

The Rose Bowl

NEWSLETTER OF THE DOON SCHOOL OLD BOYS' SOCIETY

OCTOBER, 2011

If undelivered, please return to:

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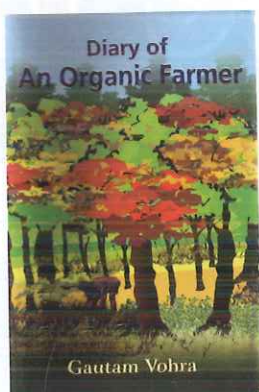
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Old Boys in the News

* **Sunil Kant Munjal**, (180 K '73) has been appointed Joint Managing Director of Hero MotoCorp (formerly Hero Honda). Sunil had been on the company's board as a Director. Our congratulations to Sunil. This is a matter of particular pride since Sunil has always been involved with School and DSOBS. He is a former President of the DSOBS and a former Member of the Board of Governors. We wish him all success in his new assignment.

* **Gautam Vohra's** (154 H '63) book 'The Diary of An Organic Farmer' was launched at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on Sept 23rd. The memoir focuses on what it takes to initiate and sustain an organic farming project. It talks of his journey of acquiring the land, finding water and slowly but surely transforming it to his own patch of green providing fuel, fodder, fruit and vegetables in Haryana.



* **Sanjiv Sethi** (205 HB '76) was formally installed as the District Governor of Rotary International for District 3070, which includes Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh.

* **Samir Kuckreja** (179 H '84) has been featured in the Forbes magazine for reviving the fading eatery chain Nirula's, the family's fast food business that was set up by his maternal grandfather. A lot of us will remember Nirula's ice cream trucks arriving on campus to treat the whole School to ice cream! The Forbes write up mentions that Samir first turned around a business at the age of 16 when he revamped the Tuck Shop at School. Samir 'rationalised' the prices and revamped the menu, a strategy he used, among many others, for Nirula's now. "We want to make Nirula's the dominant Indian QSR [quick service restaurant] chain in India and abroad," says Samir.

* **Ravi Lochan Singh** (458 H '87), Managing Director, Global Reach, was bestowed with the "2011 Australian Award for Distinguished Alumni Service" on 3rd August in recognition of his academic achievements and professional pursuits since studying at Bond University, Australia.

Old Boys' News

* **Commodore Indru Wadhvani** (50 J '57) as President & CEO of Mallya Hospital in Bangalore has offered Old Boys, including their family members, needing medical assistance a 15% discount on investigations and bed charges for in-patients, and on health check-ups for out-patients. Indru can be contacted on +91 98450 10498

* **Anirudh Narain Singh** (105 K '08) has joined ICICI Insurance in Mumbai after graduating from H.R. College of Commerce, Mumbai and can be contacted on +91 9769149976

* **Arvind Agarwal** (215 JB '75) has been appointed Director General, Sardar Patel Institute of Public Administration, Ahmedabad and ex-officio Principal Secretary to Government (NRI & ART), General Administration Department, Sachivalaya, Gandhinagar

* **Inderjit Singh** (387 T '66), MD Fiducian Portfolio Services Limited is sponsoring a team of eye surgeons from Australia to provide free eye surgery to financially disadvantaged persons at the Parmarth Ashram in Rishikesh from 11-21 December, 2011

* **Adesh Kanwarjit Singh Brar** (128 J '66) popularly called Sunny Brar, is a sitting MLA in the Punjab Assembly for the second term.

* **Rajiv Swarup** (6 H '76), (IAS batch of 1985) is now Principal Secretary of Department of Higher Education for the Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur

* **Manish Bhargava** (639 JB '88) has been appointed Development Director at The Doon School. His mail is mab@doonschool.com

* **Vivek Pandit** (595 HB '88) has now become a Director of McKinsey & Co. and continues to work out of their Mumbai Office

* **Sanjay Pandit** (127 HB '90) now heads a hedge fund called Peak XV Capital in New York. He can be contacted at Apt-9B, 200 East 30th Street, Manhattan, New York

* **Abhishek Gupta** (114 O '02) is on a Fulbright Scholarship at Columbia University doing a Masters in International Affairs

* **Karan Badhwar** (7 H '02) and **Dibakar Das Roy** (39 H '02) have started up a production house by the name of Braincell Entertainment Pvt. Ltd. The TV series *India's Most Haunted* on NDTV Good Times, Fridays at 10:00 pm is produced by their company.

* **Shiv Kak** (218 JA '03) who was until recently working with Deloitte Consulting in New York has recently enrolled at the Tuck School of Business, Dartmouth to pursue an MBA

* **Joy Kishore Sahoo** (504 O '06) has completed an MBA from IBS Hyderabad and is now working with Head Honchos as a Marketing Executive

* **Syed Owais Altaf** (456 OA '06) was previously doing a Masters in Strategic Management from Cass Business School in London and has now moved to Hong Kong beginning. He is currently working as an International Manager at HSBC. He can be contacted at syed.owaisaltaf@googlemail.com or on +85298592011

* **Harshvardhan Chamria** (554 TA '07) has recently graduated as an electrical and computer engineer from Cornell University and will be starting his MBA program at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business in September, 2012. Meanwhile he is working at Magma Fincorp Ltd.

Births

* **Anirudh Chowdhury** (557-JB '94) and Vindhya were blessed with a baby boy Vivaan on the 14th of August. Our congratulations to them and the proud Grandparents Ritu and Arvind (Tiny) Chowdhry (89-J '63)

Obituaries

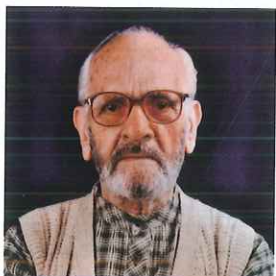
* **Dr. Hari Dutt Bhatt "Shailesh"** passed away in the early hours of Tuesday, September 20, 2011 in Dehra Dun. Dr Bhatt was 81 years of age. Our heartfelt condolences go out to Mrs. Bhatt, Himani, Himanshu, Malvika, Kartikeya and Praanjal.



* **Gurmeet Butalia** (395 J '67) passed away on 4th October, 2011 after bravely fighting cancer for many years. Our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

* **Shyamoli Khastgir**, the daughter of art master, Mr. Sudhir Ranjan Khastgir, passed away on August 15. Our condolences to the family.

* **Mr. Jang Bahadur Arora** passed away in Dehra Dun recently at the age of 97. He has three sons and a daughter. Our heartfelt condolences to the family. Along with his younger brother Anand Bahadur [AB] who joined him in



School in 1945, JB, as he was fondly called, was in charge of the procurement of food supplies. Together the brothers were referred to as ABJAB! He had a marathon innings in School, working there from 1936 to 1972, seeing the transition from the House Dining Halls to the Central

Dining Hall. He had no major illness and though his mobility had been affected the last few months, he had a sound memory. An enthusiastic squash, tennis and badminton player, JB, as he was called, used to go and play these sports, along with Mr. Joshi, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Holdsworth and Mr S.L. Sharma at the Defence Officers' Club since the School did not have any squash courts then.

AB and JB lived in Sikander Villa, behind the old squash courts behind which they had started a 30 buffalo strong dairy for School.

Accolades

* **The Doon School Arts and Media Centre** has made it to the shortlist of The World Architecture Festival Awards to be held in Barcelona this year from 2-4 November. Eligible in the 'Learning' category, the centre is among 18 other buildings that will be adjudged. Some of these shortlisted buildings have been designed by the likes of Sir Norman Foster and Zaha Hadid.



* The Economic Times in its 11th September, Sunday edition carried a story titled 'The New Old Boys' Club' wherein it cited The Doon School as the only school club to retain influence across political and corporate sectors. Analjit Singh (132J '71), Chairman of the Board of Governors was quoted as saying that "The Doon School network raised 40-45 cores for the School in the past 4-5 years."

DOSCO-WELHAM Tango

The following DOSCOs have paid up their Rose Bowl subscriptions since the August issue. They have all won a DOSCO-WELHAM TANGO T-shirt. Congratulations gentlemen! There are still more to be won..... the T shirts we mean!

Ravijit Dhillon	372 J '92	5,000.00
Sumit Dhawan	322 K '92	5,000.00
Gunjan Maithel	337 J '73	3,600.00
Rajesh Verma	460 O '93	5,000.00
Nisheeth Ranjan	476 J '93	5,000.00
Ajay Nayar	362 T '76	5,000.00
Chandra V Singh	37 J '67	5,000.00
Rahoul B Singh	312 J '92	5,000.00
Sajal Mathur	243 K '91	5,000.00
Jaisingh Rajwade	482 K '93	5,000.00
Mogali Sai Srivastava	337 T '92	5,000.00
Savnit Singh Bagga	68 Jb '02	5,000.00



With best wishes from
the Silver Jubilee Batch of 1986



A Narrow Escape

Kartikeya Kejriwal (500 OB '00)

Afzal Khan Tournament 1995; Doon had just won the basketball finals against Woodstock. A bunch of OB 'C' formers, including myself, were wildly rejoicing on the audi steps overlooking court one when I saw Nirvana Chaudhary walking towards me. We all knew what this was about. Nirvana was 'the other suspect' - due to his comparable height and built - he appeared similar when chased from a distance of 100 meters (I'll get to that part later). He had prepped me earlier that I was suspect #2. My batch mates, still clapping next to me, grinningly muttered "Good luck!" JHH, at the time master-in-charge of basketball, had called for me. I obsessively recited a pre-rehearsed alibi while walking across the court. To my shock, Mr. Sheil Vohra was standing alongside JHH with a smile on his face. It was seldom that I was within a few feet of Mr. Vohra without an angry piercing glare being directed unswervingly toward me.

No sooner had I approached and begun to adopt the all too sheepish composure which had become routine during my guilty interactions with Mr. Vohra, that he began, "Yes, yes Mr. Kejriwal, tell Jayant (JHH) the truth about what you did last Sunday." My apologetic response was "Sorry sir I overslept and missed the tournament." As much as the Afzal Khan victory was a happy moment for all of us, it was like hitting the lottery for me. Mr. Vohra, almost certainly because of his cheery mood, responded with "Jayant iska size to dekho. I don't think he would lie to us." With that my fate was positively sealed. I managed to mumble something along the lines of "Thank you Sir." and hastily disappeared towards the cricket pavilion.

The truth about Sunday however, was very different. 1995 was a lawless year at Oberoi B. Somehow the 'unright' mix of SCs, juniors and a mild housemaster comprised the perfect ingredients for anarchy. It was a very debauch time - the SCs would allow us to do almost anything as long as they too reaped the rewards of our 'risk taking.' Mr. Bhatia, our housemaster, had rightfully gated all of OB that Sunday for making too much noise the night before. CDH lunch didn't cut it for most and we had a house full of hungry stomachs at 1:30pm. Avinash 'Thud' Thadani came to me and said "Let's ask the SCs if we can go busting; I've got enough money for lunch at Presis". We invited a couple more friends and within

moments a group of five eager and willing 'busters' (boundary breakers) were all set to go. We approached Abhijit "Squeaky" Singh who we knew would gladly endorse our busting mission.

The catch was that we had to bring back 60, that's right **SIXTY**, bulls (bun andas) and two crates of Thums-Up for Squeaky and the SCs. This was no trivial task as it meant waiting at Praddu's dhaba behind Jaipur house while Ajayji flipped omelets all afternoon long. Neel, the most enlightened soul amongst us, proposed the brilliant idea that we should 'bust' in our games clothes as OB was gated that day. Off we went, five of us looking like Idiots sitting in the first floor lobby at Presis in games uniform. Camouflage was not the name of the game - we looked like zebras in a horse stable!! Half the menu was devoured in all of thirty minutes. Divine luck must have been endowed upon us that day for no one noticed five nervous kids scuttling around Hotel President in games clothes!

We were now back in a 'chooch' headed towards Praddu's to pick up the bulls. The plan was for Thud and I to remain at the dhaba while our friends Neel Patel, Avishek Pal and Deven Sadarangani hid across the road in the bushes behind the Jaipur house wall to help carry soda crates back. Every second felt like hours as we waited for bulls to finish cooking. About 15 minutes had passed when suddenly a voice could be heard yelling from the Headmaster's gate "Oye who's that??...Come here...Stop where you are!" It was JHH. Thud grabbed half the bulls that were already in a plastic bag and a 'do or die' sprint ensued. We ran across the street and the grassy knoll to the bushes where the boys thought we were 'gassing' (putting on an act). Thud and I were already half over the wall when it dawned on the rest that we are genuinely in a state of sheer panic. Deven was the last one over the wall and when he turned around a corner he swears he saw JHH's head pop up and down on the other side in an effort to jump the wall. We all split ways and didn't stop running. I went through J house to the main field, behind the Kashmir house bogs, around the swimming pool to Oberoi house. Never did I regret a gluttonous meal at Presis like I did after that sprint. It was a narrow escape indeed.



Moin Akhtar Qureshi
467 K (1975)

The fascinating story of Hari Dutt Bhatt

Homage to a friend and classmate Raj Kanwar

The news about the death on September 19th of Dr. Hari Dutt Bhatt 'Shailesh' shocked and saddened me no end.

Bhatt's inspirational life story is unique in many ways and needs to be retold so that the present and future generations could learn some lessons from the fascinating story of a self-made man. We did our intermediate and B.A. together and became good friends during those four years. Strangely, Bhatt and I were poles apart in almost everything. He was simple in every sense of the term and wore his simplicity as a distinctive badge on his shirt sleeve, and this necessity, in a way, became his virtue. He was entirely a self-made man and supported his education and living by taking tuitions. I was just the opposite. Yet, I had developed a great respect for this simple, sincere and studious student. He mostly kept to himself and did not make many friends.



How he joined The Doon School in itself would make an interesting story. Soon after his graduation, Bhatt had started teaching Sanskrit (just one class a day) at the school and was paid Rs. 150 a month. The word of his communication skills in Sanskrit and the interesting way he taught it had reached

the ears of John Martyn, the legendary headmaster of Doon. The following year the school advertised for the post of a Hindi teacher with a master's degree in the subject being the minimum qualification. Being a reputed school, the advertisement had evoked a huge response (1500 applicants including quite a few with doctorates). One day Martyn accosted Bhatt as the latter was cycling towards the Sanskrit classroom. To the headmaster's query asking him if he had applied for the post advertised for the Hindi teacher, Bhatt replied in the negative adding that he was only a graduate and that the qualification advertised stipulated a master's degree. The same day Martyn caused an addendum to be sent to the published advertisement adding that even graduates could apply for the job in order to facilitate Bhatt's selection. He was duly selected. The rest is history.

HIS HOUSE WAS A HAVEN FOR POOR BOYS

Despite the financial security and the respect that came with the job, Bhatt kept his feet on the ground, and soon his house in The Doon School became a haven for the poor and deprived boys from the hills. He helped his unfortunate brethren with admission to schools and colleges, paid their fees when required, found

accommodation for them and eventually even helped them get jobs. There is no count of the boys he helped stand on their own feet.

For, in those poor boys, Bhatt found vivid images of his own past of not very long ago, when he had run away from his home. Bhatt had passed class IV, and his family wanted him to drop out of the school and instead work in the fields. He did not relish that idea and one day quietly ran away to Dehradun. The following day he boarded the Howrah Express to Calcutta. What would one call this: stupidity, guts, foolhardiness or sheer madness? Only a few months' stay in Calcutta convinced Bhatt that this was not the life he wanted to lead.

So once again he ran away, this time from Calcutta, and came to Rishikesh. There he worked and studied hard and managed to pass his high school. Thereafter he spent four years at the DAV College in Dehra Dun on sheer guts and wits without any support from anyone.

Dr. Bhatt's literary career had begun in 1953 with a play in Garhwali. Thereafter, he did not look back. He wrote more than 130 short stories including 30 in English and is the proud author of over 40 books. Mountaineering and environment were his passion. However his novels and short-stories were based on social and current themes and had been much appreciated. He wrote for virtually every major magazine and newspaper in India including Dharmayug, Saptahik Hindustan, Sarika, Saraswati, the Illustrated Weekly and even Reader's Digest.

At the Doon School, he taught the children of the high and mighty of the country; sons and grandsons of Prime Ministers, children of business tycoons and top bureaucrats. He rubbed shoulders with the most powerful people but never even once did he exploit his position for personal gain. Pandit Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi all knew and respected him personally. The Bhatt's once spent five days as the guests of Indira Gandhi at the Teen Murti House in 1958.

After 32 eventful years at The Doon School, where he became the Head of the Department of Indian Languages and also a House Master, he sought retirement in order to return to his passion of reading and writing.

His daughter Himani Shivpuri is a well known actress both on the big and the small screen and son Himanshu is a senior officer in ONGC.

Raj Kanwar is a Dehra Dun based author and freelance journalist. Email: rkanwar_in@yahoo.co.uk

Knowledge is Light

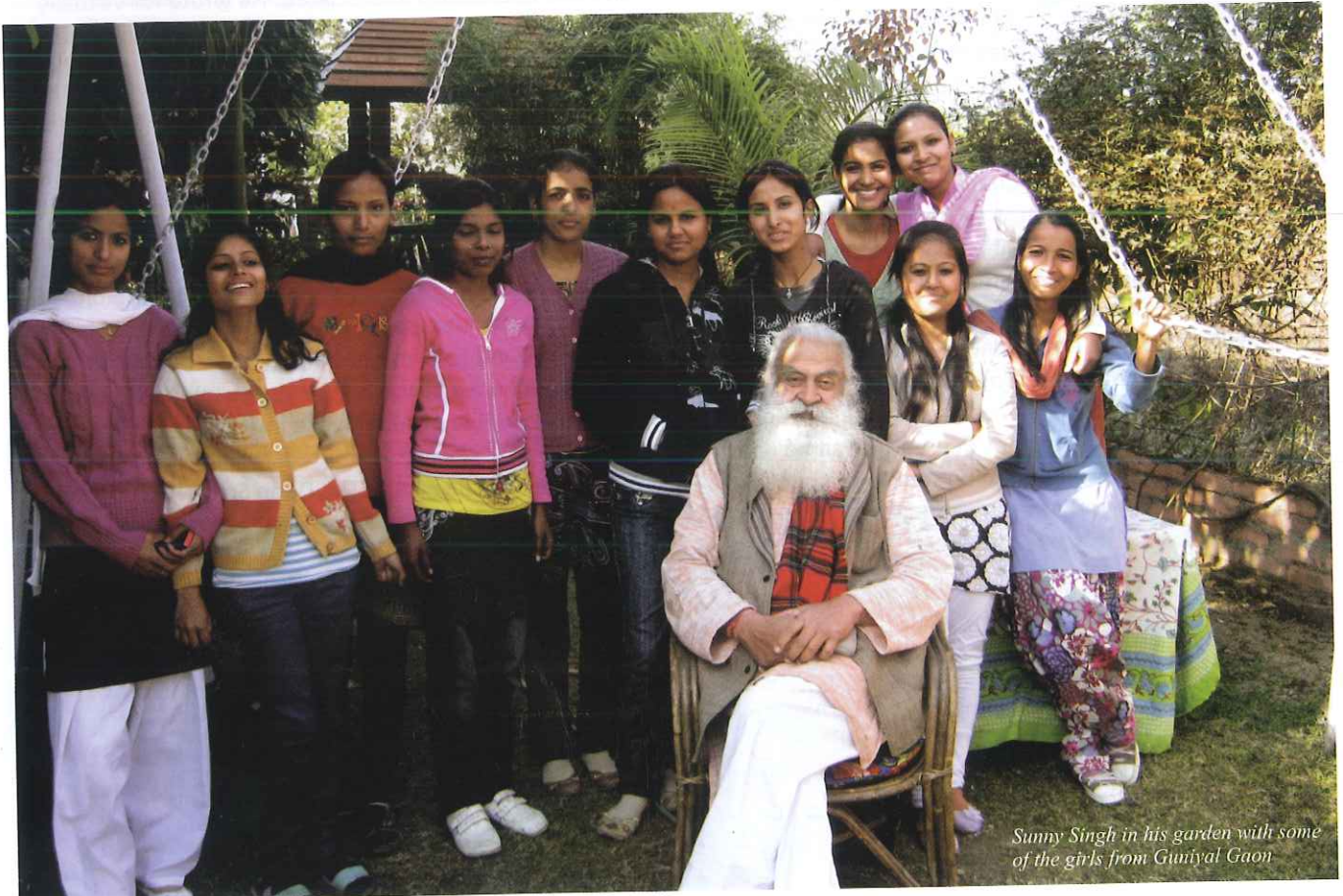
Sunny Singh (24K '54)

[You educate a boy and you educate one person; you educate a girl and you educate a whole family. Sunny Singh is doing a great service through his Guniyal Gaon Education Trust {see article 'The Road Less Travelled' in the Oct. 2010 issue of The Rose Bowl}. Thanks to his initiative, the girls in and around Guniyal gaon near Dehra Dun are living a different life; one that they would have never imagined in their wildest dreams till a few years ago. A maali's daughter who is all set to do her LLB, a truck driver's daughter who has become a computer teacher, a peanut seller's daughter who had not even expected to study till class ten finishing her MA in a high 2nd division; these are just a few of the success stories that are being silently but surely written in this little village tucked away in the Himalayan foothills near Dehra Dun. And all this is thanks to one person's resolve to not spend his retirement just enjoying good scotch and great vistas but to make a difference to the lives of those around him in a significant way; a simple start which has blossomed into something beautiful across the hillside. It is just half an hour away from the School. Do go and see it. Here he proudly shares the college results of a few of his young wards...Ed]

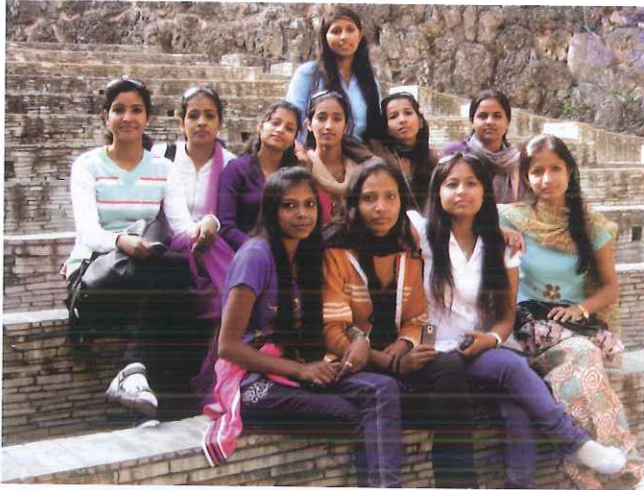
Three years back when the wife of a school mate suggested that I help three girls from village Makkawala, (Kuthalgate which is on the way to Mussoorie) through college, my immediate thought was that it would not be possible as there was no public transport from that direction to our Center, and to expect young girls to walk the wooded path through the river bed unescorted in the dark after classes would be too much, and totally unsafe. Our trust rules do not permit us to provide assistance to those who are not able to attend classes at the Center.

Within the next fortnight on my way back from Mussorie I got the opportunity to stop at the village MAKKAWALA, as I had an hour to spare for a Tea invitation to the neighboring village.

The moment I reached the entrance to the village and asked to meet the three girls, some kind of signal was sent out, much like the beating of drums in wild Africa! In next to no time the girls appeared before me, the two sisters Mehraj & Shehraj along with their father's sister Jareena were introduced to me (all about the same age) perhaps a year's gap between the three. Because of my age and grandfather like appearance, I



Sunny Singh in his garden with some of the girls from Guniyal Gaon



Girls from Guniyal Gaon on a trip to Chandigarh

was invited into the female domain, a small dark and dingy room, with two charpoys to sit on, and six more standing up against the wall, clearly indicating the number of members coupled with abject poverty of the family.

After the preliminary introductions to the rest of the family and a cup of tea, while I was trying to convince the father to allow the girls to go to college, I noticed the youngest of the three had her gaze fixed on me and her pleading eyes seemed to say, "Sir, please help us to undo the shackles of ignorance; we want to study!" That was enough for me to have a change of heart and I decided to bend the rules, and provide them with the opportunity they badly needed.

In the many months to follow I visited the village often to check on the progress of the girls, each time with Deepika (who has been with us at the Centre from day one and now doubles up as my secretary and valuable advisor as well as a computer teacher for the beginners) and at least one more person to make my visit to the village more acceptable.

Three years later, just as the college results were announced I immediately went to their village where the father met me at the very entrance of the lane leading to the homes, and the look on his face gave away the answer I was looking for, ALL THREE HAD PASSED THE FINAL YEAR B. A. EXAMINATIONS, and that too in their first attempt, an unheard of feat in those parts.

After a round of mubaraks and greetings as it was the last day of the holy month of Ramzan, I came out of the room into bright light, looked towards the heavens and silently said "Allah, thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve some of your less fortunate children."

They were the *first three* to graduate in the thirty or so villages in and around the area, where in fact the number of boys and girls who have studied beyond class X can be counted on your fingers.

I am indeed grateful to the few Doscocs and my classmate Rajbir Singh who have supported me in my project of 'THE UPLIFTMENT OF THE GIRL CHILD.'

I also wish to inform all my friends that two of the girls from the Center who I personally tutored have passed M.A (English) in 2nd division, one of them the daughter of a gardener and the other a ret'd. lance naik. Now they are more qualified than I am!! Some of my classmates who have been in constant touch with me over the years are going to say, "But that is not saying much!" I am quite prepared to hear that! Meanwhile one of them has got a job with the FRI which pays her Rs. 8000/- a month. Inspired by this, another girl, who has a one year old son, now wants to pursue an MA too.

Apart from degrees and certificates, these first generation learners have gained immensely in terms of self respect, a confidence in their own abilities and the will to keep growing as an individual. A gardener's daughter, educated thanks to the trust and now married to a lawyer, came and told me that she wants to do an LLB and what's more, her in-laws are more than willing to let her do it.

We Doscocs, who are a privileged lot, must do our best to provide opportunities to those who are less fortunate. And it has been my experience that you just have to take the initial step with a sense of selfless commitment and complete dedication. After that the universe helps you along in all your endeavours.

Please visit our website: www.guniyaeducent.com
E-mail: guniyaeducent@gmail.com
and 99Sunnysingh@gmail.com

WITH COMPLIMENTS FROM

KK Lahiri 30-K '74
and Karan Lahiri 306-K '04

Chhota Interview

Brahm Maira (239 JA'04)



RB: What is your official title and where or with whom do you work? Name three key responsibility areas.

I am a freelance photographer & a photo manipulation artist. I mostly work out of Delhi, Mumbai & work often takes me to some interesting places around the country. I work with magazines, businesses of various kinds, art galleries, interior designers, NGO's & various individuals requiring visual content.

RB: How would you describe your day job in four lines?

My day job could involve doing a shoot on location, in my own studio or out in the field photographing for personal projects. A lot of time is also spent in front of the computer editing photographs or creating artworks for various different purposes using a photographic image as a starting point.

RB: What's exciting about your job in 5 lines?

The cross section of people one gets to meet from so many different walks of life & backgrounds is probably the most interesting thing about my job. It's also a constant learning process in terms of technique & conceptualizing a body of work. From shooting landscape to interiors, architecture, product, food, documentary, high fashion, automobile to creating artwork for galleries, textiles, hotels & homes, it's the diversity of the subject matter & the cross section of people one comes in contact with is what's most exciting about my job.

RB: Name one or two highlights in your career so far that you are proud of naming brands, clients or events of note.

Exhibiting my work at the India Art Summit 2011 was probably the most exciting event of my career as a photographer on the art side of it. Exhibiting at an NDTV good times fundraiser for Ladakh is also an exhibition I am proud of. Commercially, shooting for large publications such as Hearst Corporation & Elsevier publishing are some big clients I have worked with. I have also worked on a corporate film for Ranbaxy handling the second unit camera, although I am primarily a still photographer. I am currently working on a project for Wockhardt Ltd. Numerous other shoots for various businesses, hotels, restaurants, designers & host of other professionals have been done in the past.

RB: How did you get to this position – was it through your education or work experience or both? Give us the trajectory so Doscocs can learn from you.

I completely have school to thank for where I am today. The beauty of schools all round education & its emphasis on the extra curricular activities is the motivating factor for me choosing this particular line of

work. I was in the photography STA while I was in school. In A form at special assembly I was awarded The Mahatta Award for the most promising photographer of the year and was given an SLR camera. I think that was the deciding moment for me choosing to take on this career path.

RB: What advice would you give Doscocs wanting to get into the same space in terms of what educational qualifications they need, institutions and courses in India and/or abroad that they should consider?

In today's day & age, choice of career is plenty. School plays an amazing role in helping you find your feet & discover yourself- what you are good at, what you enjoy. My advice to current doscocs would be to try your hand at everything the first couple of years, make the most of schools amazingly vast facilities & if you find something you really enjoy doing, be it computers, music, photography, wood & metal work, art, aero modelling, etc, it can seamlessly transform itself into a career, provided the passion is there.

For photography, there is an institution in South India called Light & life academy offering a diploma. Overseas, options are plenty. Some of the good ones are:

America

Rhode Island Institute of Art & Design
Brooks Institute of Photography
Parsons School of Design

Canada

Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design

Australia

Sydney College of Art (University of Sydney)
College of Fine Art (University of New South Wales)
Victoria College of Art (Melbourne University)

Europe also has a lot of good universities though I'm not very knowledgeable about them.

RB: What are you planning to do next career wise? Are you planning to study further for it and if so, what, and where?

I plan to continue making art & exhibiting with galleries. Commercially I want to try & break into the world of advertising photography & do more magazine work. I also want to do a lot more work with NGO's & other organisations involved in social work & the betterment of society as a whole

RB: Could you provide your contact details in case Doscocs would like to speak with you about pursuing work in this field? Email, phone, website or all three are welcome.

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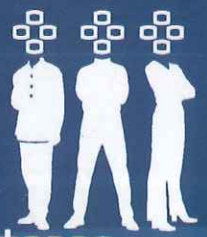
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2nd Mumbai Cyclothon & Brunch

Niren Bhavanani (441 K '06)

After two postponements by the sponsors, BSA Hercules (Murugappa Group), the much anticipated second edition of the Mumbai Cyclothon took place on Sunday April 24th. This was followed by a well attended brunch at the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) Club, Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC).

As chief sponsor and organiser, A. Vellayan (87T '68), Chairman, Murugappa Group, invited the Mumbai Doscocs to participate in the Cyclothon. Following the successful and enjoyable 2010 event, the energetic and enthusiastic Dosco cyclists were all charged and looking forward to a ride along the Bandra (Carter Road) sea promenade and thereafter over the new Bandra-Worli Sea Link. Unfortunately, the Maharashtra Government put a dampener on the ride by closing the Sea Link for maintenance. The Cyclothon ride was therefore, shifted to Bandra Kurla Complex.

Given the very early start time of the ride (reporting time was 7am on a Sunday!), it was very encouraging to see so many Doscocs and their families and friends reporting for "Chhota Hazri" minus the tea and biscuits!! Riding complimentary bicycles along with goody bags and helmets, courtesy Murugappa Group, and clad in custom made Dosco T-shirts organised through the joint and able efforts of Harsh Rohatgi (509H, '93) and Abhishek Mattoo (38H, '96), the Old Boys and their families stood out. About 45 Old Boys and their families took part in the 20km Amateur Ride with the Doscocs being officially flagged off as the lead team of the event. As leader of the lead team, the inimitable Sheel Sharma (345K, '64) showcased the Doscocs with a "live" impromptu interview to the media.

Not only was it a pleasure to see many Old Boys' daughters and wives participating, but it was very refreshing to see many "Baby Boomers" participating also. Included in this group, among other family & friends, the Doscocs were Sheel Sharma (345K, '64), Ajoy Bhandare (286J '64), Anil (222K '68) and Bimal (242K '72) Bhavanani and Vikram Kalia (422H '70).

On the lighter side, we had Vikram Kalia (422H '70) struggling to balance himself on the bicycle which was too small for him! Vellayan, please note we would require XXL sized bikes for some of our Mumbai Doscocs at next year's event! Then, we had the likes of the over-enthusiastic Ajoy Bhandare (286J '64) family which turned out in full strength, did extra laps of the circuit and subsequently accusing the rest of us of "jamming".

Many of the younger Old Boys took it upon themselves to quickly declare the Cyclothon a smashing success, and emphasized their need to go home and 'recharge the batteries' for the upcoming brunch, as it was still quite early on a Sunday!

Following the muscle toning session of the morning, brunch at the nearby MCA club was hosted by our very affable and efficient Apurva Agarwal (4770 '93). Apart from many senior Old Boys including Adi Mountvala (141J '50), Jagdish Nath (285J '53), Major Ravi Wahal (92J '53), Pradip and Nimi Bhatia (144K '61) among others, it was delightful to welcome Ashok Mahindra (257K '58) and his welhamite wife, Manju from Delhi.

Special thanks to our very supportive DSOBS President, Kishore Lahiri, who provided the booze for the brunch. Accompanying him from Delhi was Sheel Sharma, Executive Secretary, DSOBS who, as mentioned earlier, demonstrated his physical fitness through participation in the Cyclothon in the morning.

In conclusion, the organisers of the back to back events, Apurva Agarwal, Harsh Rohatgi Abhishek Mattoo and my Dad, Anil Bhavanani must be commended for their efforts without which these events would not have been a success. Special mention of thanks is also due to my Dad's assistant, Mayapa Lande, who managed the Memorabilia sales and attendance at the brunch very efficiently.



Standing (L to R) Last Row: Pooja Paradkar; Aftab & Auloke Mathur (Nephews of Ajoy Bhandare); Siddharth Vaidya (183J'03); Siddharth Paradkar (126K'97); Rahul Mehta (517K'94); Sanjeev Kamdar (Parent); Akaash Pathare (584T'07); Vikram Kalia (422H'70); Deepak & Anu Morada (Parents); Standing (L to R) Middle Row: Ajoy (286J'65) & Nikhil (634J'95) Bhandare; Sheel Sharma (345K'64); Anil Bhavanani (222K'68); Gaurav Gupta (456K'93); Bimal Bhavanani (242K'72); Anil Rodericks (Friend); Neelima & Nandini Aggrwal (Daughters) and Asavari (Niece) of Ashok Aggrwal 73H'64; Sitting (L to R): Tarang Khurana (298K'10); Pankaj Seth (46K'83); Harsh Rohatgi (509H'93); G.J. Bindra (340T'92); Vir Advani (412T'93); Niren Bhavanani (441K'06);



Team Dosco ready to be flagged off with the Bhandare family in full strength (L-R): Nikhil Bhandare (634I'95); Sanjeev Kamdar (Parent); Bimal Bhavanani (242K'72); Auloke & Aftab Mathur (Ajoy Bhandare's Nephews); Ajoy Bhandare (286I'65); Vikram Kalia (422H'70);



Parents-in-Arms (L-R)Puran Kumar (Father of Yuvan 695-T); Sanjeev Kamdar (Father of Arjun 701-O); Bimal Bhavanani (Father of Arnaav 144-K)



With A. Vellayan (87I' 68), Chairman, Murugappa Group, Chief Sponsor of the Mumbai Cyclothon Standing (L-R): Anil Rodericks (Friend); Harsh Rohatgi (509H'93); Bimal Bhavanani (242K'72); Pankaj Seth (46K'83); A. Vellayan; Sheel Sharma (345K'64); Siddharth Paradkar (126K'97); Anil Bhavanani (222K'68); Vikram Kalia (422H'70); Pooja Paradkar; Sitting (L-R): Tarang Khurana (298K'10); Abhishek Mattoo (38H'96); G.J.Bindra (340T'92); Niren Bhavanani (441K'06);



A Tribute to Gurmeet Butalia (395 J '67)

Vineet Makhija (273 J '67)

Gurmeet's life choices were characterised by Robert Frost's poem "... I took the road less travelled by and that has made all the difference." His formative years were in Russia and India, his working life took him to the London, California, Texas, Delhi & Dubai and his final years were spent in Malta and India.



Minnie Butalia, Vineet Makhija, Gurmeet Butalia

I want to share a few personal recollections about Gurmeet Butalia, my best friend of 47 years. From the beginning of our relationship in The Doon School to the end of his life I admired his passion and unique combination of personal traits.

Gurmeet, like his family, believed in living life to the fullest. His parents were passionate about the arts as was Gurmeet. He enjoyed travel, fine dining, reading and was a collector of oil paintings, antiques, rugs and crystal.

A creative and brilliant mind

When he was just 12 years old, I could see that Gurmeet was different. He would be waiting near the newspaper stand in the early Dehradun winter mornings and as soon as the paper arrived, he would carefully start reading and jotting down notes and looking up difficult words in the dictionary. His academic excellence and commitment inspired me to shift gears from a carefree existence, and later to give me the belief in myself to go on to the Wharton School.

Later in life when Gurmeet and I were both Vice Presidents in East

India Hotels (Oberoi Hotel Group), I remember Biki Oberoi once saying to me, "You know he has a gift for the written word. I will ask him to write Oberoi's diversification strategy."

More recently, when visiting us in Australia, he repeatedly beat my son, Karan, in chess. It was no easy task. For no lesser mind could have beaten the Barker College Chess Captain.

A man of his word

Gurmeet was generally quiet but when he spoke his word mattered. He said what he meant and I could blindly rely on his straight forwardness. For example, after being diagnosed with cancer, he would not deny that he had been unable to resist a glass of wine and a cigarette after a meal despite pressure I put on him to stop. For me personally, his integrity was a most important quality for a lifelong friendship.

A capacity for risk taking

Gurmeet was courageous to the end. After he was diagnosed with 4th stage cancer, he was searching for a permanent cure. He knew that traditional chemotherapy treatment, at best, offered the hope of extending his life. He therefore made an all or nothing decision to go to the US for an alternative treatment after reading Knockout, a best selling book containing interviews with doctors who claimed to be curing cancer. When in US, he would repeatedly say, this treatment is killing me. Clearly this was a risky decision as many of these expensive alternative treatments are untested and by and large play on a cancer patient's vulnerability.

I have been fortunate to have had a generous friend and inspiring mentor in Gurmeet.



Gurmeet Butalia, Arjun Matthai, Shiv Karan Singh, Sandeep Ahuja, Manuj Ailawadi



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Kashmir House: Memories of 40 Years Ago

KK Lahiri (30 KB '74)

"..... For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils."

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

Everyone has a special place – a happy place. For Wordsworth it was his patch of daffodils. For me, and many like me, that special place is, and always has been, my house — Kashmir House.

Even within his home, every child has that special place; that special room; that special corner of the garden which is his world during his growing years and which he continues to remember fondly through life. For me, it is always Kashmir House. While School became our home away from home for half a decade – my House always remained that special place where I could retreat to, be amongst my friends, share a little tuck hidden away in the 'chut' room, play 'baddy' in the 'K' House portion of the quadrangle facing the Main Field, listen to music in the Common Room, sneak in a game of TT or carom and much much more.

But I am straying. When Nikhel asked me to write this piece, it was to be about the Kashmir House I remembered between 1970 and 1974. Let me then tell you what it was like. We were probably there in Kashmir House during a very defining moment in School's history. School had completed exactly 35 years when I joined in 1970 1st term. By the time I was in 'B' Form, School was half way across the 75 years which we celebrated last October. We therefore, stood at that watershed moment in School's history dividing the 75 years like a ridge.

1970 was a year of momentous change in many aspects of School life. When we joined, the Houses were one (as it is today). There was no Kashmir A or B. It was one composite House with a House Dining Hall. If memory serves me correctly, my first Housemaster of Kashmir House and the last of a combined K House (till 2004-2005) was Mr. Sinha or 'Zeekey' as he was fondly called. The 'Zeekey' nick name stuck to all Dosco Sinhas who were in K House. My first House Captain and the last of a joint Kashmir House (till 2004-2005) was Arundhari Lall or 'Tyke' who I bumped into after forty long years at the Kolkata get-together last year in July. The Houses were truly well-knit communities within the larger community of The Doon School. We ate, slept, studied, bathed and lived our lives within those beautiful brick and stone walls of Kashmir House. The K House Dining Hall was where the Kashmir A Common Room later came to be housed, in the portion facing the Housemaster's house, while the latter part of the Dining Hall became the dorms;

the kitchen etc. became the loos and the changing rooms. However, then it was one large Dining Room with a separate table for the new boys. The food was excellent and the kitchen ably supervised by our ever-loving Dame – Mrs. Heinz (who for some strange reason and inspite of her warm and loving nature came to be called Hyena!) Incidentally, what became the K(A) House Cap's study used to be the pantry.

Mrs. Heinz supervised every detail of the meals right down to the home-made ice-cream, which in those days was made in wooden buckets by hand. Every once in a while the salt on the ice in the outer casing of the ice-cream maker would creep into the ice-cream, giving us salted desserts! I still remember the first dinner at the Kashmir House dining room when each new boy was asked to sing a song for the House. Manoranjan 'Fatsurd' Dugal sang the then popular 'Roop Tera Mastana' immediately giving him the nick-name of 'Roop Tera Surd'. He carried this name for a long time before he became 'Fatsurd'. Ashwini Sarin sang 'Delilah' and was for ever known as Tom Jones. The food was great, the warmth tremendous and the camaraderie super. Our own House dining hall also meant that you didn't have to trudge all the way to the CDH for the *chai* and bread for *Chhota Hazri*. It was served right there in your House. Mrs. Heinz also kept an immaculate Linen Room. Majid, Narain and others handled our clothes and laundry with clock-work precision. They also did us small favours like getting us *tandoori* chicken from town whenever we could collect enough money to buy one.

Alas! These days of bliss were short-lived. By then what we considered a monstrosity had appeared between the Main Field and the then tennis courts (now a beautiful garden). It was called the Central Dining Hall or CDH. It didn't have the brick work façade the CDH now has. It had a rough grey concrete finish and stood out like a sore thumb amidst the beautiful colonial brick work structures. It was an eye-sore and for many it represented a break from the past. After thirty five and a half years from the second term of 1970, the House dining halls were abandoned and the entire School started eating at the CDH.

This, unfortunately, was not the only change. Almost like the division of Germany and the city of Berlin, came the separation of Houses. It affected the house spirit tremendously. This was supposedly done for better administration and greater pastoral care with each Housemaster of the divided Houses having to look after a lesser number of wards. So, from four Houses (there was no Oberoi House then) emerged eight and Kashmir (like the other Houses) lost its unified character for years to come.

It is a co-incidence that while the Houses split in the second term of the year I joined (1970 2nd term), they re-united the

year my son (Karan Lahiri, 306-KB) left School in March 2004. I think the unified House is much better for the boys, the Housemasters and most importantly, the house spirit.

Interestingly, in 1970 second term, another experiment was tried where during Inter-House games even Kashmir-A and Kashmir-B or Hyderabad-A or Hyderabad-B competed with each other resulting in eight houses competing! This just did not work and had to be abandoned within a term and by 1971 though in theory Kashmir was two, with Kashmir A occupying the ground floor and Kashmir B the first floor, for all other purposes it was a unified Kashmir House - be it Inter-House sports fixtures, debating, elocution or what have you.

While Dr. H.D. Bhatt became the first Housemaster of Kashmir-A, Mr. Viji Hensman became the first Housemaster of Kashmir-B. I still remember Mr. Hensman or 'Henny' as he was affectionately called, very fondly. Though he is no more, he is constantly in our thoughts as I am sure he is in the thoughts of many of those who were in Kashmir B while he was the Housemaster. It was therefore, a very moving experience when I met up with Mrs. Hensman and their elder daughter, Indu during the Toronto get-together last year.

The division of Kashmir House brought about other changes. Two common rooms were required. While Kashmir B retained the old Common Room on the first floor, Kashmir A partitioned the old dining hall and converted a part of the space into their Common Room. The remaining portion of the dining hall, as I mentioned earlier, became dormitories. Kashmir B did not have this extra space Kashmir A got because of the Dining Hall and kitchens. Resultantly, Kashmir B was given the room below the staircase directly under the Common Room as a dormitory and another room next to it (the first room closest to the linen room) to compensate for the lack of space. The Kashmir B boys who used these rooms used the ground floor, or by then the KA, bathrooms. Incidentally, the Linen Room remains common. I spent a number of years on the ground floor both in the dormitory first with the batch senior to me (Nikhel Kochar's batch) then with my own batch and subsequently in the room next to it. It is therefore, not surprising that some of my closest friends in Kashmir House were either one year my senior in Kashmir-B e.g. Nikhel Kochar and Sunil Munjal or from Kashmir-A like Manoranjan 'Fatsurd' Dugal; friendships which have

endured the test of time and four decades.

Mrs. Heinz continued as the Dame though a large burden was lifted off her shoulders with the House dining hall giving way to the CDH. She now only had to look after the boys' rooms, bed linen, the linen room, etc. Mrs. Heinz was the Dame till 1973 when she took retirement. Mrs. Bhatt took over as Dame but being the Kashmir-A Housemaster's wife did not live in the 'House'. This was a great boon for us since Mrs. Heinz had two rooms in K(B) on the first floor which were interconnected and also had an attached bathroom with a western style toilet, bathtub *et al.* This happily devolved on us 'S' Formers in 1974 and for a year I had the luxury of an attached bathroom and could actually bathe in a tub.

Those years hold many happy memories. I know the mind is selective and only chooses to remember the happy moments but if this prevents insanity, so be it. My happiest moments were spent in or around the House; with boxing practice in the lawns behind the house, badminton in the quadrangle in front and swimming and squash right behind the House. Infact Kashmir House was truly well located in Chandbagh. We were right there on the Main Field and had a VIP view of all sporting fixtures. We had a better view than Hyderabad House because the track events invariably start in the stretch right in front of Kashmir House. The squash court and the swimming pool were right behind and we were a hop, skip and jump away from both Skinner's and the CDH.

For us, Kashmir House was so much more than just a beautiful colonial structure of brick and stone. It became our home, an integral part of our childhood and childhood memories, a retreat after each long school day came to an end and finally a place to rest when 'lights out' reverberated through the corridors.

For the rest of India and the world when they think of Kashmir, they visualize verdant valleys and snow capped mountains reflected in the waters of Dal lake. For us who were in Kashmir House, it is that beautiful brick and stone structure standing majestically across an emerald green Main Field surrounded by tall trees, lush and green after the monsoon rains. It has always been and shall remain that special place which flashes in my inward eye when I need to escape the drudgery and humdrum of the real world.

WITH COMPLIMENTS FROM

**KK Lahiri 30-K '74
and Karan Lahiri 306-K '04**

Chennai Chapter Get-together

Siddharth Lulla (383 TB '92)

On 31st May 2011, the Chennai/TN/Puduchery Chapter of the DSOBS held a meeting that was very kindly hosted by Ravi and Tehzeeb Katari at their home and was attended by a fair number.

It was an extra special meeting as it was also represented by DSOBS heavy weights in the form of President Kishore Lahiri and Sheel Sharma from Delhi - and it was great seeing them in Chennai to share in the warmth (read heat) of the city and seeing their involvement.

The afternoon was good fun with great food, lovely ambience and of course the chance for great interaction between all the families present.

On a more serious note, a few points were discussed pertaining to the Legacy fund that was proposed by Ravi Katari and accepted by the board. The Chennai Chapter is going to be actively involved in promoting

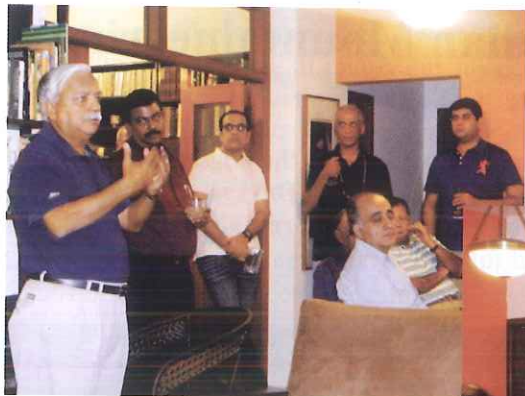
the legacies since the team comprises of Ravi Katari, Alok Bhargava and M.C.T.P. Chidambaram.

Kishore spoke of the activities of the DSOBS. The bursary from the DSOBS was also discussed and he concluded that in the medium term there should be a strong move to improve this corpus amount to ensure that it can be supportive for Dosco's kids, where there may be given financial assistance when needed. In addition Sheel further added the need for communication between Regional Chapters and the DSOBS as well as the importance of updating Old Boys' information in view of the record being published in Oct. 2011.

There was also a change of guard as far as the DSOBS Rep for Chennai / TN is concerned, and Ravi Singhee handed the reigns over to Siddharth Lulla. There was a vote of thanks to Ravi for all his support over the past several years.



Kneeling: Rohan Katari, Alok Bhargava, Chiddu, Rohit Bhatia+Raghav (future Dosco), Ravi Katari **Sitting:** Mrs. Alagu Muthu, Mrs. Srinivasan, Dr. Srinivasan, Meena Bedi **Standing:** Siddharth Lulla, Sheel Sharma, Uma, DG Rajan, Dayalan Rajes, Inder Bedi, R. Muthu, Angad Vohra, Kishore Lahiri, Hema Dayalan, Maya Verma, Jyotika Bhatia, Seema Bhargava, Jaya Patwardhan, Tehzeeb Katari, Vinoo Hoon **Standing (back row):** Tarun Ghai, Vikash Verma, Ravi Singhee, Ramesh Rajan, Madhav Patwardhan.



Sheel Sharma, Ramesh Rajan, Rohit Bhatia, Angad Vohra, Vikash Verma, R. Muthu, Arun Ghai

Angad Vohra, Dr. Srinivasan



Dr. Srinivasan, Ravi Singhee, Siddharth Lulla, Ravi Katari, Vikash Verma

YC Diaries!

Partho Nath Tagore [28 J '67]

I would have got my first Y.C. on my first day in school from S.C. Roy as I arrived in a "tonga" when the other boys reported with the assigned teacher sent to fetch the school party from Calcutta. I was delayed checking my weight as I had done in every station with a colourful weighing machine enroute. I got lucky as the same day I got transferred to Holding House, across the road, thus avoiding S.C. Roy, as I was considered very small for the Main House. At Holding House I collected my first 3 YCs.

Incident No. 1 was when I was racing in the toy room. Unfortunately, Mrs. Chandola, the House Dame, opened the door to her attached house, and I landed in her arms on her sofa! About a month later, during the mango season, Anil Wassan, climbed a fruit filled tree in the compound and perched on top with me below. He dropped a mango for me to collect; my attention got diverted following the progress with Mr. Chandola walking in with folding chair and newspaper in hand. He seated himself, and the next mango went crashing into his newspaper; an upward look was all it took! The 3rd Y.C. followed by the end of term, as we ganged up on a

room mate and plastered the poor soul with freshly made boot polish from the Chemistry lab.

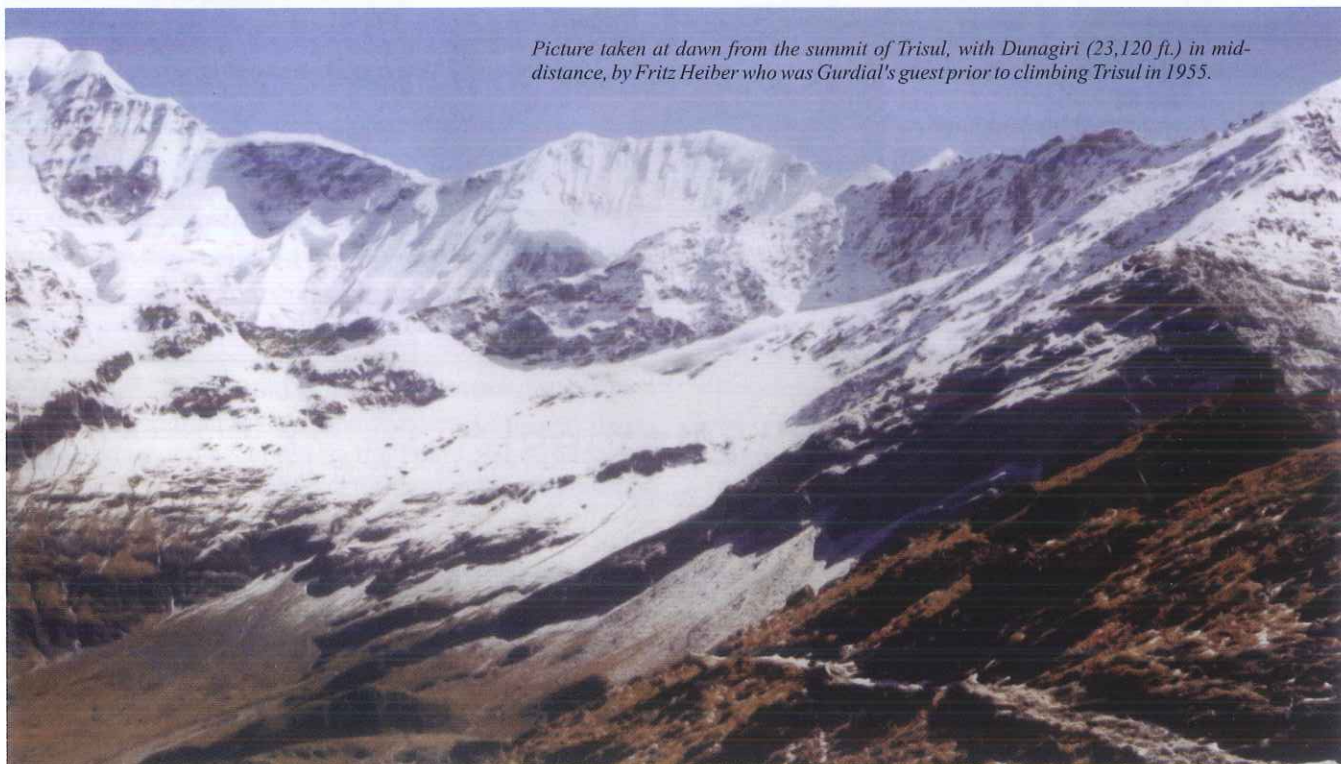
Having made this flying start, now that you ask me, it was no problem at all to collect at an average, 2-3 such cards in the ensuing 7 years in school, say 3 cards a year. At this gentlemanly rate, no alarm was caused. Sheel Vohra reminded me that I had only 24 cards and somehow for the school cricket coach a quarter century was desirable. So I obliged as the dinner that night at Jaipur House was unappetizing, and we were sighted in an eatery in Jamuna Colony.

The above misdeeds taught me a great deal in the art of evasion, independent thinking, value of stealth and leadership, which I must confess helped me pass a very interesting 40 years with the tea industry with Dosco Basant Dube (now Goodricke-Amgoorie-Jorehaut Group), Andrew Yule, Assambrook Ltd. and lastly Grob Tea (Octavius Steel) in 2008. I still remain involved with the tea industry. The scope for a man of my experiences seems limitless!

Trisul 1951 – 'The Beginning of Indian Mountaineering'

by Gurdial Singh

The 1951 ascent of Mount Trisul by Gurdial Singh is regarded by many as the beginning of modern Indian mountaineering. Located on the western rim of the Nanda Devi sanctuary, Trisul or Shiva's trident, was first climbed in 1907 by Longstaff, and remained the highest climbed peak in the world for 24 years.



Picture taken at dawn from the summit of Trisul, with Dunagiri (23,120 ft.) in mid-distance, by Fritz Heiber who was Gurdial's guest prior to climbing Trisul in 1955.

Sixty years ago Gurdial Singh climbed Trisul (23,360 feet).

He was accompanied by Roy Greenwood, Sergeant-Instructor at the Indian Military Academy, and Dawa Thondup, a Sherpa 'Tiger', who had earned renown on Everest and other major peaks.

The ascent of Trisul was not a first, for it had been climbed twice before, the first time as early as 1907. Nor was it a peak that presented exceptional technical difficulties. Yet there is an aspect of the climb that gives it historic significance. It was the first time that a major peak had been climbed by an Indian. "It was when Gurdial Singh climbed Trisul in 1951 that the age of mountaineering for Indians began," wrote Harish Kapadia, a chronicler of the Himalayan scene. The Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF), which was established a few years after this climb, recognised it as the 'beginning of Indian mountaineering.'

The history of mountaineering in the Himalaya from around the turn of the nineteenth century, exclusively by foreigners supported by mountain porters, is a

fascinating saga of adventure and exploration of the unknown. At a time when climbing equipment of the kind available today was rudimentary and accurate mapping had yet to be accomplished, it seems incredible that Dr. Tom Longstaff succeeded in climbing to the summit of Trisul at an elevation of 23,360 feet as early as in 1907 – which remained an altitude record of summits climbed for the succeeding 24 years.

This was the inspiration that led four of us to make a bid for Trisul in June 1951 with a happily successful result. We did not of course realise then that this event would count as a historic ascent of a major Himalayan peak by an Indian team, thus also marking the beginning of Indian mountaineering. It was also significant that three of the four members had Doon School connections. The Doon School was indeed the nursery that produced the earliest mountaineers of great distinction.

Scarcely had Roy Greenwood and I returned from the trip to Bandarpunch in 1950 than we started making plans for the following summer. Having considered various high-altitude treks, we decided on Trisul (23,360 feet). Greenwood left both the task of forming a party and the organisation of the expedition to me. The

former was readily accomplished. Two old boys of the Doon School, Surendr Lall and Nalni Jayal, who had long desired an introduction to the high hills, were invited to join the party. Their acceptance meant that whatever the fate of the expedition might be, we, kindred spirits all, could at least be sure of the lasting satisfaction of congenial company shared and enjoyed in a mountain venture. The average age of the party was 25 and not all of us were certified climbers.

The organisation was as modest and simple as possible. The Himalayan Club and, through the sponsorship of General Williams, the Quarter-Master-General's Branch of the Army Headquarters loaned us some valuable equipment. Messrs. Welcome and Burroughs were quite liberal, at least about sulphaguanadine, which was supplied in such large quantity that we appeared adequately equipped to treat all the pilgrims who might suffer from dysentery on the route to Badrinath.

We employed three Sherpas for their knowledge of mountaineering – Gyalgen Myckje, Dawa Thondup, and Lhakpa Tsering; the Garhwali porters had not yet got their 'ticket'. On the appointed day our party of seven assembled at the Doon School – trysting place of several expeditions before and since.

On the evening of 7th June 1951, we, together with equipment weighing 1300 lbs, occupied a portion of a third class compartment and steamed out of Dehradun station at 1940 hours. We had to struggle out of the

carriage with our cumbersome baggage, at Najibabad railway station on 7th night – such was the onslaught of passengers scrambling to fill the vacuum created by our detraining! We slept on the platform for the remaining hours of the night, and covered the one-and-a-half hour journey by rail to Kotdwara railhead, just as the first rays of the sun lit the surrounding foothills on 8th June. The Garhwal Motor Owner's Union Ltd. bus that had been hired for Rs.270 was waiting for us. Thence two days' journey by bus, first across the foothills and then along the Alaknanda, brought us to Chamoli, a mere 3,800 feet in elevation and unpleasantly warm but for a timely squall and thunder shower.

Early in the morning on 10th June, the loads sorted and the mules laden, we set off along the hot and dull pilgrim route. After a 22-mile march, past Gulabkoti, we arrived at Kumarchatti, aided by the faint glow of a waxing crescent and tired after the first exertion of the trip.

We rose early on the lovely morning of 11th June, to get our first clear view of the lower snows, away in the distance, framed by the steep sides of the Alaknanda valley. We continued along the busy pilgrim route, which brightened up somewhat with forests of *Rhododendron arboreum* around, still bearing the last traces of its beautiful red flowers. An almost level 6.5-mile march brought us by 9AM to Joshimath, a prosperous place with shops well stocked with goods of



Members of the Trisul Expedition, 1951. Standing from left to right Surendr Lall, Gurdial Singh, Roy Greenwood and Nalni Jayal. Dawa Thondup sitting at extreme left. Photo: Surendr Lall

all description. A charming Dak Bungalow maintains a historic register bearing names of eminent mountaineers who have constantly paid homage to this fertile region from the earliest days of last century.

After lunch, we set course in an easterly direction, along the Dhauliganga valley. It was with a sense of relief that we left the none-too-clean pilgrim path, which swerves northwards towards Badrinath, 18 miles away. By dusk we were in Tapovan, six miles from Joshimath, wallowing in the hot springs, and doing our last bit of washing.

And so, on 12th June we reached the last human habitation in this part of Garhwal, the village of Lata, at 7,600 feet. The mule track ended here; we reorganised our baggage into porter loads of 56 lbs each and made the acquaintance of a Bhotia of Bampa village, Kesar Singh, a veteran of Kamet and Trisul, who volunteered to accompany us and took upon himself the task of finding 15 porters from neighbouring villages. The able-bodied men from Lata village were all with the French expedition!

The teeming flies of Lata have to be seen to be believed, and so on 13th June, although only eight porters were available, we decided to rid ourselves of this menace and set camp in the cooler upper region near the 12,642 feet high Lata peak, which overlooks the village, awaiting the remaining seven porters the following day.

We, then, set-off for Lata Kharak, a delectable flower-covered grazing ground on a wind-swept ridge above the upper limit of birch trees. The exhausting climb of 5,000 feet was soon forgotten when we breathed the pure, balmy and invigorating mountain air and saw the glorious vision of the rugged spires across the Dhauliganga and the snowy peaks of Ronti (19,895 feet), Nanda Ghunti (20,710 feet) and Bethartoli Himal (20,840 feet) across the Rishiganga.

After a day's rest, we headed towards the Lata-Tolma ridge, in mist. The weather steadily worsened, and it was in disconcerting sleet that we crossed the rather sensational 14,700 feet pass leading to Durashi glen. We staggered and slithered over wet rocks and snow-filled gullies. But, gradually, conditions began to improve; the mist lifted to reveal not only the Rishi gorge, which was now several thousand feet below us, but also the broad alp of Durashi, which lay spread out in front of us. On an open alp at five that evening we pitched camp at an altitude of 13,750 feet, above the grazing ground named Durashi. Nalni had the unnerving experience that day of altitude sickness – he had been wearing his tennis shoes all along (he had sent his climbing boots ahead with a porter!).

The next morning, Saturday 16th June, saw us on the 'curtain' ridge, so called because it screens the middle and upper parts of the Rishiganga valley. We were

Headstand by Gurdial on the summit of Trisul (Photo: R. Greenwood, 1951)



awestruck by the peaks of Nanda Devi Sanctuary. Cairns stand upon the 'curtain' ridge in impressive array, to guide the adventurous shepherd who drives his flocks for a few weeks every summer to graze on these rich and remote pastures. From here we sighted the beautiful alp of Dibruggheta, 3,000 feet below us, 'a fragment of Arcady dropped amid chaos', in Longstaff's apt words. We quickly descended to this alp, situated at a height of 11,700 feet, surrounded by a fir forest, and flanked by two streams. Soon our eyes were luxuriating on the rich fare provided by its lloydias, fritillaries, anemones, cypripediums and potentillas. We camped on one side of the farther stream and on the opposite bank, beneath a clump of willow trees, saw the resplendent camp of the rearguard of the French Nanda Devi expedition – R. Dulpot, the leader, and M. Payan, the doctor. It was a happy party which got together that evening to celebrate this chance meeting of mountain lovers.

Dibruggheta marks the furthest limit to which the Lata and Tolma shepherds venture with their flocks. So, whatever little traces of a track existed thus far, now disappeared altogether.

Next day dawned fine and we had our first view of the heavenly Nanda Devi (25,645 feet) when we emerged from the fir forest overlooking Dibruggheta. Along a craggy hillside, cut by deep gullies, lay our route. There was no track of any sort, and those of us who lacked

instinct for the right way got lost for some hours. We dropped down to Deodi, 10,800 feet, to camp under birch trees about 200 feet above the Rishiganga torrent. The site showed signs of recent occupation, and a placard attached to a tree indicated the direction of a bridge; a thoughtful act on the part of a French climber, Robert Walter of Pondicherry, who too was heading towards Trisul. We felled another tree to ensure safe crossing over the rough bridge.

The ascent of the next 2,000 feet, the following morning, was through a tangled mass of rhododendrons. Heading south, we entered the catchment basin of the Trisul nalla and pitched camp in a trough near the snout of the Bethartoli glacier, on a clearing amidst juniper and dwarf rhododendron bushes. Herds of barrhal grazed peacefully in the distance, an occasional Monal pheasant flitted past overhead, the bubbling call of a snow-cock distinctly audible.

Gurdial, Greenwood, and Dawa Thondup reached the summit of Trisul on 23 June 1951, after a gruelling seven-hour climb of 3,650 feet. No flags were taken or hoisted on the summit, nor any objects to defile the holy crest; only prayers and thanksgiving were offered. No 'assault' was mounted in arrogance to 'conquer' the peak, only gratitude expressed in all humility to have been 'permitted' to achieve the ascent.

- Nalni Jayal

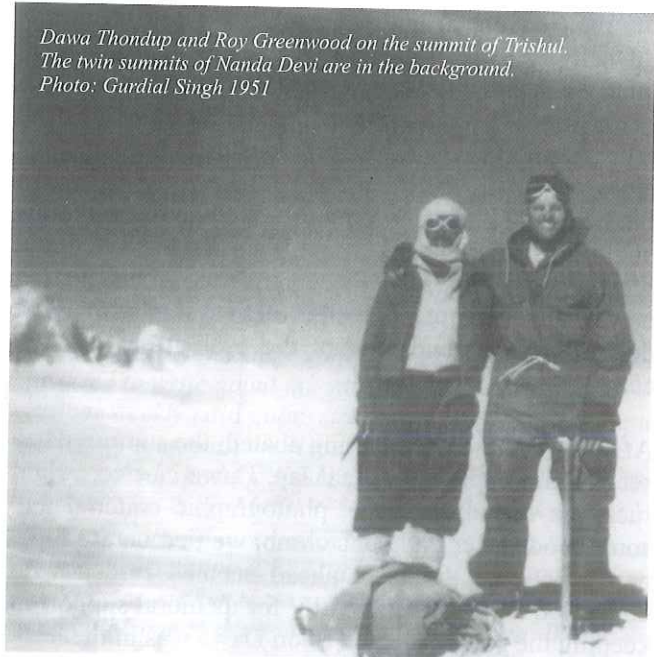


Trisul Base Camp, c. 15,500ft. Photo: Gurdial Singh 1951

Base Camp Established

Wearily we crossed the glacier the next morning. Following a barrhal track on the divide of the left-bank moraine of the Trisul glacier, we eventually established our base camp on 20th June, on a level, grassy hollow at a height of 15,000 feet. Save for the lack of fuel, it was difficult to imagine a more idyllic site. It was sheltered and all around us was cushion-like turf bedecked with primulas and saxifrages. The stern, yet glorious spectacle of both Devistan (21,900 feet) and Dunagiri (23,184 feet) lay before us.

While Nalni and Surendr re-organised loads and recovered from the exertion of the previous day,



Dawa Thondup and Roy Greenwood on the summit of Trisul. The twin summits of Nanda Devi are in the background. Photo: Gurdial Singh 1951

Greenwood and I, eager to see what lay ahead, left the base camp with light loads. After rounding a long series of cliffs, we saw the moraine turn sharply in a westerly direction towards a towering ice-fall. We climbed a moderately steep snow-covered slope and saw the snowfields on the north-east slope of Trisul. We levelled some rocks opposite the ice-fall, pitched a tent, dumped the loads inside and sped down to Robert Walter's camp for a hot drink, and thence to base camp.

Next day, a bright morning indicated the summer solstice, 21st June, and we rose to find the grass covered with hoar frost, which soon thawed with the first rays of the sun. We set off for Camp I – the whole party except Kesar Singh and the porters – which was established at 17,800 feet. The same afternoon, Greenwood, Dawa, Gyalgen and I climbed another 500 feet in thick mist to dump stores at Robert's camp. Altitude had begun to tell on Nalni and Surendr – both had splitting headaches and severe lassitude. Accordingly, at supper, it was arranged that Greenwood and I, with Dawa and Gyalgen, should put 'rush tactics' to the test, leaving others to follow the advance party if they felt fit enough to climb, or, if not, to return to the base camp and await the arrival of the summit party on June 25th.

Four of us lay cheek by jowl in a 'Meade' tent that night.

View of Nanda Devi

In sparkling sunshine we joined Robert the next morning, 22nd June. As we looked back, we beheld, behind a dip in the Devistan ridge, the imposing head of Nanda Devi. This double-turreted peak asserted itself in the views which we were privileged to enjoy during the next few days. Accompanied by Robert and his Sherpas, we, now heavily laden, resumed the climb over glistening snowfields. Progress was slow and it was tiresome work breaking the trail, especially as the

morning advanced and the sun shone with a pitiless intensity. At 3 PM, with the arrival of the usual afternoon mist, we decided to set up Camp II on the gentle slopes stretching to the east of the northern ridge of Trisul, at an estimated height of 19,500 feet.

We awoke the next morning on 23rd June to find a low pile of drift snow near our feet. This and the bitter cold prevented an early start. Robert gave us the disquieting news that he did not feel well enough to start with us; he decided to wait and attempt the peak from a higher camp.

At 8.30 AM, the wind having abated, the summit party set off to complete the final lap. Dawa carried a light rucksack containing rope, photographic material and some food. After an hour's climb, we tied on the rope, partly because the névé ahead seemed ridden with concealed crevasses and partly for its moral support in keeping the party together. Soon Dawa was in the lead. Steadily we climbed in his footsteps. The Devistan group of peaks sank lower and lower and by 2 PM was completely enshrouded by a sea of clouds, through which Dunagiri, the twin peaks of Nanda Devi and distant Kamet group appeared like floating castles.

After nearly six hours of weary struggle, the climb still seemed interminable with the same unbroken horizon of snow above us, until at 3 PM, the somewhat gentler slope of the summit ridge was gained. Here Gyalgen announced that he had reached the end of his tether. He looked a very tired man – he had obviously reached the absolute limit. We instructed him to await our return, and then resumed climbing. Gasping for breath, Greenwood and I tugged at the rope. Dawa turned around and, with a mixture of firmness and politeness, emphasized that time was pressing; therefore we must quicken our pace!

The Summit Attained

4.15 PM: the tip of Shiva's trident was ours at last! No flag was planted on top. Instead Greenwood erected a tripod – not an easy task with numb fingers – and he clicked his camera through 360 degrees. The only demonstration of joy I can recall was our homage to Mother earth; we bent our heads low and pointed our feet skywards, though Greenwood remarked that our attempts lacked technique!!!

Forty minutes of exalted life on the summit were followed by a rapid descent. For a while we stopped at Robert's Camp III to exchange salutations. Clouds were tinted with the glow of sunset when, just after 7 PM, the weary but contented lot of us reached Camp II. A dream was fulfilled.

On 24th June, we raced down the gleaming snowfields and, after collecting the left-over loads at Camp I, wallowed in the comforts of the base camp before midday. Greenwood stayed behind with Dawa and Lhakpa to attempt Mrigthuni (22,490 feet) while the rest of us retraced our steps towards the lower levels. Double marches enabled us to reach Joshimath on 28th June, where Gyalgen and I took leave of Nalni and Surendr to spend another month in the high valleys of Garhwal.

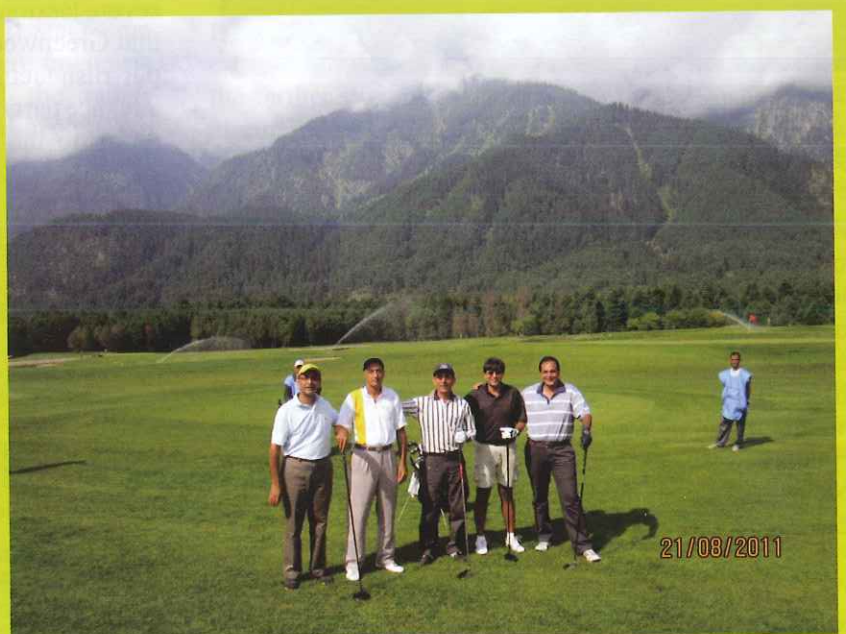
FOOT NOTE:

1. *Gurdial Singh: Assistant Master in the Doon School from 1945² to 1962²; Housemaster of J House from 1963¹ to 1972²; and Deputy Headmaster from 1972² to January 1979.*
2. *Surendr Lall (Bandy): 107-J, 1936¹-1943¹; School Captain.*
3. *Nalni D. Jayal : 100-T, 1936¹-1945¹; House Captain 1945¹.*

[2011 marks the 60th anniversary of the ascent of Trisul by Mr Gurdial Singh. This article appeared in the July-September issue of 'The South Asian Life & Times'...Ed.]

GOLF IN THE VALLEY

A group of avid golfers flew up to Srinagar on the 18th August weekend to play two hectic rounds at Pahalgam and Srinagar. The group included (L to R): Rajiv Sarin (Class of 1974), Nalin Khanna (Class of 1980), Nikhel Kochar (Class of 1973), Jaikaran Singh (Class of 1980) and Jaiwant Bery (Class of 1976). Khem Singh (Class of 1980) also joined them at Srinagar. A notable absentee was 'local' Rajiv Nanda (576-T '80) who had to pull-out of the trip at the last moment.



In My Anecdote

N.Ramaswami (237 K '47)

GALLUP POLL

Let me go back to the spring of 1945. Those days we used to have a "Gallup Poll" (do they still have it?) on some subject or the other, with the boys dropping their votes in a box outside the HM's room on the landing. The subject this time was "Who is the greatest man of modern times?" The results were reported in some newspapers too. Here is the score: Mahatma Gandhi-131 votes, Hitler-58, Stalin-29, F.D.Roosevelt-9, Rabindranath Tagore-8, George Bernard Shaw and Jawaharlal Nehru-3 each, Chiang Kai Shek-2, Mussolini-0. The war was still very much on and knowledge of Nazi atrocities on the Jews, the Indian National Army, etc. were still below the horizon. Except Tagore, the others were still alive then.

A MATCH TO REMEMBER

Jumping 3 years to the summer of 1948, Firdaus Jehangir (297 H '49) and I were the scorers for the House XI match between Kashmir and Hyderabad Houses. After Kashmir's 211, Hyderabad made just 50 and following on, were 46/7 on Saturday evening. On Sunday, the last recognized (and how!) batsman Inder Swarup (21H '47) and Hara Prasad Mookerjee (240H '48) came in to bat. Then came some hurricane batting by

Inder Swarup. Boundaries galore, interrupted by sixes, took the score to 271, when finally he was caught by School Captain Ashok Gokhale (216 K '45) for 206. Hyderabad lasted 4 more runs, leaving Kashmir to get 115. But a dispirited Kashmir went out for 84, thanks to some tight fielding and deadly spin bowling by Raghupati Sahay (75 H '46). Rahul Banerjee (179 H '46) was inspired to write about this match in the next Doon School Weekly (still going strong I hope). He likened it to a boxing bout, with the Hyderabadis cheering "Inder Inder Inder!" and the Kashmiris calling "Mallik Mallik Mallik!" for Uday Mallik (258 K '48) who took 6 for 121. Rahul mentioned a very sporting action by Kashmir's skipper Chengappa (287 K '47). When 2 runs took Inder to 200, non-striker Hara ran across to congratulate him. The ball came to the bowler Chengappa (Gen. B.C. Nanda in later life) who desisted from running out Hara. This was much appreciated by the Hyderabad boys. Next year Uday Mallik led Kashmir to win the cup.

Incidentally like Neville Cardus, appreciated by Mallik in 'The Rose Bowl' August 2011 issue for writing on Cricket and Music, Uday Mallik captained Kashmir House in Music too besides captaining the School in Cricket.

DSOBS REGISTER & DOSCO RECORD

Saroj Kumar Mehera (122 K '44)

There appears to be a great deal of confusion among a number of Old Boys regarding the captioned publications.

The DSOBS REGISTER is akin to various institutions' directories/address books and, among other things, contains Class Listing which is meant to show the year an Old Boy passed the School Certificate (SC) exam (Senior Cambridge, now ISC). It was customary in Doon's earlier years for boys, who had done their Senior Cambridge (SC) at age 15 or 16, to stay on for the Intermediate Exam of Allahabad University (Inter) fifteen months later or for the Cambridge Higher School Certificate Exam (HSC) two years later, provided their age did not exceed 18 in the year of the exam, after which they left. Probably for want of information, boys who left before sitting for the SC, have been shown in the Class Listing of the year they left or of the year in which, theoretically, they might have taken the SC.

In determining an Old Boy's batch year, it had been laid down that it should be the SC year, not Inter/HSC. However, many Old Boys continue to use the Inter/HSC year as their batch year, which does create confusion, in the REGISTER and elsewhere. Once the ISC came in, there were no such problems.

The DOSCO RECORD is meant to include full particulars of all

Old Boys – date of birth, parentage, date of joining, school number, achievements in school – academic and sports, exams passed, date of leaving, post-school academic and career achievements, marital information, children, address, date of death. The first RECORD, which developed from the REGISTER, was compiled in 1980 by the then Headmaster, Mr. J.A.K. Martyn. The second edition was compiled in 1987 by the then Secretary of The Doon School Old Boys' Society, the late Col (Retd.) P.C. Khanna [38T '44], with the active support of the Society's President and his predecessors. The subsequent edition came out in 1996-97 and was known as the Diamond Jubilee Edition. The next edition was due to appear in October 2011 but its publication has been deferred by a year. Since 1996-97, there has been a huge increase in the number of Old Boys, giving rise to the difficulty of incorporating everybody's particulars in one volume, without pruning the information provided in the answers to the questionnaire sent out in 2010 or, in the absence of replies, the data in the earlier editions.

The RECORD must be archived. If this is to be in book form, multiple volumes will be required, covering entrants, say from 1935 to 1987 in the first volume, 1988 to 2040, or any appropriate span, in the next and so on. In our climate, books, no matter how well bound, tend to disintegrate after a time. An answer may be to have the RECORD on line, as are an increasing number of previously published books.

D O W N M E M O R Y L A N E

The actresses and back stage crew of the School summer production 'Under-Secretary' [1974)



The back stage crew (L-R)
Mr. PN Raina, Mr. CK Dikshit, Mrs. Jean Simeon, Mrs. Bhatt, Mrs. Batish, Mr. Batish, Mrs. Pitre,
Mr. Painuli and Dr. Bhatt with the boys

Seated in front: Mrs. Sinha, Kavita Sinha, Himani Bhatt, Vibha Malhotra, Kishore Lahiri

The Back Stage Boys in the photograph (L-R)
Not identified, Nawal Kapoor, Gurpreet 'Hard Out' Singh, Jaspreet Singh, not identified,
Manoranjan 'Fat Surd' Duggal, Anoop Seth, Rahul Akerkar (at the back), Jagabir Singh,
Prabhat Misra (behind Mrs. Pitre)), Akbar Firasat Hussain, Anil 'Paps' Malhotra, Sunil Chadha

Kishore Lahiri (30 KB '74) has shared this picture with us.

D O W N M E

The actresses and back stage crew of the So



The back stage crew (L-R)
Mr. PN Raina, Mr. CK Dikshit, Mrs. Jean Simeon, Mrs. Bhatt, Mrs. Batish, Mr. Batish, Mrs. Pitre,
Mr. Painuli and Dr. Bhatt with the boys

Seated in front: Mrs. Sinha, Kavita Sinha, Himani Bhatt, Vibha Malhotra, Kishore Lahiri