



Barpak village is situated in the northern part of the Gorkha district of Nepal. It is located about 1900 metres above sea level and is inhabited by Ghales, Gurungs, Sunwars and Pariyar peoples. The traditional culture of the Himalayan Region in Nepal is mostly Buddhist and so is Barpak. The village was the home of the late VC Capt GajeGhale who won the Victoria Cross in World War II in Burma.

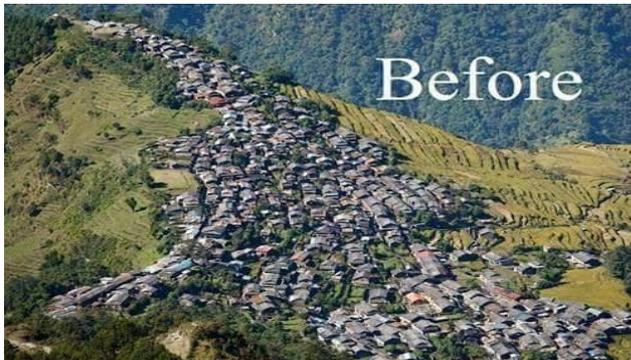
BEFORE AND AFTER – THE STORY OF BARPAK VILLAGE IN NEPAL DESTROYED IN THE EARTHQUAKE OF 2015 AND REBUILT BY SHEER DETERMINATION

BY: MICKEY GORDON MBE – LEADER OF OVER 40 TRIPS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE TO BARPAK

THE THIRD HARMONY CONFERENCE: ACTION AND ACTIVISM IN PURSUIT OF HARMONY, UWTSO, LAMPETER 14 MARCH 2018.

<http://www.harmonyinitiative.net/event-harmony-conference-14-march-2018.php>

Barpak came to the world's notice in April 2015 when it was one of the three villages close to the epicentre of the calamitous earthquake in Nepal when hundreds of people died and 1,400 of its 1,450 houses were razed to the ground leaving most of its 11,000 residents homeless.



The community demonstrated extraordinary resilience, erecting a temporary school for over 1200 children in only 2 weeks, having been cut off from the outside world and relief aid for the whole of that time. People from Barpak and those who had visited this wonderfully friendly village from all over the world responded in their droves. A very special Wang (Blessing) ceremony by **VV Guru Mingyur Rinpoche** took place on 25th March 2016 to celebrate its rebirth.



Today Barpak is once again a flourishing village with a rebuilt school, monastery and other public buildings, but the scars live on, with many adults and children traumatised by the events of 2015.



Mickey Gordon (MBE) - canoeist, youth worker, expedition leader- has been a regular visitor to Barpak since his first expedition to Nepal in 1985 to locate the source of the Dudh Khosi river. He returned in 1988 for the Channel 4 film *'Thin Air White Water'* where he was responsible for the logistics involving the Sherpas on the expedition. Having injured his leg on trek, he was taken to one of the Sherpa villages to recover. That village was Barpak and the beginning of a lifelong mutual respect and friendship



While in Barpak, Mickey became closely involved with the everyday lives of the Sherpa people discovering how much of their lives was one of sheer survival, living in a sublimely beautiful but harsh area of the world and yet their attitude was one of optimism and general contentment. He became fascinated by their lives and found a deep respect for them.

His first expedition with a group of young people from East London to Nepal was in 1988, a unique compare and contrast type of experience examining their lives and expectations to that of their Nepali counterparts

They took with them one tonne of educational material and came back transformed by the experience. Little did they realise that this was to become a 30 year long friendship between Mickey, the UK and Barpak.

Every year since, Mickey has taken a group of young people to Nepal to help build or provide educational materials as well as experience life in the village and trekking in the Himalayas as well as white water rafting. The ethos of the trips was ostensibly to help the village with what they needed and for the young people to gain an insight into the lives of the villagers. However, while the village gained practical and functional help, the young people benefitted hugely on a personal, social, and educational level which would often have far reaching consequences for them.

Following receipt of his MBE, Mickey has hung up his proverbial boots but is taking one more trip this year with leaders from previous trips to celebrate 30 years of enduring friendship and hand on the baton to the next generation. All the monies raised for Barpak, Mickey Gordon has raised independently, by doing talks, shows and visits to people and organizations that have approached him.

UWTSD Pro Vice-Chancellor for Sustainability and External Engagement, Dr Jane Davidson, joined one of the earliest expeditions to Barpak in the 1980s and will join Mickey Gordon again on a celebratory trip this April 2018

THERE WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A DONATION. For those who want to, but can't on the day, please support our Just Giving Page

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/raising-funds-for-barpak-village> **Thank you!**