THE KALIMPONG ASSOCIATION (UK)

NEWS LETTER

Autumn 2002



A note from the President

We were privileged to have had Mr Bernard Brooks with us as a special guest at our AGM.

I would like to say thank you to all those who supported me and the other officers, to serve you in office for the forthcoming year. We give you our assurance that we will do our best to merit your continued support.

It would be most remiss not to extend our thanks and appreciation to Eric Whittaker (Editor) and Dave Edmunds (Committee Member) who have stepped down. Eric's work as Editor of the Newsletter for a number of years during a period of change and growth in the organisation has been especially appreciated. We thank them both for their unstinting time and energy expended no more so than up to and including 25 May when we organised the charitable event on behalf of the school.

My fellow Committee Members and I look forward to instigating further initiatives during the coming year and we would welcome your input should you have any ideas for promoting the Association, increasing the membership or for fundraising.

One of our priorities next year will be to show our gratitude to Revd. Webster for his fund raising efforts on behalf of the School. (Continued on page 2)

From the Editor's Desk

My thanks to you for electing me as Editor of your Newsletter. I hope to be able to rise to the challenge and provide you with interesting and informative reading. My thanks also to Eric Whittaker, for his hard work during his time as Editor. The enormity of the task I have undertaken is just sinking in!

We were privileged to have Mr Brooks visit the UK this year and recollections of his visit are on pages 3 - 5 - makes riveting reading.

I hope to include in the next and future issues an article from the Kalimpong Association (UK) Charitable Trust which will provide an update on the children sponsored by the Trust. This is living proof of what the Trust does in assisting some of the most needy children.

Don't forget Revd. Webster's request for volunteers to raise funds at the next London Marathon and remember to diarise dates mentioned on the Notice Board page.

I would like to extend my appreciation to those who have contributed material for this newsletter. Please continue to get your thinking caps on and put pen to paper.

Yolande Meyers
Editor



Committee Members 2001/2002 With special guest Bernard Brooks

We will be asking you all to give a little of your time to support him by joining in the run and collecting in the crowds. This will spur him on and show him that we care as much as he does for the children and the future of the School.

The next event is our Birthday celebration in September. Following discussions at the AGM it was agreed to hold a meeting immediately prior to the usual Birthday celebrations and the foregoing subject can be discussed in more detail at that time. Please, please do try and make every effort to attend, as your continued support is greatly needed and very much appreciated.

I have few illusions, but I feel responsibility to work towards the things I consider good and right. I don't know whether I will be able to change certain things for the better, or not at all. Both outcomes are possible. There is only one thing I will not concede and that is that it might be meaningless to strive in a good cause.

With my very warm wishes to each one of you.

Margaretta Purtill (Byers) President

We really appreciated the splendid tea that our ladies (below) prepared and served to us at the AGM. Thank you.



From Left to Right – Betty Frizzell, Pat Crawfoot, Rosemary Baker and Jean Gundlach.

UNFORGETTABLE 2002

There is a popular saying which runs thus – "It is better to be born LUCKY than RICH". Of course the only thing better than that is to be born 'lucky' AND 'rich' – and after the wonderful experiences of this recent trip to the United Kingdom, I fervently believe I am the inheritor of BOTH these 'gifts'!

The 'luck' of BTB is well documented although my appointment to the teaching staff of the Homes in 1958 could not have been less auspicious. I have a science background, but was offered a temporary post as Senior Geography teacher until a vacancy on the science side arose! However, in the course of the very first year, the Headmaster resigned to pursue PhD studies in the States, and a short while later the Officiating Headmistress left to get married. Unbelievably, within a period of six months, I found myself Acting Headmaster before my 29th birthday! Two years later I was confirmed in the post, and a further decade on, appointed as Principal of Dr Graham's Homes. Thus I have had the rare privilege to serve for thirty years in one of India's finest institutions - and the only one in the world that was founded because a remarkable man children". What a heritage in which to share!

But the 'luck' does not end there. As Principal, I had the opportunity of making five separate visits to our Overseas Committees and so was in a position to appreciate at first hand the enormous contribution they make - and have made to the work of the Homes. interesting to see how differently the two separate organisations operate, and more importantly, to meet each 'faithful band' which has supported the Homes for I refer of course to the decades. Committees in the UK. Canada, Australia. New Zealand, Sweden and Switzerland. Sadly, although I was associated with the founding of both the Swedish and Swiss Committees, I never had the privilege of visiting the latter, in spite of the close personal relationship that always existed.



So much for the 'lucky' side. Now let me deal with the 'riches' that were mine. and which made 2002 an even more memorable year for me. It all started with a personal invitation from the President of the UK OGB's Association to attend a "Champagne Dinner and Reunion" being held as a "fund-raiser" in London on 25 May. It was as simple as that. The encouragement of my own two children "to go for it" soon dispelled any apprehensions I had that my cardiologist may not let me make the flights involved, and I went ahead with plans long before obtaining a medical clearance or entry permit. Typical of OGBs, once this news got around, there was a flood of invitations (which even included one from France for an 'all expenses paid' holiday) and it became quite apparent that the trip needed to be extended from four weeks to six!

When I commenced this article, I did so with the firm intention of NOT mentioning names, but clearly that perspective needs to be altered - and altered fast. After all is said and done. what really influences our lives is not places but people. Accordingly even at the cost of becoming tedious, I am going to name (in some sort of chronological the hosts/hostesses order) influenced my life. This is partly because I believe I need to, and partly because this Newsletter goes far beyond the shores of the United Kingdom, and so OGBs elsewhere may recognise some very familiar names.

Things got off to a great start when I spent the first week-end in London with Committee Secretary, Leslie (Minto) Walker, who scored a perfect '10' as

hostesses go. Then on to Hilary (French) and husband Vinoth at Chorleywood for a total stay of six nights spread over three visits - such was the luxury of the Kumar ' Five-Star' establishment! Next, a night in a London hotel – per kind favour of Juliana (Benbow) Duckworth; and then followed a week's glorious stay in Scotland mostly on the exotic island of Arran with John and Jennifer Webster. The last two days were spent in Edinburgh in their son Jonnie's luxurious flat. Next was a relaxed holiday with John and Ellena Christie where I nearly developed 'chocolate poisoning such was the dessert served after all three meals! Then on to the home of Malcolm and Linda Johnson in Swindon, a town where a strong belief exists that no one casts a stone in any direction for fear of it landing on a PRATT - or one of their descendants! By this I mean that all eight of Wilbur and Hope Pratt's 'children' have settled in Swindon - and no doubt a street (or two) will be named after them in due course! (They are a very happy, united family who tend to do everything together - including supporting the Homes 100%). It was then on to Witney to the home of Charlotte (Johnson) Jahan. She and John have stayed with me briefly in Tellicherry on two occasions, and so this was something of a very special 'reunion'. So special in fact, that of the 9lbs I gained on the trip, more than half is the result of my two spells at Witney. Indeed, the last supper we enjoyed together was so enormous it would have kept a starving anaconda happy for at least a couple of weeks!

One needs to do a bit of deep breathing (as I did) before moving on to the next 'halt': the home of irrepressible Sedhar (Chozam) Ball and husband John. He is an Oxford Don and an eminent mathematician of world repute. It was at dinner here I had the great pleasure of meeting Prince Jigme, the Crown Prince of Bhutan. The next stop was Bristol to share in the joy of the Christening of Sonam (Llamu) and Samdup's baby son. I stayed overnight in the home of my 'Best Man' – and if that does not go back far enough, I then went on to Lynwood to visit an old school friend!

After that it was back to London for the AGM, but before this took place I spent an interesting morning with Rosa and Kevin Foo in their beautiful home at Dorking, Surrey. Then a second stay with Freddie and Ruth Pakianathan, where I had the pleasure of meeting Eunice (Salisbury), whose teaching skills – and sensational good looks – are still fondly recalled by 'children' who passed through her hands. It was then off to Colliers Wood to spend the weekend with Association President Margaretta Purtill and her husband Vince. Ouite apart from the AGM which was held during this period, the Purtill household is a case of non-stop action from the word 'Go', and so I know Margaretta will forgive me if I do not highlight the many memories that featured in those eventful 48 hours we shared together.

The final phase was one of unwinding: a delightfully relaxed time spent with the Gundlachs in Croydon which included long distance phone calls to Mary (Leck) and the Esselmonts in Australia; the kindness and thoughtfulness of Jean (Mc) Martin in Hounslow; unscheduled though memorable visit to the home of Eddie & Elspeth Lamb; a final stay in Pinner with friends from Calcutta days, and ultimately a sort of 'Lotus Eater' existence at Witney - yet again!

On this long and enjoyable tour there were several 'highlights', notably the Scottish Connection: a delightful 'open house' in Edinburgh attended by Committee members, former Staff, close friends from previous visits – and of course, OGBs.

Another event of special interest was the dinner hosted by the Kumars and graced by Rita (Warner) all the way out from Australia, Pat (Fergredo) now an 'inhabitant' of Paris, and Rosa (Nichols) – all of whom I was meeting after decades.

Yet another 'memory' was the unscheduled trip to Bristol. Five years ago I had been privileged to attend Sam

& Sonam's wedding in Darjeeling – described by simple hill folk as the 'Wedding of the Year' – which indeed it was. It was an equally great privilege to attend this Christening – made so impressive by the very meaningful way in which John Webster conducted the 'ceremony'. I believe other residents of Zetland Road may also remember the noisy though very touching 'send-off' I was given by Sonam, Vanda and Sedhar. How I love being spoilt!

There were also several memorable highlights of a 'non-Homes' nature: the classical concert at the Royal Albert Hall; the Queen's Golden Jubilee Celebrations (no one – bar no one – can impress with pageantry quite like the Brits); the 'pilgrimage' to Stratford-on-Avon; the magnificence of Blenheim Castle and Estate, and a glimpse of the history and rich culture which only London can provide – even when viewed from the top of a bus or a ferry on the Thames.

At the end of the day, however, the 'Dinner' remains very special, and the Committee under Margaretta (Byers) Purtill is to be commended on the success of a very ambitious programme. Over 150 were present, and Rev. John Webster as MC was not only 'professional', but added an intimate touch that only he can provide to any function.

Generally speaking 'Kalimpongites' have looked after themselves very well. Eddie Lamb hasn't altered a whisker in the last thirty years, while Jeffrey Fegredo and Malcolm Johnson are still the heartthrobs they were in School. At first glance David Gundlach hasn't changed much from the days when he played football on the Mela Ground, while John Duncan - even after several glances – looked so much younger than when I last saw him in college twenty years ago, that I kept addressing him as 'Graham' - his kid brother! As for the 'girls', Barbara Burgess (I made two delightful visits to their home in Letchworth), Florence Snell and Pat Hardie are as slim and elegant as ever, while Pat (Fegredo), Glynis, Ellena, Margaretta and Rosa – all looked as though they had just

Stepped out of a 'Vogue' magazine! (I expect to be 'paid' for all these compliments the next time we meet!).

For a final impression, the OGBs remain a great lot: happy, comfortable, sensitive – with that unique quality of "belonging" which sets them apart from 'products' of any other school. I have to confess complete ignorance of why this 'quality' exists – but IT IS ALWAYS THERE.

I have made five previous visits to the UK, but this was exceptional. One last question therefore remains answered: "What made this trip different?" Initially, the obvious difference lies in the fact that on all the other occasions I was the guest of the Committee. They planned the hospitality and engagements, and I was accordingly received with the courtesy and respect due to the Principal of Dr Graham's Homes. On this occasion I was the guest of the UK OGB's Association, free to arrange my own programme, and in the capacity of a retired old school master. Interestingly, the courtesy and respect were even more evident, and there was an even greater 'ingredient' noticeable. This called FRIENDSHIP! is Unquestionably this was the real blessing.

And so in the last analysis it is not a case of being born lucky or rich that really matters. It is more a question of the blessings that flow from those whose lives we have touched somewhere along the way. Indeed, I am reminded of those beautiful words: 'I am, amongst all men, most richly blessed.'

Thank you.

Bernard Brooks

OGB PROFILES

Name: EDDIE LAMB Years: 1920 – 1936

Cottages: Lucia King, Calcutta, Farm House, Heathland & Frazer

Brief Update: To ensure a happy married life I chose a girl from Kalimpong who was born the

very year I left school

Questions	Answers
What is your earliest memory of DGH?	From toddler days in 1920 – 22 in Lucia King under Miss Gray.
Describe yourself in three words?	"The Thirteenth Hundredth" – This is the admission number allocated to me on arrival in a "tokree" on the steps of the Anderson Office.
What is your idea of perfect happiness?	Not to hold anything against anybody.
What is your worst nightmare?	Living to real old age in poor health.
What's the best bit of advice that you have received?	LIFE'S TOO SHORT TO WORRY! (A good bit of advice given to me by James Purdie when I was sent to him for wrong doing).
What's your perfect meal?	"BHOOTA" on the cob roasted in the ashes and rubbed with salt and Bhootia Butter. Raided Bhoota of course!
What's the best birthday present you have ever received?	Each successive one seems better than the last.
Who do you admire most?	DADDY GRAHAM for sure!

Name: KESANG TSETEN Years: 1962 - 1971

Cottages: Hart & Frazer Hostel

Brief Update: I live in Kathmandu, write and make films; I'm unmarried but partnered.

Questions	Answers
What is your earliest memory of DGH?	Quarantined in hospital, fighting with Jack Griffin (I think, bless him).
Describe yourself in three words?	Now, now I don't call myself names.
What is your idea of perfect happiness?	Believing I will find the idea
What is your worst nightmare?	Discovering I won't
What's the best bit of advice that you have received?	Beware of anyone who says, "THIS IS FOR YOUR OWN GOOD".
What's your perfect meal?	Bread! Much thicker slices and brown. In post-nostalgia, Japanese.
What's the best birthday present you have ever received?	Fantastic present but wrong day.
Who do you admire most?	The Dalai Lama, VS Naipaul.

<u>DAVID FONING</u> – A PERSONAL PROFILE – By Percy Frizzell

Congratulations to David Foning on the promotion to Bursar of the Homes. He has the privilege and honour of being the very first ex Student of The Homes and the first indigenous person to achieve this high accolade and prestigious position.

David is one of eight children of the late Estate Manager Lt. Dipsingh Foning. The Foning family are synonymous with the Kalimpong and Darjeeling District since before the British arrived in the district in the year 1856.

David finished school in DGH in 1969 and graduated from North Bengal University & Post Graduation (Master of Arts) from Annamalai University (South India). With his love for Kalimpong and the Homes he took over his father's post as The Estate Manager which included the Stores, Bakery and the Farm during the tumultuous period of 1986-89 (Gorkhaland Movement). At the time of his appointment to Bursar, David was in charge of the Estate, Workshop and the security of the Homes. A good sportsman, he enjoys Badminton, Football, Hockey and Cricket and was awarded the "Best NCC Cadet" in 1969.

He is a member of the Pastorate Committee of the Macfarlane Memorial Church (MMC), Convenor of The Mission House KPG and Lay Leader of MMC. He is a Charter Member of The Rotary Club of KPG and served as President in 1998-99, being awarded the Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of KPG for excellence in community service and general contribution to club activities.

He is currently writing a thesis on "Laughter the Best Medicine" and has been offered the post of Professor in "The Academy of Laughing Clubs" in New Delhi, India.

We wish him all the very best in his new posting.

WORLD WIDE NEWS

Boston (Massachusetts) – Elspeth Lamb has asked that mention be made in the Newsletter with regard to the excellent work carried out by Dorothy Georgerian (nee Mackenzie) on behalf of Police dogs in her State in America. Dorothy (or Dora as she is known) was a MacGregor girl who excelled in sport. She lives at 33 Pilling Street with her husband George, four cats and one dog. children have two and three grandchildren.

An article was written recently in the local newspaper praising the work that Dorothy does. Through her efforts 124 dogs have benefited from funds raised to purchase bulletproof vests. Dorothy's home has been turned into a virtual production line with seven machines churning out blankets, scarves, bed covers and quilts for auction. The majority of dogs that benefit serve on patrol duty and are used in tracking criminal suspects, lost people and as sniffer dogs for drugs at Logan Airport.

Dorothy has been honoured for her volunteer service during the second anniversary of Massachusetts Vest-a-Dog and received an armful of citations.

Congratulations Dorothy for the wonderful work you are doing.

Canada

John and Mary (Spurr) Haughey will be celebrating the Birthday Reunion on Saturday September 21 at 1.00 p.m. at the Willowdale Presbyterian Church 33 Ellerslie Avenue Toronto.

\$10 entrance. Tel: 416 221 8373.

They would like as many OGB's to turn up. The meeting will be less formal to give everyone a chance to interact and take ''pot luck''.

Kalimpong

Rev. & Mrs Johnston – Mrs Johnston was invited by the Principal to assist with the Girls Cottages and she and her husband have procured a two year consultancy Visa. She will also train a suitable successor for the job of Girls Superintendent and will report directly to Mr Bannerjee. Mr Johnston will be offered the role of Counsellor on the Campus, a role that has needed to be filled for some time. It is hoped that the Johnstons will be able to contribute substantially to the campus.

ICSE/ISC Results — It was noted with satisfaction that all supported children had passed their ICSE/ISC Examinations and that the results had generally been good. The Principal will contact all supported children to ascertain their future study requirements.

Floriculture Project – Mrs S Sugimoto – The Board was advised of the visit of Mrs S Sugimoto and the discussions Mr R Joseph and the Chairman had with her on the proposed expansion of the Floriculture Project with substantial Japanese aid. It was agreed to go ahead with the project which will go a long way to assisting local farming and the creation of goodwill for the Homes and Kalimpong. It was noted that there would be a special floriculture show designed by a Master Flower Designer from Japan with flowers from Kalimpong. This would be a first in Kolkata in January 2003.

Winter Concert – The Chairman briefed the Board on the plans for a Winter Concert in Kolkata by the children. He sought the support of all members of the Board in developing the concert as a fund-raiser in Kolkata and as a means to showcase the work being done in the Homes.

Nepal

Sujeev Shakya (1982) who headed the Grahamites Association of Nepal ("GAN") for four years, including the Centenary year, will be stepping down. He is Vice President of the Soaltee Group, one of Nepal's largest business houses. He will spend a year at Boston University as recipient of the prestigious Hubert H Humphrey Fellowship from the US State Department.

The baton has been passed to Sam Tshering (1966). Sam has been an active OGB participant and donor, coproprietor with his brother Sonam Tshering (Class of 71) of a reputed trekking company. As a senior member, Sam Dai (or Daju) will try to draw out the "budda" GAN members from the wordwork! He is planning the next Birthday bash, jelabies and all.

The Grahamites Association of Nepal boasts one of the largest membership bases, at more than 150 and has been in existence for nearly 15 years. Large numbers turn out for the Birthday celebrations; and a small group will show up for impromptu gatherings at the Dechenling Beer Garden, owned by OGB Phintso Wangdi (1979), who has a coterie of well established businesses including a trekking agency, resort hotels, and a hot air balloon ride enterprise.

Kesang Tseten (1971) is making a renewed appeal to everyone to buy the Homes Centenary Video, made with the support of the Class of 1971. All those who read this will never witness another Centenary. To purchase a video or VCD contact: Dawn Vansteensil (Australia), Tshering Dorjee (North America), Kezang Doma (Bhutan), Lance Fuller (Principal) DGH, Sonam Gompu (KPG), Desmond Meyers (UK) or Kesang Tseten (Kathmandu). ALL PROCEEDS will go to the school from the Class of 71.

"We Homes Chaps", Kesang's personal documentary about growing up in the Homes, (which was also shot during the Centenary), has been screened in 25 venues to date (as part of the Travelling Film South Asia Festival) and at the Directors' Guild at Los Angeles in May.

Perth (Western Australia)

In July 2001 the Association had its first AGM at Stuart & Lesley Price's home. Committee members met up with Diana (nee Macey) and her husband who were visiting her sister

Enid. The Committee meet every three months and this is followed by a smorgasbord dinner prepared by Committee members. Soon after the first meeting Marie & Michael both resigned due to personal commitments and Valerie Appleby was nominated as Secretary.

A number of Fund raising activities took place. We celebrated the Homes Birthday on the 24 September 2001 at Yvonne and David's home, the Committee having organised a free curry dinner as well as buns and jelabies [Jelabies made by Yvonne Van Steensel (nee Sampson)]. There have been a mini private OGB get-togethers celebrating birthdays and other social events. One that I attended was exceptional and I certainly felt honoured to be part of Yvonne & David Hugh's 40 Wedding Anniversary. They had a Hindu marriage ceremony, walked around the fire, repeated vows in Sanskrit (after the "pukka" Hindu priest), with their children and grandchildren participating in it – the works! Needless to say, Yvonne (still so proud to be Indian) and her daughter Kikki looked absolutely gorgeous in their 'Zari' saris and David (a "pukka" English gentleman) did well in repeating the Indian vows whilst sitting cross legged!

In the New Year the Committee organised a family get-together, a Bring-Your-Own lunch on a Sunday in Kings Park which is central and overlooks the beautiful City of Perth. Sadly, the only folk who turned up were some of the die-hard Committee members with our partners. We still proudly displayed the School Flag (Dudley had since made a flagpole) and shared our lunch.

Our first official event culminated on 19 July with a "Mouse Race" fund raising night. A great deal of work went into organising this and had it not been for family and friends of Yvonne & Stuart, Val & Dudley, Colleen & Mike Oehme, Rita & Andy Saunders & mine the night would have been a non-event! There are approx. 200 OGBs in Perth and apart from those mentioned only one other turned up! It is quite disheartening that OGBs here could not spare one evening to "give a little something back" in spite of the event being advertised on radio, phone calls, e-mails and mailing the flyer to individuals

to circulate (at our expense). However what was heartening was the willingness and generosity from sponsors and friends to make this DGH Fund Raising night a success.

The last and most recent function was an OGB BYO lunch at our place to meet my Godfather (& Rita's) Mr Freddy Pakianathan and his wife Ruth.

Finally, thank you to all the Committee members, OGBs, sponsors, friends and families for your support commitment. My message to OGBs is that if you are unable to independently sponsor a Homes child or contribute funds to the school that gave you the opportunity to make something of what your life is today, you could do so collectively, with family, friends or other OGBs or by supporting your local DGH Association! The aim being to keep our school running so it can continue Dr Grahams' vision to give children from poor socio-economic backgrounds, an opportunity to "walk this earth with dignity" - just like you and I do now!

Brenda Haseldine (nee Stokoe)President DGH Association WA

<u>Sikkim</u>

The Sikkim OGBs meet quarterly to discuss minutes and finances of the association.

They held a Charity Ball on the 25 May 2002 at the Tashi Dalek Hotel. The event was a resounding success and they made a substantial profit. Some of the money (Rs 6,000) was used to equip Dr Kumar Bhandari's Clinic with vital life saving heart drugs and Rs 1 lakh is being used to refurbish the Gym at The Homes. Work has already started on the extension, though it has not yet been completed. The Sikkim Association has pledged another Rs 50,000 towards new Gym equipment. Plans are in the pipeline to screen at a charity function, the film "Bend it like Beckham", the proceeds of which will go to the school.

NOTICE BOARD

<u>Champagne – British Design Sale</u>

The above Preview Show will be held at the

Chelsea Town Hall, Kings Road On Tuesday 19 November 5.30 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.

Tickets £10.00 (valid for the rest of the week).

RSVP: Ms Caroline Eckersley, Manor Farm, Holwell, Burford, Oxon OX18 4JS

Photo CD

A Photo CD bas been produced of old as well as recent photographs of Dr Graham's School which we hope to be able to offer soon for sale. We would appreciate copies of photographs of families and friends taken at the School for CDII and future editions. So please go through your albums and provide us with them so that we can produce more photo CDs. Please send them to **Norman Freeman, 39 Winfields, Pitsea, Basildon, Essex SS13 1HA**. More details on this will be made available at the Homes' Birthday Celebrations on Saturday 21 September 2002.

DIARY DATES

Event	Date	Venue
Inverness Highland Gathering	Thursday 12 September 2002 p.m.	Inverness Contact: Sheila McNabb Tel. 01249 866212
Birthday Gathering	Saturday 21 September 2002	The Methodist Church Hall, Hinde St, London W1. Nearest Tube Station, Bond St. (Doors open at 2.30 p.m.)
London Curry Lunch	Wednesday 23 October 2002 12.00 p.m. onwards	St Columbus Church Kensington.
Edinburgh Curry & Ceilidh	Saturday 30 November 2002	Stockbridge House Contact: Vanda Fraser Tel. 01506 871957
Edinburgh Curry & Auction	Saturday 8 February 2003	Raj Restaurant, Edinburgh. Contact: Rev. Webster Tel: 01770 700747