

Since 2004, the Kohima Educational Trust through its affiliate the Kohima Educational Society, formed by leading Nagas in 2007, has financed many projects to aid education in Nagaland such as a children's hostel, a basketball pitch, a reference library, medical training including our Mind Your Health workshops, a Master's Degree for a Naga teacher, a bibliography of Naga literature and a glossary of sixteen Nagaland languages. Outstanding among these projects has been the provision of scholarships for 14 to 18 year-old Naga children, which has appealed to hundreds of British donors, led by veterans and their families, who have been moved by the Kohima Educational Trust and this exemplification of gratitude. Each scholarship lasts three years, and costs £375. Some of the scholarships are dedicated to men who fought in the battle. At the annual awards ceremony in Kohima, each scholar is invited to write to his or her donor, and many individual friendships have been formed between donors and scholars. The scholars are selected by the Kohima Educational Society in conference with schools and churches, on the grounds of ability and need. Some of the scholars have just one living parent. Some are orphans. If you would like to donate, or consider donating a scholarship, please complete the order form.

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KET Scholarships

WAR MEMORY GRATITUDE

THE STORY OF THE KET
SCHOLARSHIPS



War

In April and May 1944 elements of the Japanese 15th Army and the British-Indian 14th Army clashed at the village of Kohima, a gateway between the mountainous jungle region of the Naga Hills and the Brahmaputra Valley where the main supply depot of the 14th Army was located. The battle lasted two months. Thousands of soldiers were killed. Many of the British dead are buried in the war cemetery in the heart of Kohima. One of the crucial battles of World War II, Kohima halted the Japanese invasion of India. British troops were aided in their desperate fight against the Japanese invaders by the young men of Nagaland, who acted as guides, spies and porters. Without their help, it is doubtful that the British could have prevailed.

Memory

For sixty years after the battle of Kohima the British survivors gathered annually in the city of York. These meetings were to maintain comradeships and to remember those who had not returned. The highlight of these occasions was the Kohima Memorial Service in the grounds of York Minster, where speakers and the congregation, with prayers and hymns, reminded themselves of the injunction engraved on the 2nd Division war memorial at the entrance to the cemetery in Kohima: When you go home, tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow we gave our today. During these years of reunions, there was little or no contact between the British veterans and their Naga allies. As part of post-colonial India from 1947, what became 'Nagaland' was not only distant from Britain but became a restricted area.

Gratitude

When the British veterans of the battle of Kohima met in 2004 to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the battle, they decided that, their numbers having dwindled, this would be their last reunion, although the annual Kohima Service at York Minster would continue. However, determined that the spirit of their reunions should be sustained, the veterans turned their thoughts to their Naga allies. Thus was formed the Kohima Educational Trust (KET), an expression of gratitude dedicated to assisting the education of descendants of the Nagas who had fought alongside the British in the epic battle. A British veteran wrote to a Naga friend to ask if the idea of educational aid to the Nagas would be welcome. The reply was: "You have not forgotten us".