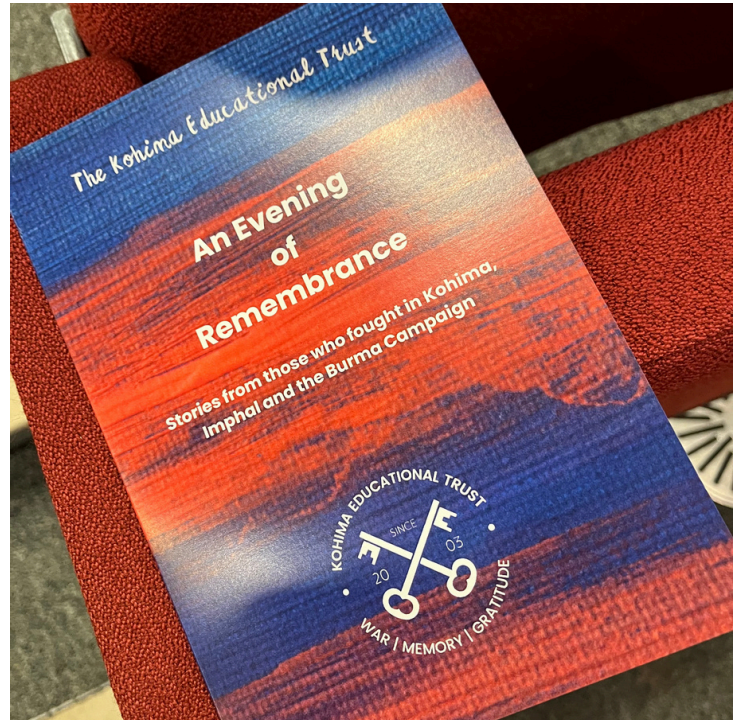


Ten descendants of veterans and supporters of KET honoured us by allowing their personal family stories to be told; some told the stories themselves, including Lucy Green, the daughter of Alick McDonald who fought in the 1<sup>st</sup> Arakan with the 5<sup>th</sup> Indian Division and recounted his experiences laying lines at night despite patrols. Bob White told his father's story from the Admin Box during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Arakan offensive. Hannah Gibson read movingly from her grandfather's account of his war with the 99<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment and Jerry Bird recounted the story of his uncle, Cyril John Bird who died in Kohima fighting with the Dorsets.

Sally Cohen's father, John Moreton kept a diary and Sally read an extract written from an observation post on Garrison Hill in April 1944 where he was awarded an MC; Patricia Firth, daughter of Ezra Rhodes, recounted her dad's story of attempting to get his Grant tank up onto the tennis court, but it slid down one side of the hill, where it remains to this very day.

Richard Cullen spoke movingly about his mother who had been a nurse near the front and Ben Brownless read from his father's searing account of the march down Death Valley with the 1<sup>st</sup> Essex. Meanwhile, Anoushka and Kimaya Kitson told their great-grandmother's story of being a 14-year Naga girl in Kohima when the Japanese invaded.

We also enjoyed several recordings, two made by veterans themselves. The evening began with an excerpt from Gordon Graham's audio book *The Trees are All Young on Garrison Hill* and his daughter Sylvia May concluded the readings with Gordon's description of crossing the Irrawaddy river, where he was awarded the second of his two MCs.



Ray Jackson flew with 34 Squadron and crashed behind enemy lines. His story had previously been recorded by KET. Introduced by his son Richard, it was replayed on the evening, telling his tale of being rescued by the Nagas.

The evening was recorded and can be viewed on our website along with the Book of Remembrance itself which contains nearly 100 personal stories and photographs.

This is a remarkable and unique collection and if you have not yet contributed your family story and wish to do so, please write to: [remembrance@kohimaeducationaltrust.org](mailto:remembrance@kohimaeducationaltrust.org)





# WEBINARS

We hope you will have enjoyed our fantastic series of webinars in 2025. With huge thanks to our wonderful speakers, we have brought to you a further nine events this year featuring wide ranging and often little-known subjects.

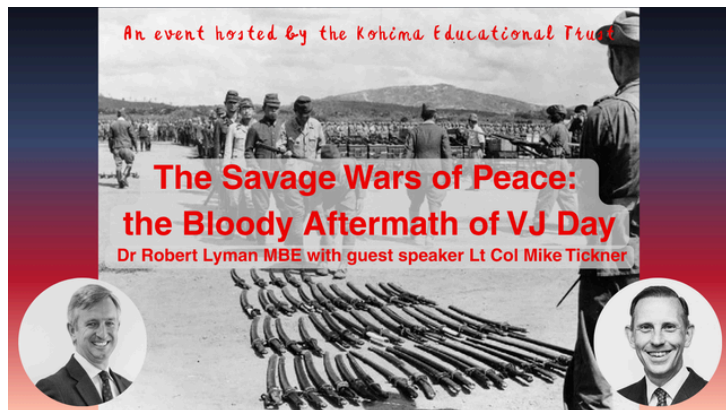
Liz Lockhart Muir gave a brilliantly moving presentation about her aunt who was in the Women's Auxiliary Services in Burma (WASBIES) whose story you can also find in her first class book *From Frontline to Fortitude*.

Emily and David Lutken also greatly moved their audience when they told the story of their father, who spent much of the war years behind enemy lines first with V Force and then with OSS.

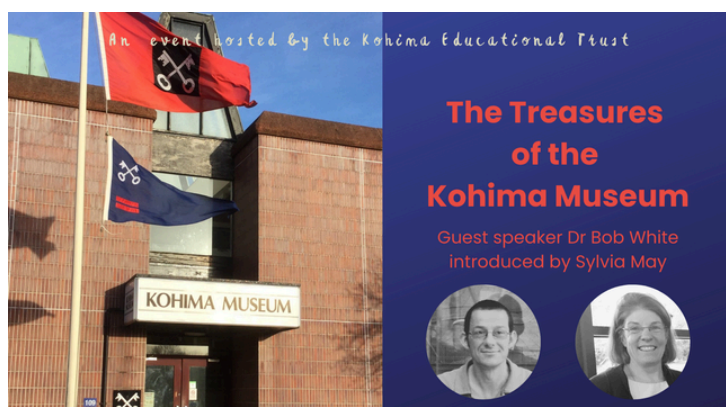
The late Dr Nigel Warwick gave a memorable talk on the RAF Regiment in Burma, a tale little told and I know that Nigel was over the moon to be able to bring this story to a wider audience. We were deeply saddened to learn of his death just a few short months later.



The brilliant Lt Col (Retd) Mike Tickner gave a fascinating account of the aftermath of VJ Day in 'The Savage Wars of Peace'. Japan's sudden surrender created a seismic resetting of the political and social order in the Far East as power vacuums were exploited for political gain and rapid decisions were made, with consequences which still reverberate today.



Dr Bob White, the new curator at the Kohima Museum, talked about the treasures of the museum and highlighted some of the fascinating items held within its walls, many of which have been donated by families of veterans – more on page 10.



Jack Bowsher entertained enormously with his account of one of the last huge battles of the campaign at Meiktila: Thunder Run and Andrew Kilsby took us through the trials and tribulations of many crashed airmen in Burma and their stories of reaching safety, entitled *Uncertain Outcomes*.



Our webinar schedule began and finished its 2025 season with the same presenter, Dr Richard Duckett. In January he gave his excellent and highly researched presentation on the SOE in Burma; and in November, together with Colonel Peacock's grandson, Duncan Gilmour, saw the season out with a flourish with the fabulous *Jungle Warrior*.

I am sure all our presenters will join me in thanking Dr Robert Lyman MBE for hosting each one and bringing his own perspective to many of the subjects tackled.

Five of our guest speakers have books available which can be purchased from our online store and do remember, all our webinars are recorded and available to watch for free any time. [www.kohimaeducationaltrust.org/news-and-events/webinars](http://www.kohimaeducationaltrust.org/news-and-events/webinars)

## 2026 WEBINAR PROGRAMME

**22nd January 2026** – Managing the Media in the India-Burma War 1941-1945. Guest speaker Dr Philip Woods introduced by Dr Robert Lyman MBE

**26th February 2026** – Jungle Commandos: The Battle for Arakan 1945. Guest speaker Lucy Betteridge-Dyson introduced by Dr Robert Lyman MBE.

**26th March 2026** – Judgement at Tokyo: World War II on Trial and the Making of Modern Asia. Guest speaker Professor Gary Bass, the William P. Boswell Professor of World Politics of Peace and War at Princeton University, introduced by Dr Robert Lyman MBE

**21st April 2026** – From Devon's Hills to the Naga Hills (An Ordinary Soldier's Journey). Guest speaker Jerry Bird, introduced by Dr Robert Lyman MBE

Full details will be on the website and registration will open approximately 2-3 weeks before each event date.



# THE KOHIMA MUSEUM IN YORK

On 6<sup>th</sup> May 1944, Captain John Randle of the Royal Norfolk Regiment gave his life charging a bunker on GPT Ridge at Kohima. He was awarded a Victoria Cross (VC) posthumously for his courage and self-sacrifice. There was great excitement amongst the Staff and Trustees of the Kohima Museum when Captain Randle's son, also John, loaned his father's VC to the museum, to accompany the other items already there including Captain Randle's cap badge and captured INA flag.

To mark this loan, the museum decided to hold an exhibition about Victoria Crosses of the Burma Campaign. It described the heroic events leading to the award of twenty of these famous medals, with Captain Randle's as the centrepiece. Beneath pictures of VC recipients, the museum included displays of cartoons depicting the same incident in the Victor comic, published from 1961 until 1992.



Museum Development North announced a competitive grant scheme to fund five projects in response to the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE or VJ Day. The Kohima Museum submitted a collaborative application with the Bankfield Museum in Halifax, which houses the museum of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment. The joint application was successful and the Kohima Museum was awarded £8,000 to fund its activities.

## DR NGULLY: KOHIMA EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY CHAIRMAN

It is with great sadness we report that our dear friend and colleague, Dr Phyoemo Ngully, passed away in Kohima on 3<sup>rd</sup> July from a sudden heart attack.

Dr Ngully, as KES Chairman, had worked tirelessly on our behalf, despite his incredibly heavy workload. We will always be thankful to him for his wonderful Mind Your Health programme which he conducted over a period of seven or eight years, training up to twenty-five people at a time, teaching them basic healthcare and gifting medical kits for their villages. He carried out this work selflessly amidst so many other calls on his time.

Some of you will have had the pleasure of meeting him when he came to the UK and attended the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary service in York. You may also have met him in Kohima, when, at the momentous 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service, he gave the closing remarks. He spoke of the gratitude and the debt of honour felt by those men of the British and Commonwealth armies who had so briefly fought in Kohima, destroying it in the process and how much they felt they owed something to the Naga people, to mark this moment in history.



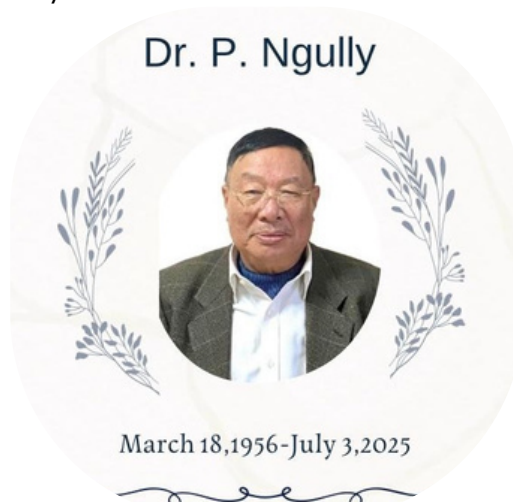
The grant financed rearrangement of the museum's displays to accommodate the VC exhibition. It also paid for the expensive renovation and framing of Captain Randle's captured flag, so it could be displayed with his VC.

The exhibition opened on the day of the KET Remembrance Service in York, providing a good crowd at the museum. The museum was also delighted to host a group that had travelled from Japan, whose fathers or grandfathers had fought at Kohima. The visit was organised by Akiko MacDonald, Chair of the Burma Campaign Society, who describes the Kohima Museum as a shrine to those who fought. One of the group, Yoshiko Fujiwara, reflected: "If my father fought in the atrocious conditions of Burma, perhaps our task is to fight against forgetting. As his descendants, we feel it is our duty to tell the story – not to glorify, nor to be ashamed, but to understand and have dialogues."

The Kohima Museum marked VJ Day with a display at York Army Museum. Located in the centre of York, this splendid museum kindly supported the smaller Kohima Museum by creating a large display space which was enjoyed by all.

The Kohima Museum display was also represented by the Bankfield Museum when they staged an event in Halifax on 16<sup>th</sup> August. A record number of visitors attended both the York Army Museum and Bankfield VJ80 events combined, which raised awareness of the Burma Campaign in general and resulted in an upsurge of visitors to the Kohima Museum. It's been a terrific year for the Kohima Museum and more exhibitions are planned for 2026 to keep memories of the events in Burma fresh and in the public eye. The Kohima museum can be viewed on line at [www.kohimamuseum.co.uk](http://www.kohimamuseum.co.uk)

He was a private man, a humble man and a deeply thoughtful man. Always prepared to help others, we will be forever grateful to him. He will be missed enormously and our thoughts remain with his family.





# SAMPAN TRAVEL

Sampan creates journeys around the Bay of Bengal. Remote, bespoke travel in Myanmar, India and Bangladesh. Their journeys are for those seeking something different. They are adventures for thoughtful travellers, with authentic, immersive experiences. Their purpose is to help their guests look closer and go further. To encourage travellers to make a connection through unexpected encounters. Their journeys are handcrafted. They offer customization through an intimate service and personal recommendations.

In November each year Sampan organises a **Forgotten War Tour**, led by British historian and KET Trustee Dr Robert Lyman MBE (below). It is an exploration of the Burma Campaign, with a focus on the Battle of Kohima and the role played by the Nagas.



Unique among battlefield tours, The Forgotten War Tour explores the stories of civilians caught up in war: the Nagas, the Kukis, the Manipuris. This journey allows our guests to dive into the contemporary lives of the people that call these battlefields home today. It is the only Second World War tour of India that incorporates two nights at the picturesque village of Jessami.

## INDUS EXPERIENCES

**Family History and Battlefield Tours of India:** Discover Kohima with Indus Experiences

"Seeking fame or fortune, Britons first came to India more than 350 years ago. Some returned home as wealthy men. Many others, including soldiers, women and children, left their bones here. Discover the life they led before they found their last resting place in India."

This evocative thought captures the spirit of Indus Experiences' Family History and Battlefield Tours of India - journeys that reconnect travellers with their ancestors and shine a light on the extraordinary story of Britain's long association with the subcontinent.

For over 30 years, Indus Experiences has been crafting tailor-made holidays and family history tours for those wishing to explore their family roots or to visit sites of personal and national significance. These unique journeys help travellers uncover their ancestors' stories - visiting churches, cemeteries and family homes that may have changed beyond recognition since the Indian Independence Act of 1947.

For those with a special interest in military history, Indus Experiences has a long-standing partnership with the Kohima Educational Trust (KET) and the Kohima Museum in York. Together, they offer expertly-led tours to the battlefields of Kohima and Imphal - tracing the path of the British 2nd Division through the jungles and hills of north-east India.

The popular **Britain's Greatest Battle: Kohima and Imphal tour** is led by Bob Cook, former Curator of the Kohima Museum, and brings history to life through contemporary maps, personal accounts and operational records.

The tour visits the site of the Battle of Jessami, where the Assam Regiment (largely made up of Nagas) fought one of the most pivotal battles of the Burma Campaign.

The Battle of Jessami saw the Japanese 31st Division attempting to seize Jessami to facilitate their advance towards Kohima and Dimapur - this was feared to be Japan's long-expected "March on Delhi". Despite being heavily outnumbered, the young soldiers of the Assam Regiment put up a staunch resistance for five days. Eventually came the order to retreat.

Led by Commanding Officer Lt Col "Bruno" Brown, the retreat back to Kohima took 39 hours, arriving there literally hours before the Japanese invaded Kohima.

Sampan's **39 Hours to Kohima tour** is a challenging trek, recreating that march from Jessami to Kohima, masterminded by Brown's granddaughter, Charlotte Carty.

In March/April 2026 Sampan are offering the chance for a maximum of 12 people to attempt this journey. Starting at Jessami at midnight on 1st April, the tour will aim to reach Kohima on foot by 3pm on 3<sup>rd</sup> April.

Sampan also organises a **Beyond the Chindwin tour** in Myanmar each year in February. Also led by Dr Robert Lyman MBE, this tour explores what happened in Burma during the Second World War, with particular emphasis on 1945 and General Bill Slim's reconquest of the country. This tour also looks closely at how the events of the 1940s shaped the country it is today.

For more information about Sampan's Second World War tours please contact Bertie Alexander, Founder & MD of Sampan Travel [bertie@sampantravel.com](mailto:bertie@sampantravel.com)

Participants not only gain an understanding of the military campaign but also a deep appreciation of the landscape, the people and the enduring friendship between Britain and Nagaland. The next group tour with Bob Cook is scheduled for Autumn 2026 (dates will be confirmed shortly).

Tailor-made individual holidays can be arranged at any time of year. Every itinerary is individually and sensitively designed, combining meticulous research with local knowledge. Travellers are guided to the places where their forebears lived, worked, and are remembered - from hill stations and cantonments to railway towns and mission outposts. Many describe these visits as deeply moving experiences: personal pilgrimages that bring the past vividly to life.

Indus Experiences' commitment extends beyond remembrance: for every tour booked, a financial contribution is made to support both KET and the Kohima Museum. This ensures that while we honour those who fought at Kohima, we also help to provide educational opportunities for the children of Nagaland today.

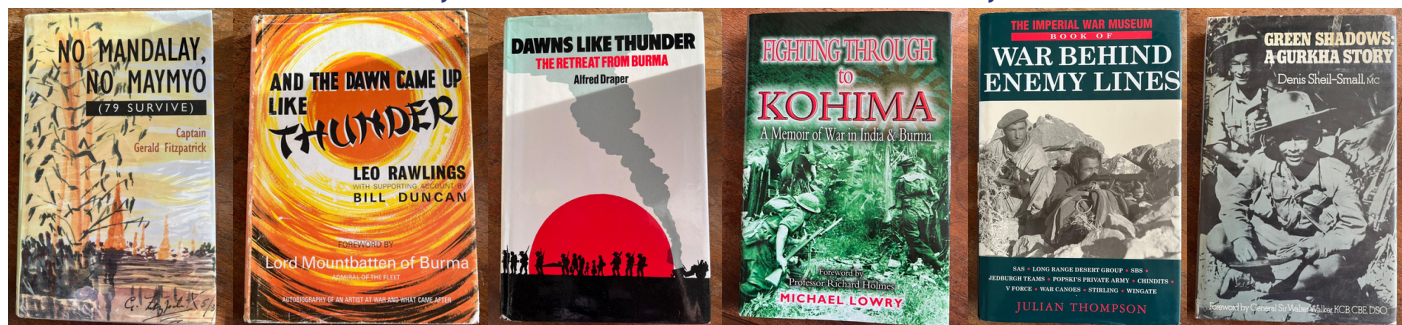
Whether tracing a family connection or exploring the sites of Britain's wartime past, Indus Experiences offers a sensitive and meaningful way to rediscover history - and to ensure it is remembered with dignity, understanding and gratitude. To find out more or to discuss your own tailor-made journey, please visit: [www.indusexperiences.co.uk/holiday-types/family-history-tours](http://www.indusexperiences.co.uk/holiday-types/family-history-tours)

email [holidays@indusexperiences.co.uk](mailto:holidays@indusexperiences.co.uk)  
or call 020 8901 7320





# KET SHOP – BOOKS, HANDMADE JEWELLERY, BAGS AND SCARVES

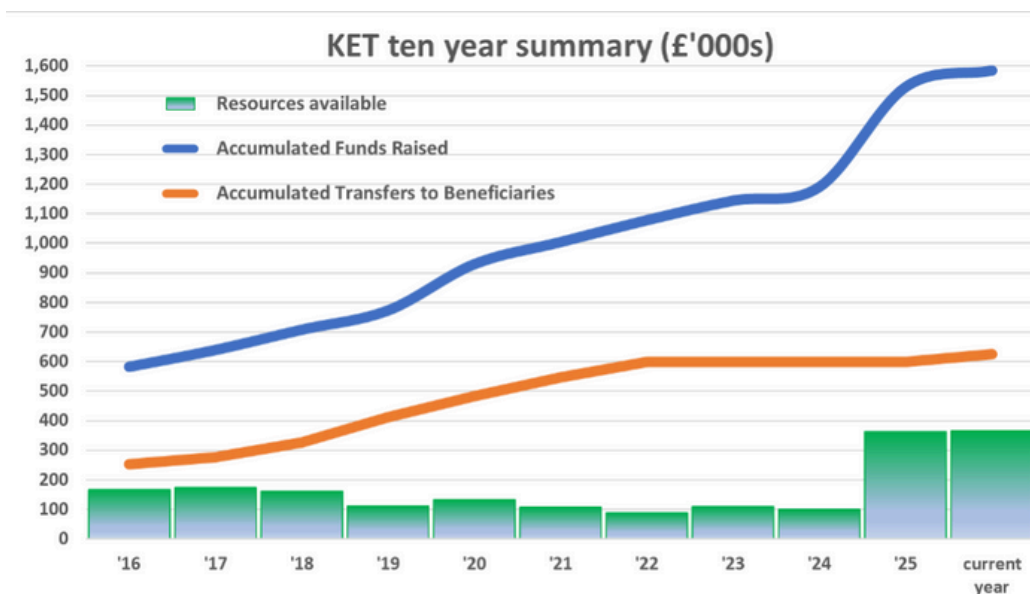


The KET online shop sells a wide range of books about the campaign, both new books and, recently added, a fascinating second-hand selection of titles covering many aspects of the Burma campaign.

## Bags, purses, jewellery, wooden utensils: handmade in Naga Homes



## FINANCIAL UPDATE



Above is an 'at a glance' illustration of the KET finances over the last ten years. The blue line shows the big rise in funds raised, thanks in the main to a most generous legacy last year; the brown line, remaining flat from '23 to '25, reflects the absence of the necessary FCRA licence and the associated frustration in not being able to send monies to our beneficiaries. The contrasting trajectories of these two lines explains the very material rise in 'Resources available' (blue/green columns).

However, with thanks to our new partner in Nagaland, ECS, we now have a new channel enabling us to continue our work in Nagaland with the original focus of our founding fathers - assisting young Nagas with their education - firmly back on the agenda. Our first donation is currently on its way to India and is reflected in the slight rise in the brown line, in the 'current year'. This rise also reflects the first year's expenditure on Bursaries awarded in the summer and will grow next year, as we increase the number of Bursaries awarded and make further payments to ECS.

We have you, our supporters, to thank for continuing to support us during these last three years. Your patience and confidence in KET are so appreciated and now, with two major projects to fund, we anticipate and look forward to a major 'call to action' and look forward to demonstrating how your donations and support will be put to use supporting young Nagas with their education in the future.

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, Managing Trustee  
 KET, The Thatched Cottage, Newbury Road,  
 East Hendred, Oxon OX12 8LG

Tel: 07990 887287  
 Email: [sylvia@kohimaeducationaltrust.org](mailto:sylvia@kohimaeducationaltrust.org)

The KET policy on Data Protection can be found on the website. For further information about the many KET activities, please visit:

[www.kohimaeducationaltrust.net](http://www.kohimaeducationaltrust.net)  
 Facebook @KohimaEducationalTrust  
 X @KohimaEdTrust  
 Instagram @kohimaeducationaltrust

Designed and edited by Melissa Furness  
 York Commemoration photos by Nikki Bowling Photography