

# REMEMBER THEM



ON JUNE 8TH 1982, Chiu Yui Nam was serving aboard the Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship Sir Galahad when it was attacked by Argentine Skyhawk and Mirage aircraft. Two of their bombs made direct hits and within minutes Sir Galahad was burning fiercely. The order was given to abandon ship, but seeing that some soldiers were trapped, Chiu chose to disobey the order, put on his fire suit and went back into the flames and smoke. After bringing out one man, he returned into the flames. It's thought that up to ten Welsh Guards owe their lives to him.

He travelled to London in 1983 to receive the George Medal from the Queen and more recently the Royal British Legion in Hong Kong organised a ceremony to honour his bravery, at which he received a personal message of thanks from Lady Thatcher.

Chiu is one of thousands of ex-servicemen living in Hong Kong and China, many of who fought and defended Hong Kong during World War II. Many are now finding that due to their increased

China Branch, cites the case of a Gurkha who, having served with the Queens Gurkha Engineers for 25 years and subsequently worked with mine clearance companies in Cambodia, Angola and Bosnia, lost the lower half of his right leg below the knee in a mine explosion in 1997.

He receives a small disability allowance from the social welfare department and a prosthetic leg from the government, but this had a rigid ankle that didn't allow for easy movement. The RBL paid for a new prosthetic leg with a flexible ankle to aid movement, arranged part-time work for him and provides him with a small monthly grant to supplement his income.

To raise funds, Hong Kong continues to follow the tradition of holding a poppy day and a Remembrance Sunday ceremony is held to honour the dead. This year, Remembrance Sunday is on November 14th and will be marked by a multi-faith memorial service at the Cenotaph in Central. The service is organised by



age, they're unable to cope with their disabilities, failing health and loneliness.

Fortunately for many, help is at hand through the support of the Royal British Legion (RBL). Formed in 1921, the RBL provides assistance for ex-servicemen, their widows and dependents that have fallen on hard times. The Hong Kong and China Branch was granted charitable status in 1951 but rely entirely upon public support to continue their work.

Brigadier Christopher Hammerbeck CB CBE, President of the RBL Hong Kong and China branch says, "Many [of our members] are now extremely old and frail. We also support those ex-servicemen who served in the British Garrison prior to the handover and their dependents who have fallen on hard times, including widows of ex-servicemen whose husband's have died unexpectedly and been left to raise young children."

All requests for their assistance are carefully vetted and currently 24 ex-servicemen are being supported. Fiona Bishop MBE, Treasurer of the Royal British Legion Hong Kong and

the Hong Kong Ex-servicemen's Association and the Royal British Legion and is attended by various government officials, consuls and the representatives of various religions.

## HOW TO HELP

- The Royal British Legion is allowed a flag sale on Hong Kong Island on November 13th. Volunteers can collect donations between 8.30am to 12.30pm and collection bags and poppies are available from Jardine House.
- Anyone can collect poppies, posters and collection bags to display in their workplace - these can be collected from Jardine House in Central from November 2nd.
- The Royal British Legion is entirely dependent upon public support to continue its work. Donations can be made directly and cheques made payable to 'The Royal British Legion'.
- For further information please call 2544 6270 or e-mail [rblhk@netvigator.com](mailto:rblhk@netvigator.com)

