

The Old Lawrencian

The Newsletter of the Old Lawrencians Association, Lovedale
4Q 2015

Welcome

Foreword	1
OLA.....	2
Radio Days.....	3
Headed Home	6
Introducing.....	11
Remembering	14
Writer's Block.....	16
Happenings	18
Calling OLs.....	22
Administrative	23
Class Notes	26

Hola OLs!

I hope you all enjoyed the last issue of the newsletter and the variety of pictures that showcased how each batch celebrated Founders. We're now back to the regular issue and hope the contents will give you a laugh, pull at your heart strings or compel you to buy OL memorabilia.

After the Founders excitement died down, the only way to keep the spirit was to have OL meetings at various places. At the AGM, the new OLA President Joseph John (Jojo) (VIN, 1979) stressed on fellowship, and has done a great task in getting dates for OL meetings all over the country.

As most of you are aware, we're still in the process of developing the OLA app. Right now the android version is out but is still work in progress. We've had quite a few anomalies, and till it is perfected, your patience would be much appreciated. The iOS version is expected to be available early next year. If you haven't sent in your details, please do so and you will get access to the OL world.

This issue has a humorous article by Gautam Joshi (VIN, 1979) about his experiences in school, Radhika Vaz (DEO, 1990) and Anuli Katakam (DEO, 1990) write about their 25th reunion experience at Founders this year and Ekom Mamik (VIN, 2006) the talented painter tells us her story of discovery and art. We have the happenings to let you know what events to watch out for and what has passed. There are OL businesses and the class notes to complete this issue.

Sadly, this year has seen the demise of many OLs both young and old. We extend our heartfelt condolences to the family and friends who have to deal with this loss.

OL memorabilia is now available for sale. For all those who want to buy souvenirs, we have ties, women's stoles, men's scarves, baggage tags and a diary interspersed with beautiful pictures of school that are bound to evoke memories. All you have to do is send me a mail and I will ship the items out to you. Soon you will be able to view and buy the items that we have in the OL shop right from your phone. We would like to come up with more items and your suggestions are more than welcome.

I hope you enjoy this issue and revert with suggestions, comments or articles that will make our next issue an interesting read.

Thomas Mookken – (ARA, 1980)
Sandya Kutappa – Virtual Office



4Q 2015

OLA



For ordering contact Sandy at, +91 98800 19802 or sandy@oldlawrencians.org



Price: ₹ 100/- for 3

Price: ₹ 1,100/-



Price: ₹ 1,500/-

Price: ₹ 1,200/-



Price: ₹ 310/-

OL Shop - <https://www.instamojo.com/dashboard/>

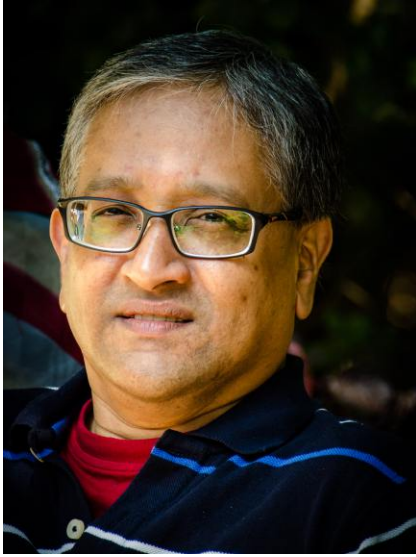
Shipping and handling charges ₹ 300/- per shipment



Radio Days



Joshi Gautam
I VIN | 1979 |



Gautam Joshi lives in Mumbai and will basically write for any publication that will publish him. A founder-member of B.R.E.A.D (Bombay Rockers Enforced in the Abolition of Disco) - he has never been the same since the late '70's break-up of Devil's Disciples and the Hillsideers. Gautam can be contacted at gautamjoshi@yahoo.com

One thing my parents did not tell me before sending me to Lovedale, was about the food I'd get there. Reality hit home when on day one, I was guided into believing that eating oats laced Porridge was good for my health, and had nothing to do with horses. After the first spoon, I saw my life (and my taste buds) pass before my eyes.

Agreed food wasn't everything, but I never thought my life would revolve around food, or the lack of it, from then on. Headmasters spent hours at assembly time, telling us how school food built character. But as far as I was concerned – the only thing it built, were my stomach muscles.

Tuck shop at a younger age, was actually a place to eat at (unlike at a later age, when you choreographed your visits with the Girls' afternoon out) In those pre- cholesterol days, our favourite dish was “Egg on Bread”. Any guy worth his salt, needed to have a bath after consuming that dish. Egg on Bread was successful, mainly because it had more oil than Kuwait. Tuck Shop's cost of production was lower than a sweat shop, and this showed in the taste of the Coconut “sawdust” Balls, and Orange “where is the taste?” Juice. I think they mistook our famished cry of “I could eat a horse” for “I could eat the same food as a horse”

If Tuckers was heaven, then Dining Hall was hell. Saturday was chicken night. All that salivating for one piece of chicken, which looked like it had been raised in Auschwitz. The chicken pieces were so miniscule, that I'm sure after one look at them, Arundhati got the title for her book “God of Small Things”. The architect of this abuse - head cook Ramatta (known in culinary circles as The Kitchen Rat) was blissfully unaware - as he took another slug from his bottle, which was definitely Formaldehyde – taken from Bio Lab, when Long John wasn't looking.

Actually some of my Vindhya house-mates pioneered “Fast Food” in the Nilgiris. Their version was - to dip bread in the gravy bowl, and fling it across to the Sumeru and Aravalli tables. Luckily for us, Newton's law was not at work, and most of the bread did not come back to us. Come to think of it, there was almost a food riot – when some hungry Vindhya guys asked for the bread to be returned.

What I still don't understand, is that all the guys in school complained about “bad food” somewhere in-between their 4th and 5th helpings – of that same food! Our activity levels were so high, that in sheer numbness, at that moment, any food tasted good (it reminds me of the old tale of why mosquito mats work – They induce sleep, so the sleeper is just unaware, that he is being bitten)

Shinkows at Ooty, was the Oasis in the desert of school food. After a week of boiled rice, bondas and porridge, our stomachs screamed (in tune with the Chicago song) “take me back to Shinkows Coz the Zodiac room charges more tax! “

On Sunday, before we went to Assembly rooms for our dose of Hollywood, Shinkows was a ritual stop. The owners of Shinkows stayed behind the restaurant. If you went too early, Grandma Shinkows would still be cutting vegetables on one of the tables. Whenever her grand- kids cried, we would shout “Oh no! Meat shortage again!” Suzy our favourite waiter (who served at 4 kmph) was an institution. When he died, they shut the restaurant between 3.00 pm and 6.00 pm in his memory (Didn't lose too many customers between those hours!).

During our 25th Mother of all Reunions (MOAR) my wife accompanied me to school. She





Radio Days



started having second thoughts on our marriage when she saw me rushing for chai and biscuits after Parade. She had to get her own shrink, after I insisted on eating at Shinkows - 4 times in 3 days!

Why don't Lawrencian spouses understand... this was the very food that makes their cooking look good!

Apart from food, the second most important thing for us in school was music. We were basically 'Raised on Radio'. There were no TV's in the dorms, and assembly rooms was the only grail. In our times music was heard and not seen. There was a charm in listening to music, and imagining the rest. It took us many years to move from records to CD's - This was because one always thought that static was part of the music, and actually enjoyed the accompanying scratch sounds.

There were many "bands" in school. Their names were stranger than their music. "Methylated Spirits" with Shireesh and friends had everyone on their feet with their version of "We're an American Band". They also set up a roaring practice for ENT specialists in Ooty.

The girl's had a band called "Speed Breakers". They would have replaced the "Spice Girls" had they not been forced to write their 10th standard exams – while they were in 10th standard.

But the finest in the "I can skulk 2nd prep, because I'm in a band category", was the 1979 batch rock band - "Bad Magic". Our versions of "Song Sung Blue" and "Shame and Scandal" moved the audiences (luckily we had bolted all the large hall exits, in case some stupid kids decided to bolt) It took us 20 minutes and 3 songs to realise that the kids in large hall audience were shouting "expel them" and not "encore".

Our one chance for listening to a live band was at the school dance. More on this subject later, in my sequel "Terminator II – What is with Lawrence School Girls?" – Which covers the day when we almost invited the Nazareth girls to our school dance.

When it came to local bands, there was not much of a choice. Choosing between the Devil's Disciples and the Hillsiders, was like choosing between Cholera and Typhoid. Whenever either played our favourite songs, we thought the Hill Train had derailed.

Our big mistake was to shout "Encore" after the Hillsiders finished playing their version of 'Beautiful Sunday' – giving them the impression that we actually liked their singing. This made them once again, badger us with the same song, thus successfully sterilising all the remaining birds in the Clock Tower. I don't know what stressed me more – the Hillsiders music or the fact that most guys lied that they knew in school itself, the actual word was "Encore" and not "Honko".

In fact it was at the dance, that we discovered steps that would have put "Saturday Night Fever" to shame. School Dance had to be prepared for. This involved not going for PT for 3 days prior to D-Day. This was not surprising, considering the way most guys danced, was similar to Selva's skinning-ups at Top Flats.

The shy girls used the "Left knee Tango", which involved moving only the left knee slightly throughout the song. For the not-so-shy guys, the most common dance step was



Radio Days



“The Adidas Shuffle”. This involved flapping your hands wildly, and vigorously jogging in the same spot. It did not matter, that in most such cases, the girl involved, was so embarrassed, that she simply walked away and danced with someone else.

The most awaited was the “Johnson Swing”. This involved the dancer going up vertically very rapidly, and descending at an even greater speed. This was mainly due to the large amounts of Johnson's Baby Powder spread the previous evening, on critical areas of the dance floor. (We also referred to this dance, as the crash course in flying).

Finally for the brave-at-heart, it was the “Suicide Shuffle”. This involved tagging (or tapping as we called it) the most brutal senior, when he was dancing with the girl you wanted to dance with. After this you knew, that the light at the end of the tunnel - was actually a train coming towards you.

Rock & Pop music was basically our main interest. We tolerated Disco and could not understand Jazz. Further we hated Country music, because the songs had Titles such as “I Miss you Baby but my Aim is getting Better “or“ I would have taken her to a dog show – but I was afraid she would win”.

Bad food, good music was all in the game – but what I took with me forever - were my batch mates. The best part of the batch of 1979, was the batch of 1979. We fought, “kicked-up” skulked, did not study, kicked St. Joseph's butt, etc.. But at the end of the day, we wound up still friends, laughing & crying, helping each other and together as Team '79.

This bonding and support continues to date and was summed up recently by an eminent economist during an inter-galactic press conference – “About the Lovedale batch of 1979 - There are no passengers on that spaceship... they are all crew”!



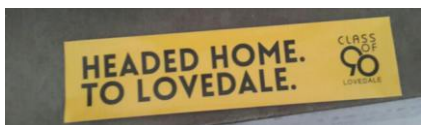
Headed Home



**Vaz Radhika and
Katakam Anuli**
| DEO | 1990 |



Radhika Vaz and **Anuli Katakam** are both writers. They were selected to work on this piece because all their other classmates have actual jobs.



Glimpses From a Reunion

A 25th Reunion is special. No matter how many Founders Day celebrations you may attend after leaving school this one is the big daddy, and to mark the occasion the Class of 1990 was represented by 66 batchmates. Our swag bag (more on this later) luggage tag read “25 Years of Baggage” and while some of us may have been traveling heavier than others, we all made the journey with one hope – to reconnect and recreate those crazy and carefree school days.

Planned to the last detail, a team of enthusiastic volunteers from the batch of 1990 was led by the very efficient Roseann Shetty who had worked tirelessly to ensure we wouldn't lose a moment of fun. For those of us involved, those monthly Skype calls at timings that were convenient to North Americans, Indians and South East Asian batchmates were hilarious, but it must be noted the calls were singularly responsible for making Project Reunion a success.

Over two years, batchmates were found or smoked out from across the globe. A massive and somewhat daunting exercise in raising funds for the Top Flats Pavilion took priority and Prahlad Nanjappa spent the better part of last year designing the best swag bag ever. We had t-shirts, hoodies, umbrellas, bags, car stickers, luggage tags, a banner, mugs and school scarves, which would we would wear with great pride. Closer to May 2015, the hotel was booked, transport organised, and more importantly our party planning went into overdrive with the US contingent hosting our big do. Before we knew it, we were driving up those familiar ghats feeling young and car sick! It may be 2015 but we could have easily been back in the 1980's.

Going Back

In a better version of “Batches,” groups of us began arriving from Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kerala and other parts of the world. For many of us just meeting classmates we hadn't seen in 25 years at the airport was excitement enough, and by the time we reached what would be our home for the next few days, the “Monaarchch” Hotel, it almost seemed like we were returning to Lawrence school after our summer break, though thankfully in some comfort rather than by Indian Rail.

It goes without saying that the only thing most of us knew about The Monarch Hotel was that it was owned by Mithun Chakravorthy, something we girls may have said 'haaley' or 'kaaney' to in school, but now that we were older we recognized the value of a hotel that basically let us behave as we pleased. It was even better than being back in school, it was being back with no one in-charge.

Within a few hours as more of us started to arrive the hotel corridors began to feel more and more like the dorms. We were in and out of each others rooms and everyone was forced to give up any ideas of 'private space'. The girls were already talking hair care, the guys with hair were doing the same and all of us were fighting not to regress back to our teenage selves, at least until the administrative chores were sorted out. But as soon as that was done the only place worth bothering to look for anyone was in the hotel bar. Our swag-bag sticker couldn't have said it better “Never Left School”.

Our Day

The following day, and the day before Founders started, we headed to school kitted out in our reunion class t-shirts. A convoy of three buses and several cars drove through the familiar

Headed Home



The wall of 10C



1990 Dames



eucalyptus tree lined roads from Ooty to Lovedale. The hit of memories was strong we could have been returning from an outing and other than a big gate at flag staff, Lawrence School looked the same if not better.

Warmly welcomed by Jojo, the school had laid out the red carpet for us. This included lunch at the junior school that featured a most nostalgic menu of rice, sambar and pappadam – it smelt and tasted the same, and later we had chota buns for tea after our “rigorous” cross country run. Challenge any OL on his geographic knowledge of Lovedale and he will bristle. Likewise all of us insisted we knew our way to grass pitch and back. It was quickly apparent this was not the case with most of us making the run a lot longer for ourselves because we were all hopelessly lost...some of us intentionally! Nonetheless many of us finished much to the amazement of the physical ed teachers who were probably expecting us middle-aged men and women to wimp out.

Later that day our big moment was spent on Top Flats, the site of many victories and defeats. We gathered together to remember our classmate and class headgirl Divia Bidappa as well as to commemorate the pavilion that our batch had donated to the school. While we all had our own individual reactions to everything we experienced over those few days, that afternoon felt like the one time we were all closest to having the same thoughts and feelings as to why we had gathered together.

A reunion is an opportunity for rediscovery, self-reflection, and a host of other things that are good for us. It is also an opportunity for a big fat party and we took ours. Our head boy Sartaj Singh Gill kicked it off by making a wonderful presentation on Divia and the batch. After a few emotionally charged moments it was time to celebrate. A few select party animals kept the flag flying, and thanks to their spirit, and collection of spirits - lets just say a great time was had by one and all.

Founders Day

Founders began the next day and we kept it easy – most of the day was spent just wandering around school, meeting old friends, old foes and even some old crushes! Visiting classrooms and other familiar spots like 67's or pitchies took up most of our time and of course an enthusiastic few even played football. Some of us attended the play and PT, while some went right back to their dorms and partied some more.

And then suddenly it was day three. In spite of the exhaustion, we reached top flats bright and early looking very smart in our school scarves to take pride of place in the Trooping the Colour march past. Batch of 1990 – we looked fab, yes we did, even if we say so ourselves.

Another significant moment for our batch was giving the school a trophy in Divia's name. This would be awarded to the best student in the performing arts. Divia's sister Kirtana had worked on hard on making sure the trophy was a spectacular work of art and we were very happy to see it go to the current head girl who is just amazing.

As always Beating Retreat brought Founders and our reunion to a dramatic yet poignant close. It was a beautiful clear, crisp and cold Lovedale evening, the school's silhouette against the sunset looked spectacular and this lasting memory is what we can all hold on to until we are back.

Headed Home



The comedians of our batch



We made it to grass pitch

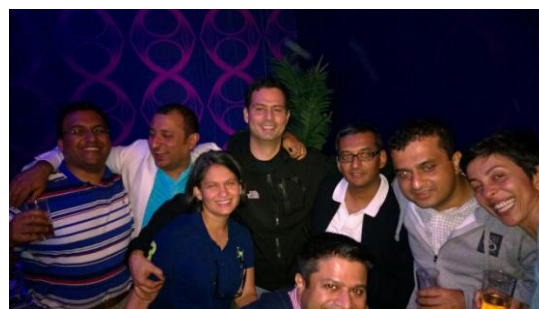


The Aftermath

The class of 1990 came to Ooty with the intention to have a lot of fun and we did. We are sure some of us killed a few demons that may have been chasing since we left school. For those who did not make their peace, take heart there will be more reunions in store. And while we were all admittedly older, none of us were in the mood to play wiser and it worked! To the reader, please don't miss your own reunion for anything. Unless of course the President of the United States needs to have a word with you – which is what happened to our illustrious classmate Neha Gill. Sorry we could not resist bragging!

The thing about a 25th reunion is that we are 43. Its not a 10th or even 20th where we are still positioning and judging. We have made choices. We are living with our realities—no children, three children, impressive careers or starting all over again, divorces, re-marriages, the works. We are who we are and no one gets that better than our boarding school friends.

So to all of you juniors, when it's your turn (and trust me it comes a lot faster than you think!) try and keep the date. Not for the reunion itself but for what comes after. The reunion for us was just the beginning, it led to old friendships being renewed and connections made deeper. In fact in today's manic world we know this needs to be treasured. And that is what really makes the trek up the hill worth it.



Arrival party - Monarch Hotel



OL 1990 Party - and what a party it was!!

Headed Home



I can still hold a rifle



**Proud to present
Akshi Sinha the Divia Biddapa
Award for the performing arts**



The party continues in to day 3



They tried to enter but
Girls school is still only for girls!



Nothing has changed.
We still lounge on the lawns

Headed Home



**On your mark, set, go! -
cross country via grass pitch**



A very fit batch of 1990



...and they made it



A nostalgic lunch in junior school



Introducing

Mamik Ekom
I VIN I 2006 I



Ekom formative years were spent divided between the tea estates at the foothills of Darjeeling in India and the Lawrence School, Lovedale. Although she has no formal training as a painter, art has served as an enduring outlet for her creativity. Her chosen medium is oil on canvas.



UNENDING TRUTHS
Oil on Canvas
20" x 16"

The Painting Business Woman

Ekom Mamik says "I paint when I am in a constant state of flux or in those deeper and darker moments. I find that painting has a therapeutic quality that provides a great deal of clarity in an otherwise burgeoning mesh of confusion." Ekom Mamik began attending Lawrence School at the age of nine. She worked in the corporate sector for half a decade before trading in the confines of a rigorous office job to travel, discover and rediscover. Ekom has always been intensely attracted to art as a medium of learning and expression, creating and recreating pieces over time. The website, www.ekommamik.com showcases a carefully curated introduction to some of her works.

When did you start painting and know that art was a medium of expression for you?

I think it was superficial at first, more than form or an artist's work; it was colour that initially attracted me to painting. It helped that both my mother and grandmother were inclined the same way and had dabbled quite extensively in oil paintings while they were growing up. There was a point I remember, the use of the colour black would evoke this profound sense of calm and in some ways from that point on, the way I perceived colour as a mere visual experience changed quite dramatically.

What is your experience with growing up in LSL? Whom did u draw your inspiration from?

LSL definitely shaped and grounded me in more ways than one. Family here, were the friends we chose and that itself laid a strong foundation in terms of forming relationships, which I believe is key to being successful in all of the different roles we take on in our lives. I have constantly drawn from that thought process in the way I approach MoringaWhat, my startup.

Having been at Lawrence for nine years, inspiration came in all forms and sizes and situations. I had many role models in school, from seniors, to teachers, to the sub staff; there was something to learn from everyone.

In terms of art specifically, I remember we had to sketch, still life at that, and it had to be approved by the teacher in charge, before we were accepted into a Fine Arts class (11th grade). After having literally drawn only over a 2cm/2cm space of the A4 sheet, I was told that art wasn't for me. This was followed by a long drawn appeal by a few of us to the DHM at the time about how all we needed was the opportunity, and really sometimes all you need to do is look beyond the rigidity of what is accepted vs. not, and go with your gut feeling. In the same vein, Lawrence gave you that flexibility and opportunity to voice your opinion, to state your point and be heard.

Where did life take you after school? Tell us a bit about your journey.

Post school, I attended college in Bangalore at Mount Carmel where the level of estrogen was far too much to endure I have to admit! I graduated in Psychology and Economics. During my time here, I did an internship with Goldman Sachs which translated into a job offer. I spent half a decade in the corporate sector before I left it to travel, the experience of which led to the conception of my startup MoringaWhat.

Post my time in Kenya, where I worked with a model sustainable village of HIV orphaned children and grandparents; I encountered the drought resistant, multifaceted Moringa Oleifera tree. The benefits of the tree have been passed on in folk remedies and known across cultures and ancient civilizations as being rich in nutrients and anti-oxidants; containing emollient, exfoliant, anti-inflammatory and anti-ageing properties. This tree seemed to be



Introducing



Standing Ovation
Oil on Canvas
36" x 30"



MOVEMENT AND EXPLOSION
Oil on Canvas
35.5" x 35.5"



a hole within somewhere - I
Oil on Canvas
24" x 36"

working 'miracles' at a microcosm level in the places that people needed it the most. Followed by months of research, I tied up with small holder farmers in the foothills of Darjeeling to grow and harvest part of the produce of the Moringa Oleifera tree and spread awareness of the nutrient dense leaves that research has shown to have the potential to effectively tackle malnutrition. And thus, MoringaWhat was conceived.

There are things, few and far between that you find your heart is in and when you do, you pursue that with an unending passion. MoringaWhat (www.moringawhat.com) is a result of that. The product is Moringa Oleifera Oil (cold pressed), known across cultures and ancient civilizations as containing emollient, exfoliant and anti-ageing properties. It's used by high-end cosmetic companies as a base in their anti-ageing products - my case in point, why not use it au naturel. It absorbs easily into the skin and can also be used as a carrier or massage oil. The packaging is eco-friendly. The oil is contained in amber glass, encased in bamboo and wrapped up in Jute! An exciting part of the process for me, was to have a painting I did years ago, titled Unending Truths (the logo), find meaning and intertwine with the vision of MoringaWhat. The product is now available to order, so get your hands on some Moringa Oil goodness! Help spread the word, MoringaWhat is on FB and Twitter too! #skincare #startup #socialimpact #ecofriendly. I am also a singer/ songwriter and played my first gig at Kitsch Mandi a month ago. Music has definitely influenced a lot of how I process what I'm going through.

Personally, each experience is an opportunity to take from, absorb or understand what to let go of. I view my time at Goldman Sachs as a stepping stone to what I am doing today. I keep reflecting back on a painting I did years ago, titled, 'Past, a Future', which I think captures the essence of that.

There are certain skill sets that one imbibes, transferable across different roles one takes on in life and a work culture that places 'people' on the top and provides the opportunity to network like no other place, that was Goldman Sachs for me. I continuously see myself draw from my experiences during my time at the firm and apply that to the way I'm taking Moringa What forward. Sure, there were bad days, real bad days that turned into weeks, but guess what, I still have bad days!

Through all of this time though, I had always been painting and continue to do so. Taking to the canvas always provided that sense of calm. Although I've had no formal training as a painter, art has always served as an enduring outlet for my creativity. I had my first exhibition in London earlier this year, a group show.

What are the memories you cherish most about LSL?

The freedom that comes with the view of an unending sky, amidst the view of punctuated flora and fauna, spotted with red bricks, you really felt invincible in school! The relationships I formed at Lawrence are my closest set of friends today, they're family and memories with them at school are unending and will always be cherished.

Do you ever see yourself teaching art at LSL?

I haven't really considered teaching art, but definitely spending time imparting what I know now would be something I would consider. Perhaps a summer with art at LSL!



Introducing



DSM - POPS
Oil on Canvas
24" x 36"

What is your advice to students on how to harness the opportunities Lovedale offers?

The opportunities at Lovedale are unending. I would say, be a sponge, absorb all that you can, keep an open mind, dabble in different things, explore and keep asking those questions. Never stop asking questions. Most importantly though, value your environment and above all your relationships, whether it be with your peers, seniors, juniors, staff, sub-staff, treat everyone as you would yourself.



PAST, A FUTURE
Oil on Canvas
29.5" x 23.5"

Remembering



Gupta Nergis aka Ma Guppu



Mrs. Gupta better known as Ma Guppu was passionate about Geography and brought in various tools and aids that added to understanding the physical features of the earth. This is a tribute to one who was loved and respected by the students of LSL.

The write up on Mrs. Gupta is a compilation of several opinions of those who knew her and, has been taken from an OL blog. For those who didn't have the pleasure of meeting her, read for yourself and see what you missed. Sadly, Mrs. Gupta passed away in June this year, and this article will evoke the fond memories that so many have.

Ma Guppu taught us the geography of the Nilgiris which I am sure was not in the Cambridge curriculum. The "Ouchterlony oranges" which are what we had for lunch many times a month, and "Naduvattam on the crest of the slope that got the brunt of the SW monsoon" are still fresh memories. Traditionally, science students rarely took Geography for the Cambridge exam as one of the 2 extra subjects (5 were required, LSL made us do 7 and the score of the best 5 were considered) since it was considered a difficult subject to get good marks in. Ma Guppu turned this paradigm on its head and started turning out excellent marks, batch after batch. In our batch, my friend Balagopal got a 1 (with >95% which I believe was an all India record), followed by four 2s and many 3s (the maximum possible grade in Cambridge is 1).

When Mr. Gupta retired some years later and they left Lovedale, they donated their meagre Provident Fund to the sub staff children/school. It is no wonder she has been in somewhat straitened circumstances these past few years, given her generosity.

"Ramesh Venkateswaran as Headmaster, and the OLA started a system of felicitating retired senior staff. This was read out and presented to her along with a silver framed photograph of herself from the old days. (The same was done for the other two retired stalwarts). She was overwhelmed and teary during her speech and gifted us in return a handmade basket with paper flowers that she had laboriously made herself."

Viju Parameshwar (NIL, 1968)

"There was another side to her as well - a side that we girls got to know much better - living with her in such close proximity. She was always ready with a song to cheer us up whenever we were down - she taught us how to do the waltz and the foxtrot - in the evenings post dinner she would come around with a wicked gleam in her eye and crack jokes with us, tease us, argue with us, bond with us. Once in the middle of the night when I was in excruciating pain she sat for hours massaging my legs with wintergreen. At camp she trekked with us from start to finish and made oodles of soggy noodles to fill our ever hungry stomachs. Her door was always open for anyone to walk in at any time. She was proud of her Parsi heritage and would pull out her beautiful embroidered saris for us to admire. And Pa Gupu was undoubtedly the most darling and gentle man. I never knew her as a teacher as I didn't have geography as a subject - I only knew her as Ma Gupu."

Semanti Sinha Ray (DEO, 1977)

"Yup, Ma Guppu's door was always open to us at Girls School. I still remember her coming to check on us when we tried to have midnight "parties" after exams were over. I can't remember a harsh word from her ever. I think she moved later to a place in Prep School (I'm not sure). Pa Guppu was such a good Hindi teacher. I know he was the one who coached me for hours for a Hindi debating competition which our House won, thanks to him! Such good memories of both of them- gentle souls!"

Hema Kumar (DEO, 1974)

"Geography was also my optional in the humanities, and I vividly remember learning from her how tornadoes and hurricanes formed. I still see the warm and cold currents begin their slow



Remembering



dance and develop their fever exactly as she described them. Physical Geography then and since has continued to fascinate me. I also have to say that she was among the most beautiful of teachers who taught me, and not all her skills could deflect me from my appreciation of her beauty. Images of Greek goddesses paled in comparison. Complemented by a sense of deportment that one was unlikely to find even in the best finishing schools, her charisma easily made her one of the most-admired and most loved of teachers.”

Mathew Antony (NIL, 1965)



“Suffice to say she was quite an institution. An amazing Geography teacher. A person with boundless energy and a passion for teaching, she made Geography a fascinating subject. She was felicitated when I was in Lovedale as Head. Her zest for life and her love for kids and teaching is as high now when she is 80 plus as it was 45 years ago when she would have been 30 plus.

One thing she always says – she lost a child at birth – but God gave me hundreds of children. If I remember right (someone can substantiate or correct me) when Mr. Gupta passed away all his savings and entitlements were given away by her to the staff at Lovedale. That is Nergis Gupta in a nutshell.”

Ramesh Venkateswaran (SUM, 1967)



“Mrs. Nergis Gupta - She was such a loving geography teacher of mine, it never came to my mind even to think of her as Ma Gupu. I am proud to say that I was one of her weakest students and there was no geography class without me being pulled up by her. She had so much confidence in me and my behaviour, that she gave me the charge of looking after her niece, who was visiting her - Jerry Ardeshir. Later did I come to know that Jerry's sister Sherene; was my wife Suki's schoolmate at the Presentation Convent, Kodaikanal. Yes, same old Mrs. Gupta, strong as a rock - does not want any financial help from her own children, so many like me. We are there Mrs. Gupta, when the need comes, I am one of the many children of yours; we will rise to the occasion. All my love, respects to the great Mrs. NERGIS Gupta.”

M. S. P. Senthikumar (VIN, 1966)





Writer's Block

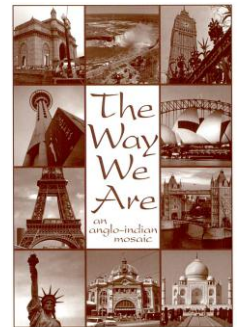


Breen Moira
| DEO | 1938 |



Never Give In

An OL from the 1930's Moira Breen writes about her experiences in a book called 'The Way We Are' which talks about her life in Lovedale and her journey from India to the USA. To read her story 'Never Give In', follow the link [Never Give In](#)



Edited by
Liesel Lunde & Deborah Van Nieuwenhuizen



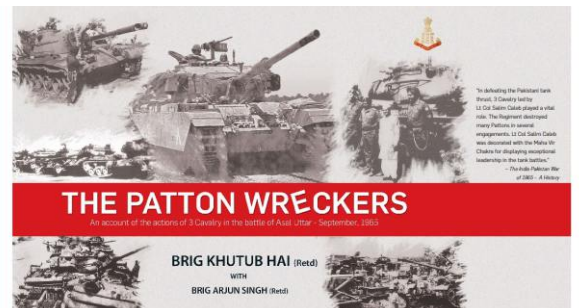
Brig. Hai Khutub
| NIL | 1961 |



The Patton Wreckers

Brigadier Khutub Hai was commissioned into 3 Cavalry in 1966 and went on to command the Regiment in 1985. In the Indo-Pak war of 1971, as Adjutant of the Regiment, he saw action in the same sector where 3 Cavalry has so successfully covered itself in glory in the 1965 Indo-Pak War - the subject of this book. He retired from the Army in 1998 and had a successful second career in the corporate sector, where he set up and ran the defence business of a major Indian private sector company.

Brigadier Khutub lives in Delhi and currently runs his own defence consulting company, Firmbase Consulting.



This is the story of the heroic actions and deeds of 3 Cavalry in the battle of Asal Uttar, which has been called the most decisive battle of the Indo-Pak War of 1965.



Goli Venkat
| ARA | 1997 |



Avoid Another Market Failure

Venkat Goli wrote for the Business Standard on Net Neutrality Rules of Gol and how not allowing the markets to perform could be potentially harmful.

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) recommendations on net neutrality go against the very grain of the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) election campaign slogan of 'minimum government and maximum governance'.

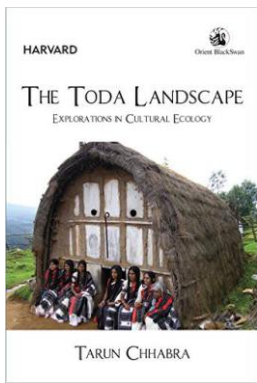
To read more - [Venkat Goli: Avoid another market failure](#)



Writer's Block



Chhabra Tarun
| ARA | 1981 |



The Toda Landscape: Explorations in Cultural Ecology

We are proud to announce that Dr. Tarun released his book in Ooty on 24 October 2015.

According to Ramesh Venkateswaran (SUM, 1967) "Dr. Tarun is a wonderful person - a dentist by qualification and profession, but probably more passionate with the environment, ecology and the like. I was fortunate to get to know him pretty well during my short stint at the school. He has spent a large part of his time and money on understanding and preserving the Toda culture and heritage. This book is the outcome of his life's endeavours.

What is even more creditable is that this book is a part of the Harvard Oriental Series Volume 9. The book is published in India by Orient BlackSwan - headed by OL Krishnadev Rao".

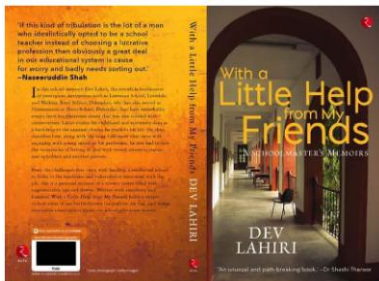
For those who are interesting in getting their hands on his book:

Amazon Link: [The Toda Landscape](#)

HBP link: [The Toda Landscape](#)



Lahiri Dev



With a Little Help from My Friends

In this tell-all memoir, Dev Lahiri, the erstwhile headmaster of Lawrence School, Lovedale, lays bare remarkable events from his illustrious career that was also riddled with controversies. Lahiri evokes his childhood and university days as a backdrop to the unusual choices he made in his life. He then describes how, along with the huge fulfilment that came with engaging with young minds in his profession, he also had to face the vicissitudes of having to deal with vested interests, status-quo upholders and entitled parents.

From the challenges that come with heading a residential school in India to the loneliness and vulnerability associated with the job, this is a personal account of a stormy career filled with unpredictable ups and downs. Written with simplicity and humour, **With A Little Help From My Friends** holds a mirror to how some of our better-known institutions are run, and makes invaluable observations about our school education system.



Where: Lawrence School, Lovedale
Details: To be given in the next issue

Where: Puma Social Club
Time: To be intimated closer to the date
Cost: To be intimated closer to the date
Contact: sandy@oldlawrencians.org or call +91 98800 19802

Where: 'Carnation' 3rd Floor, Willingdon Catholic Gymkhana
(Not to be confused with the one in Mahalaxmi),
Church Road, Santacruz West, Mumbai 400054

Time: 11.30am to 3.30pm

Cost: To be intimated closer to the date and to be paid at the venue

Dress Code: Smart Casuals (no shorts or sandals allowed)

Contact: vikbabulkar@yahoo.com

Where: Kota House
Time: 7 pm to 11:30pm
Cost: To be intimated closer to the date
Contact: pgphilipose@gmail.com

Where: To be decided
Time: To be decided
Cost: To be decided
Contact: sunil.rongala@gmail.com

Contact: Kuntal DESAI, (VIN, 1980) at desai.kuntal@gmail.com or
call Mobile: +91 98410 21118

The Kerala Meet was held at the Casino Hotel was well attended by about 40 OLs. Unfortunately, we have no visuals to know how it went as there wasn't a single picture taken. Catching up with each other was so engrossing that capturing the evening was the last priority.



Happenings

Bangalore Meet October 11, 2015

The Bangalore OL meet was a great party! There were over 126 OLs at the Puma Social Club, and people danced and made merry till late evening. The thundering noise of the school song being sung was one of the highlights of the afternoon.





Happenings

Singapore Meet October 3, 2015

This meeting was held at NUS Guild Hall and 32 OLs ranging from batches 1957-2011 hosted HM Mrs. Cheema, staff member Mr. Sharma, and a bunch of lovely girls (current students) who had been selected to represent the School at a Round Square event in Singapore. It was a wonderful evening, filled with nostalgia and pride, as well as looking to the future with optimism.

The HM gave a very well-received presentation on the current 'state of play' in school generally, and status of different improvement projects. One was left with the clear impression that the school is in good hands, and also that the OL-School interaction is much healthier now than at various times in the past. Kudos to Amala Menon, Itty Abraham, Aparna Bhosle and Ninita Agarwal (nee Chandrasekhar) for being the driving forces behind this event.





Happenings



Coimbatore Meet September 27, 2015

The Coimbatore OL lunch meet was held at the Vivanta by Taj Surya on Race Course Road and included OLs from Coimbatore, Nilgiris, Metty, Pollachi, Tiruppur, Erode, Palghat and other nearby places. A warm invitation to OLs anywhere on planet Earth and beyond was extended. There were about 45 attendees including HM Sangeeta Cheema and OL President Joseph John (Jojo). Congratulations to Senthil Gundan, Sanjai Shankar and Ram Swaroop Mohan for organizing this wonderful gathering.





Calling OLs

This section seeks to provide a platform for business owners to reach out to more customers, as well as help those who are searching for services and offerings, within the OL community. To list your business or firm please write to sandy@oldlawrencians.org.

The school would be grateful if OLs can come forward to arrange internships for the students of class 11 and 12 in your companies. This will offer them exposure to various fields like manufacturing, media, sales, advertising, design, law, hotel management or any such career opportunities.

If you can help, contact the OLA President Jojo (VIN, 1979) separately on jojo@thelawrenceschool.org

Need to get away from the madness of city life? Try escaping to the private guest house on Kotagiri Road at Madithorai junction (11km from Ooty and 15 km from Kotagiri) which is ready for occupation. It has 3 bedrooms, a kitchen, two halls and a pool table with all modern facilities. Far from town and free from the hustle and bustle of urban life.

Parents and OLs get a discount of 20%

For bookings/queries, please contact Dr. K. Manjunath on drkmanjunaath@yahoo.co.uk
Or call him on +91 90470 23673





Minutes of the Old Lawrencian's Association Committee Meeting, held at 4 p.m. in the Prep Hall (Junior School) at the Lawrence School, Lovedale

Mr. Joseph John – President
Ms. Rukhmini Krishnan – Vice President
Mr. E John Philipose – Secretary
Mr. P. Ravikumar – Treasurer
Ms. Deepika Medappa – Member

- 1) The outgoing President Mr. John K Paul reiterated the Vision and Mission statement of the OLA to the new committee and emphasized on the importance of networking within the OL community. This, he said, will create a strong and participatory OL community.
- 2) The outgoing Vice President Mr. T T Job, elaborated on the OLA Rules passed at the AGM prior to this meeting.
- 3) Mr. Job informed the members regarding merchandise vendors, Alma Mater and Campus Mall, who will pay the OLA 25% of the order value placed by an OL. He said that all OLs should be periodically informed about purchasing merchandise through these two vendors. Also, the vendors should be reminded regularly to remit the commission to the OLA bank account. These vendors would also be hosted on the App being developed by the Association.
- 4) Mr. Job mentioned that currently the OL records are in a cupboard in the school's archives and requested the new committee members to spend some time and segregate the records.
- 5) Mr. John K Paul suggested that the committee request the HM to allot the OLA a room on the school premises; to be used as a store room for stocking merchandise.
- 6) It was decided to hold four committee meetings for the year 2015-16, with this meeting being the first one. A minimum of three members should be present for the committee meetings. This would be in compliance with the TN Societies Act as well as the OLA bylaws and rules.
- 7) Mr. Joseph John suggested January 30th 2016 as the date for the OL lunch for the outgoing 12 std. students. As done in the previous years, it was decided that the lunch would be hosted at Ooty Club.
- 8) There was a suggestion to raise the OLA life membership fee from the present Rs. 2,500/- to Rs 5,000/- for new members. However, a consensus was not reached as members present felt that further discussions on this were needed before bringing this to the attention of the General Body.



Administrative



OLA Fund Raising

Joseph John heads the Office of Projects and Alumni Relations at school. Jojo, as he popularly known, is also the current OLA president. He can be reached at jojo@thelawrenceschool.org or +91 94865 61497.

If you contribute, please inform Jojo so that he can keep track of it. Also, let him know if you have a special project in mind. If you are couriering your contribution, please use Speed or registered post or DTDC couriers only.

Information for sending in your contributions is as under

Domestic Contributions NEFT & RTGS

Payable to The Lawrence School, Lovedale
Account 12701450000069
Bank HDFC, 421/C1, Ettines Road, Ooty 643 001
IFSC HDFC0001270

Domestic & International Contributions Cheques & DD

Payable to The Headmistress, The Lawrence School, Lovedale
Mail to The Lawrence School
Lovedale
Ooty 643 003, Tamil Nadu

International Wire Contributions Cheques & DD

Payable to The Lawrence School, Lovedale
Account 31802983759
Bank State Bank of India
SWIFT SBININBB470

US Contributions with Tax Benefits

Payable to Old Lawrencian Association, Americas
Address Arjun Rajaratnam
11720 Broadfield Court
Raleigh, NC 27617, USA

Please email Arjun Rajaratnam (SUM, 1976), at arjunrajaratnam@yahoo.com, and Joseph John at jojo@thelawrenceschool.org with your contribution information



Administrative



OLA Support

Sandya Kutappa

OLA Virtual Office

sandy@oldlawrencians.org

Uday Kumar

Office Manager

office@oldlawrencians.org

Newsletter Volunteers

We are seeking volunteers to help make this newsletter more relevant and useful for all OLs. If you wish to help, please email us at contact@theoldlawrencian.org

Acknowledgements

Our sincere thanks to Gautam Joshi, Radhika Vaz, Anuli Katakam and Ekom Mamik for contributing their time and material.

Thomas Mookken and Sandy Kutappa put together and edited the the newsletter, while Vidya Srikanth and Sandy Kutappa laid out the sections.



Class Notes

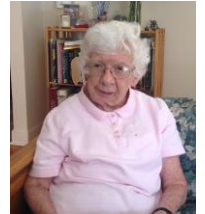
■ ARAVALLI ■ NILGIRI ■ SUMERU ■ VINDHYA ■ CHAMPAK ■ DEODAR ■ PANKAJ

1930
1939

1938

Rahel Joseph (DEO, 1994) had a serendipitous encounter with **Moir Breen** (DEO) which would blow any Lawrencean's socks off! In her words - "It was Saturday and a crisp beautiful Chicago morning. My girls Saira, Mia and my dog Ben and I are sitting outdoors at our local bakery enjoying a cup of hot chocolate when we notice Moira walking out with several bags in her hands. She was happy to accept our offer of help so we carried her bags to the parking garage and got talking along the way. I was pleasantly surprised to hear that she should even know where Kerala is! We exchanged contact details and soon enough there she was in my inbox with an account of her days in South India. A week or two later we had an invitation to tea when we got to hear more about her especially through a part of a book called THE WAY WE ARE written by her as also others from her community. The title of her story is 'NEVER GIVE IN' (sounded familiar but no penny dropped) until I read her story. To my delight, I read that she attended Lawrence School, Lovedale in the 1930s.

All you need to do is google THE WAY WE ARE by MOIRA BREEN and you too can read about her remarkable journey via Lawrence School. It sounds quite the same down the ages....its Spartan lifestyle, its discipline, its parades and its homesick children! Around where I am there is no Lawrencian as far as the eye can see, and yet I get to bump into one in the course of a leisurely morning. A chance encounter? Maybe or maybe not!!”



1950
1959

1959

Sunil Gulvadi (ARA) passed away in Madras due to a myocardial infarction. He leaves behind his wife and 3 children. Our condolences to the family. Sunil Gulvadi was in the same batch with Narender Malik and Shanti Sagar. He was loved and admired by so many. May his soul rest in peace.

1960
1969

1963

TT Potenkulam (SUM) passed away after a short illness in Kanjirapalli, Kerala. He was cousin and uncle to numerous old Lawrencians that include TV Pottenkulam (SUM, 1963) and Teresa George (DEO, 1958) amongst them.



Class Notes



1960 1969

1961

"An Evening to Remember Nomita" was organised by the Bangalore chapter of OLA on 20 June 2015. Apart from the Bangaloreans, Johnny Paul (OLA President Emeritus) and his daughter Sarah attended the function. Nomita's children, Shonali Chandy Chinniah and Vidur Chandy were present.

Nomita Chandy (CHA) has been OLA President and Member of the School Board. In recognition of her social work, she was awarded a Padma Shri. She was always active in school and OLA affairs.

Nomita will be greatly missed. May her soul rest in peace.



1970 1979

1970

Elizabeth Beena Belliappa (DEO) had the last of her fold tying the knot in May this year. There was a fabulous turn out of OLs who braved the rains to attend the wedding. We wish the couple eternal marital bliss.



1975

Francis Joseph (VIN) passed away in Bombay few months ago after his brother Jose Joseph's (VIN, 1980) demise. Losing two members within a short span of time must have been traumatic for the family. Our prayers and thoughts are with them.

Class Notes



1980
1989



1979

Col. Naveen Kochar (ARA) is featured on youtube, being awarded and interviewed for the Facility Management Wall of Fame. Col. Naveen Kochar, Country Director Operations, Director-Infrastructure, Hitachi Consulting has been awarded on the 63rd Facility Management Leadership Award 2015 for excellence in the field.

To know more - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o26T1r0lf_o&feature=youtu.be

1980

Jose Joseph (VIN) left us too soon. Jose aka Torty tragically in June this year, succumbed to surgical complications and passed away. He will be greatly missed.

1981

Kairus F. Irani (SUM) The youngest son of late F.K. Irani and founder of Ideal Jawa factory, passed away following brief illness. Kairus leaves behind his sister Morvarid, brother Raian F. Irani and a host of relatives and friends. Kairus's demise leaves a void in the lives of many.

1982

Cmdr. Philipose George Pynumootil (SUM) recounts 5 Classmates and 3 wives who went on an adventure of a lifetime. He says “A disparate group of super achievers. Our head boy, who got married a week ago, with his amazing wife, a New York property tycoon, an IIT and Wharton business school software magnate, a hotshot publisher, a construction guy with a college to boot and a cashew king. With one thing in common - a passion to challenge their physical limits. Each of them have reached the pinnacle in their fields... All that remained was a different challenge - of the physical kind.

I was privy to their frenetic preparations. Getting their gear which had to be just right. Working out, steadily improving their fitness levels. The gals keeping pace perfectly, with single minded focus.

Kilimanjaro stands at some 20,000 ft. Temperatures dip steadily to - 15 deg at the peak. It's one of the few peaks you can climb without ropes and pitons. Climbing Kilimanjaro needs physical fitness and they say - A huge reserve of will power and mental toughness.

80 of us on our class whatsapp group would monitor their progress at each stage. They carried our school flag which was hoisted on the peak.

Our school motto will spur them on just perfectly!
‘NEVER GIVE IN.’”

The brave ones of the 1982 batch were - **Sashi Reddi** (VIN), **Sumark Desi** (VIN), **Ravi Kant Badruka** (ARA), **Krishnadev Rao** (VIN), and **Rajiv Kumar** (VIN). The enviable spouses were Ashwini Reddi, Vandana Badruka and Vallary Puri.

Proud of you guys!





Class Notes



2000
2009

2002

Balakrishna Shenoy (NIL) departed this earthly realm too young and too soon. Sadly, this young, much loved Lawrencian lost his battle with cancer a few months ago. May his soul rest in peace.



2005
2009

2005

Thimmaiah A. B. (ABT) (SUM) has said goodbye to his bachelor days and taken the plunge with Ritchika D'souza in May this year. The wedding saw several of his classmates and other OLs celebrate this new phase in his life. We wish the couple a long and happy married life.

