



THE WAR GRAVES PHOTOGRAPHIC PROJECT



In Association
with the CWGC



News from the Front line

October 2011

I hope that you have all had a good Summer as we in Northern Hemisphere move into our Autumn. I have taken a week's leave to get on top of those odd jobs around the house before light fades and now find I should be basking on the beach with temperatures in the late 20's (last week in September). However, the Newsletter needs to be processed so the Bar B will have to wait.

The most important acquisition we have received in the last quarter are the images of Basra memorial in Iraq. TWGPP have been waiting for some years now to obtain pictures of the panels which commemorate 40,700 men who died during the Mesopotamia Campaign between the Autumn of 1914 and August 1921 and whose graves are unknown. This memorial was originally erected on the main quay of the naval dockyard at Maqil on the west bank of the Shatt-al-Arab, about 8 kilometres north of Basra. In 1997 the Memorial was moved by presidential decree to a position in the desert located 32 kilometres along the road to Nasiriyah, in the middle of what was a major battleground during the first Gulf War.

Although re-erected in its entirety the panels have not been maintained since and are now showing signs of neglect and damage with at least one panel in sections on the ground. However, with thanks to Sergeant Ian Forsyth, RLC, of the Army Media & Communications HQ in Andover and Sergeant Ben Osman who was our initial contact we now have images in high resolution of all the panels.

I was surprised to find that considering that there are over 40,700 commemorated that there were so few panels but during the processing of the images it was noted that for Indian forces individuals were not named but engraved as '48 Indian soldiers', albeit individual names are now recorded on site.

