

BOROUGHBRIDGE MAYOR'S DIARY
Councillor Geoff Craggs's Weekly Diary

26 August 2011

It has come as a surprise to me to realise that, as you read this week's Gazette and Herald, August Bank Holiday weekend is upon us- where did the summer go? That isn't to say that it has been a really bad one weather-wise; it has just passed all too quickly.

On Tuesday evening we were invited to Menwith Hill, along with the rest of the "Chain Gang" and many local folk, to the Base's informal summer get-together, and we all had a really pleasant informal evening. As everyone was in casual dress, the American habit (of which I thoroughly approve) of issuing everyone with a name tag proved very useful, particularly in identifying folk you have been used to seeing in Service dress, and who look totally different in "civvies"! A great evening and further proof of the friendship between our communities.

On Sunday we attended the Evensong Service in Ripon Cathedral, which was held to bless the flag of the Leeds Nepalese Community. The Service was organised by the Chairman of Ripon Branch of the Royal British Legion, Howard Whiting MBE and Major(Retd) Laxmi Bhakta Bantawa, MBE, of the Gurkhas.

. Quite a large number of Nepalese families have settled in the Ripon and Leeds Diocese and, whilst these lovely people have integrated happily into their environment, they feel the need to retain their "roots", hence the community association they formed in, I believe, 2008 and the dedication of their Community Flag at a wonderfully-ecumenical service in the Cathedral conducted by the Bishop, the Dean, a Buddhist Guru and a Hindu Pandit. After the Service we were entertained by Nepalese music and dancing on the Market Square and a superb buffet for everyone in the Town Hall, giving everyone a chance to mingle and talk with our Nepalese friends, who have much to teach us about manners, modesty, courtesy and commitment- wonderful, wonderful people, and how badly British governments have rewarded our Gurkha friends and comrades for their loyalty to us over the years.

Whilst on the subject of Ripon activities, "Scuba Diving For All" is holding their annual Raft Race at the Ripon Canal Basin tomorrow, Saturday the 27th. As you should be aware, this great organisation provides facilities for anyone with learning or physical disadvantages to experience the joys of being in an environment where their disadvantages are largely negated, and several members are from our own Community. The cost of running this very worthwhile organisation is huge and the Raft Race is the main fund raiser, so why not go along, join in the fun and support a very worthwhile charity which is run "on a shoestring" by a very small team of dedicated people.

Have a good Bank Holiday!