



Prince Harry Hosts Remembrance Dinner To Celebrate The Gurkha Welfare Trust

A Remembrance Dinner hosted by His Royal Highness Prince Henry of Wales took place last night (15 November) to celebrate the vital work of The Gurkha Welfare Trust (GWT), a charity close to his heart.

Prince Harry hosted the celebration of the charity's work at the State Apartments in Kensington Palace.

Prince Harry has a special interest in the charity having served with the 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles during his tour of Afghanistan in 2007-2008, where he memorably commented: "When you know you are with the Gurkhas, I think there's no safer place to be, really."

Also in attendance at the black-tie fundraising event were GWT Vice Patrons Joanna Lumley OBE FRGS and Field Marshal Sir John Chapple GCB CBE DL.

Speaking at the start of the event Prince Harry mentioned how despite his association with the Gurkhas not equalling the 40 years of his father, it is a relationship which is similarly important to him.

He said: "The men of the Royal Gurkha Rifles are some of the most dedicated, caring, humble and courageous soldiers I have ever had the privilege to meet. They are an inspiration to me and to anyone fortunate enough to meet them. I am honoured to call them my friends.

"The Gurkha Welfare Trust provides the most incredible support to these men, their families and the communities in which they live; the charity doesn't pretend to have all the answers but listens to what its beneficiaries need and provides it in the most efficient way possible."

The event, which was attended by some of the charity's long-standing supporters and major donors, also saw a reunion between Prince Harry and GWT team member and retired Gurkha Major, Bishnu Pun. Bishnu formerly served as an Orderly at The Prince of Wales' household and once hosted a young Prince Harry during his father's official visit as Colonel-in-Chief of the 2nd Gurkha Rifles in 1991 (below).



GWT Director Al Howard, a former officer who served with the Gurkhas in Hong Kong and Brunei before leaving the Army in 1998, said the dinner was not only a suitable Remembrance tribute to all

the brave Gurkhas who have lost their lives, but also a celebration of the difference the charity makes to Gurkha veterans, their families and their wider communities in Nepal.

Al said: *"We are extremely grateful to His Royal Highness for hosting this successful and very well received event and for his ongoing support of The Gurkha Welfare Trust.*

"We are also very grateful to everyone else who attended and for the ongoing support of our Patrons and Ambassadors who continue to play a vital role in supporting the charity and championing the work we do."

Bishnu Pun, who first met Prince Harry in 1991 when His Royal Highness was a boy, said: *"Prince Harry does a huge amount to support a number of military charities. Having spent time with the prince when he visited the regiment as a 6 year-old boy I am delighted to see that his enthusiasm for the Gurkhas hasn't faded. We're all incredibly grateful for his support."*

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Notes to editors: The private event was covered by a Host photographer, from which a selection of jpeg images are provided. If you use them please credit Mark Brightwell/The Gurkha Welfare Trust and do not archive.

For further information /interviews with GWT staff please email Jo@jollygoodcauses.com

Prince Harry and his links to GWT

Prince Harry's father, HRH The Prince of Wales, is the GWT Patron and also Colonel-in-Chief of The Royal Gurkha Rifles.

In 2016 Prince Harry visited Nepal to see some of the vital work GWT were doing to rebuild the homes of Gurkha veterans and widows after the earthquake in 2015, as well as the wider support they provide to communities through school and water projects.

In June 2015, Prince Harry attended the Trust's Gurkha 200 Pageant, celebrating two centuries of loyal and distinguished service to the Crown. Also present at the event were The Queen, The Duke of Edinburgh and The Prince of Wales, in honour of the Gurkhas' significant contribution to the British Army.