

Well met DV!

Dilsher Virk
(140 K, 1959)

*Race Course Metro Station, Lutyens Delhi,
10:30pm, November 21st, 2018*

Well lubricated after a splendid Dosco gathering at Navin Bahl's place in Vasant Vihar, I was given a ride to the Metro by Lalit Mehra. Emerging from his (Pran's) fancy Lexus, I made my way down the stairs to the yellow line. The station was deserted, and I asked the stern looking sardar at security if I should go through again to give him something to do; he did not seem amused!

Descending the final flight of steps to the vast, largely empty platform, I saw one person standing stationary on the Northbound side, and one well-dressed gentleman pacing furiously up and down the Southbound side. I thought this was a pretty good way to get some movement, so I asked to join him and set off beside him. We had only taken a few steps when he turned to me and said; "Aren't you DV? You taught me Geography!"

Turned out to be Rajiv Nanda (576 T, 1980), who had indeed been in my Geography class when I did a term of teaching at Doon around 1975. I believe it was a mutually joyful reunion! Rajiv is an advocate in Delhi, hence his dark suit and immaculate white shirt and tie. We had a great gab until I alighted at Guru Dronacharya in Gurugram.

In 1975, I was resident in Calgary, Canada, having done short stints in Winnipeg and Montreal. While I started my career as a mechanical engineer, by this time I had morphed into a Geosciences Software Engineer. In my consulting business, I ran into a situation in which one of my clients was trying to sell some Geophysical Software to the ONGC in Dehradun. I offered, and they accepted my help.

Since lobbying the ONGC was not going to be very time consuming, I asked the then headmaster, Mr Simeon, if I could lend a hand at Doon. It turned out that the school was a bit short handed at the time, and I was given a full-time position. I taught English, Geography and Physics, if I remember correctly. I appeared as DV on the timetable; and what a rewarding time that was.

I used the same word tests that Holdi (RL Holdsworth) used to give me when I was a boy. I had my teacher's training in those very classrooms; they could not get away with anything, as I had been there myself. Mostly, I believe my students responded well to the Old Boy, and I had a marvelous time. My rooms were between the CDH and Hyderabad House, right in the middle of the campus, so boys would stop in often.

A group of boys went out with me on a cycling mid-term that was excellent. I am pretty sure Manpreet Badal was one of those on the trip. Always a joy to see his great success in life.

I had a bit of a struggle with the HM, as we were trying to recruit a new head for the workshops. I felt it had been an important component of my education at Doon, and I was trying to get the position elevated to that of a full master. I lost, and the position remained at a lower grade.

Had I been independently wealthy, I might well have stayed on. The positive rewards of the job; the environment and feedback from the students was very positive. I still get a kick when I run into my former students, as the following narrative illustrates.

I am looking forward to my Class of 1959 reunion this October when I will be back on campus again.