



Kalimpong Association UK

August Newsletter 2015



"Happiness cannot be travelled to,
owned, earned, worn or consumed.

Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every
minute with love, grace, and gratitude."

Denis Waitley





HORIZONS FAR An Indian Summer

Let me introduce you to Elizabeth Price

Elizabeth is a lay reader in her Anglican church in Essex and participated in the UK committee spring supporters pilgrimage to the Homes. Many good things came from this visit, including new sponsorship for ten children at the Homes.

Elizabeth responded to a need and has volunteered her services in Kalimpong over the summer to assist Revd Henry Simon in his pastoral duties. She will be conducting services and also mentoring our sponsored children.

Below is the first of what we hope will be regular reports from Elizabeth, giving an insight in to daily life on the Homes campus.

Greetings from Ahava Guest House

I made it folks! Here I am in beautiful, damp, misty Kalimpong and nicely settled into my room at Ahava where I have spectacular views of the hills and, with a bit of luck during the next two months, I might see Kanchenjunga.

Ruth (Sponsorship Secretary and all-round amazing lady) was at Bagdogra airport to meet me, having been on the road for six hours due to landslides. Another six hours later we were in Kalimpong!

Up and up we drove on the narrow mountain road, twisting and turning, surrounded by mist as thick as a London fog and bottomless ravines below, until suddenly we broke through it into clear skies, waterfalls, giant ferns, wild monkeys and the famous narrow gauge steam train which came chugging past us as if to say “welcome back”.

It was around 8.30pm when we reached the school campus and Ahava was a very welcome sight. Housekeeper Christine had a delicious meal waiting for us, internet connection was available on her laptop thanks to something called a ‘dongle’ (I’m off to buy one tomorrow!) and my room was comfortable and spacious, hence I was asleep within minutes of climbing into bed.

Sunday morning dawned wet and very misty after heavy overnight rain. In an effort to help me get my bearings, Ruth gave me a short guided tour on the way to the hall for morning worship – the chapel being out of bounds at the moment due to the repercussions of the Nepal earthquake in April.

I was introduced to the congregation (students and staff) and there were some “oohs and aahs” when they were told that I would be leading worship next Sunday. In the 115 year history of the Homes I am the first female chaplain!

Then it was off to Lucia King nursery to meet the new intake of children, four of whom are sponsored by members of the McCabe group who were here in March. I chatted with Rose Pallabi

(Caroline, Margaretta, Doreen), Angelique Cramer (Averil), Sylvester Brooks (Stella) and Jordan Domingo (Bob Harley) and they were obviously having great fun and looking very smart in their Sunday best. They all spoke good English and sang to me in Hindi.

There are some amazing names here. So far I have met Cinderella, Elton John and Rocky Balboa!

Monday Assembly was at 8am and as it was bucketing down with rain, I assumed that Ruth would order a car to pick us up. No such luck! Umbrellas were next to useless against the deluge and we arrived at the Assembly Hall like a couple of drowned rats. Thank goodness I had the foresight to buy some plastic shoes last week; although my feet were soaked, at least my shoes were not ruined.

I feel so sorry for the local people; every day during the monsoon season they are afraid there will be more landslides, more homes falling off the hillsides into the chasms of the valleys, and of course more deaths. So far eighteen people from the local village have died and many others have lost their homes. No fresh food supplies can be brought from the surrounding towns and farms due to road closures; no fuel is available and the shopkeepers are losing trade whilst waiting for deliveries of all kinds (including the IT shop where dongles are sold out until the next delivery).

Much prayer is needed here.



In front: Rose, Angelique back: Sylvester, Jordan (plus an interloper who was very cute and wanted to be in on the act).

The Principal decided that I should have an office in the admin building where I could work on my sermons and presentations for study groups, and have private chats with those older, new intake children who might be having difficulty settling in to the school routine. I've been given a mobile phone and a list of useful numbers for communication with staff around the campus, so all I need now is the 'dongle' to get me online. For the time being I shall have to resort to the internet café in the village, although today even that is inaccessible because the road down from here is a fast flowing river.

Henry (the Chaplain) is back from visiting his family in Lucknow and we have worked out a schedule of services and Fellowship groups for me to lead. This morning I took the lead at the Boarders' Assembly and on Sunday I'll be preaching and assisting at Communion. After school yesterday I led the Fellowship group at Wiston Cottage (boys) and we covered such diverse topics as GPS Apps on Smartphones, Star Wars, and life in a British university. Believe it or not, I managed to make it a spiritual hour.

I also got to meet Magdalene Blinkworth (sponsored by Jennifer Harley), Navin Peter (Stuart Lynch) and Prabhat Kullu (Paul and Pat Raymer) –

Pictured next page from left to right



Magdalene is a lovely girl, settling in very happily and enjoys all her studies – even maths! She told me that she came 10th out of 37 in the half year exams recently and was disappointed that she did not make the top 5. I think she will go far. I Still have to see Chandannay Brewer (John and Diane) and was aiming to do so this morning when disaster struck.

Overnight the rain was torrential and we had a massive landslide on campus. Part of the road from the school to Ahava has subsided, two trees uprooted but, thank God, the resulting mudslide stopped just short of the small village below.



There's no telling however, if there will be further damage after the next rain which is due this evening. The road has been closed off and now my only route to the main campus is up a steep slope and along the 'top road' – good for the legs, so I'm told.

So, at the end of my first (eventful) week I am beginning to immerse myself into the daily routine of the school and am known to the children as "the English ma'am", which I think is rather endearing.

Trying not to think of things like hot baths, cream cakes and prosecco; the menu here is curry, curry and more curry for lunch and dinner, with porridge, fresh fruit, eggs and school bakery toast for breakfast. All delicious and much appreciated.

Elizabeth

To follow Elizabeth's blog, email Nada on nada@mccabe-travel.co.uk with your details to start receiving the blog by email.



LINDA'S SURPRISE 60TH BIRTHDAY PARTY



Linda Johnson joined the elite group of The 60's Club on 27th May 2015. Malcolm, together with his two daughters Tanya, Kirsty and Son-in-law Danny started planning the surprise party in 2014. We were all sworn to the utmost secrecy, and with a family of our size, this was an unbelievable achievement!!

The Johnson family had arranged to spend Linda's Birthday in Carvoeiro in Portugal and for the Surprise Party to take place in the Hilton Hotel, Swindon on Saturday 30th May 2015.



Linda with her two
Daughters Kirsty & Tanya



Linda and Malcolm



Malcolm, Linda
Tanya and Danny

Since they were going away for her Birthday, Linda had invited the whole family to a Birthday Lunch at The Barbury Inn, Broad Hinton on Sunday 31st May followed by tea and cake at her house. Of course, this was not going to happen as her daughters said they would make the booking!! In fact, on the morning of the party, Linda sent me a text to remind me to bring my folding chairs on Sunday –which I obviously said I would!!

In order to get Linda to the Hilton without raising any suspicions, Malcolm bought a Wedding Invitation and after getting someone to fill it in, told Linda that one of his colleagues at work was having a reception for his daughter in the Hilton and they were invited. By showing her the invitation this authenticated the duplicity and thereby no suspicions were aroused.



Guests awaiting
Linda's arrival



Linda through the
years



The Birthday Cake

On the day of the party all the guests arrived by 7.30pm and Linda and Malcolm got to the Hilton at around 7.45pm. We all kept very quiet and shouted "Surprise" when she entered the room and the look on Linda's face was classic.

Linda asking Malcolm what
is going on!!



Linda



Malcolm, Kirsty, Linda and Tanya



Our thanks to Linda, Malcolm, Tanya, Danny and Kirsty for a very enjoyable evening indeed. We thoroughly enjoyed the sumptuous buffet, music and the Birthday Cake with an image of Freddie Mercury on top, as Queen is Linda's favourite Band.



Linda and Malcolm enjoying the evening

It was wonderful that Linda was able to celebrate her Big 60 with family and friends, many of whom had travelled great distances to join in the celebration with her. Sadly, the only OGB's who came down to Swindon were Margaretta and Pema and of course Vince. Roll on the next milestone.



Margaretta & Pema



Glynis and Charlie



Jeff and Yolande



Linda and Yolande

This report of a great evening is from Yolande Fegredo (nee Pratt) Swindon

Hi Margaretta

It was good to catch up on Saturday after my recent holiday in Scotland. After speaking to you about Ian I was able to track him down. We spoke on the phone yesterday Sunday. He is a retired Rector. His parents were also in India as his dad worked for Duncan & Duncan a Scottish Tea Firm. Since Independence the firm was first in East Pakistan and then from 1971 in Bangladesh with its office in Dhaka. He taught for 13 years till 1976 in Bishops College a Theological Centre founded early in the 19th century in Sibpur, Howrah not far from the Botanical Gardens. These days it is at 224 AJC Bose(Lower Circular) Road, Ballygunge, Kolkata - 17.

Ian's aunt, Louise McMorran was visited by Daddy Graham in Calcutta in the 1920s and asked to start up a home for the little ones. She was the person responsible for the beginnings of Lucia King and remained at the Homes for five years.

Before I met Ian last Thursday 7th May, I met Mrs Mary Balfour outside St. Andrews Episcopal Church, Kelso and she invited me in to have a look at the Art Exhibition of paintings by local artists that were also available to purchase.

One of the paintings by V. Baden-Powell caught my eye. This artist was related to Lieutenant-General Robert Baden-Powell later Lord Baden-Powell founder of the Scout Movement.

Whilst having a conversation with both Mary and Ian it came to light that they were supporters of DGH.

All the best

Norman Freeman





Sister Nirmala Joshi, M.C.



Born

July 23, 1934 Syangja, Nepal

Died

June 23, 2015 (aged 80), Kolkata

Education

Master's degree in Political science,
Doctor Juris, Graduate degree in Law

Religion

Hinduism (1934-1958) Catholicism
(1958-2015) Nirmala Joshi, M.C. (July 23,
1934 – June 23, 2015), better known as

Sister Nirmala, was a Catholic Religious Sister who succeeded Nobel laureate Mother Teresa as the head of her Missionaries of Charity and expanded the movement overseas. After taking over the charity following Mother Teresa's death in 1997, Nirmala expanded the organisation's reach to 134 countries by opening centres in nations such as Afghanistan, Israel and Thailand.

Biography

Nirmala Joshi, née Kusum, was born on July 23, 1934 in a Brahmin family as the eldest of the ten children at Regmi Village, Syangja, Nepal . Her father was an officer of the British Indian Army until the nation's independence in 1947.



When Nirmala was one year old, her father brought the family to India. Although the family was Hindu, she was educated by Christian missionaries in Mount Carmel, Hazaribag.

At that time, she learned of Mother Teresa's work and wanted to share in that service. She soon converted to Catholicism and joined the Missionaries of Charity, founded by Mother Teresa. Joshi completed a Master's degree in Political Science and then went on to secure a doctorate degree in law from the University of Calcutta. She was one of the first Sisters of the institute to head a foreign mission when she went to Panama.

In 1976, Joshi started the contemplative branch of the Missionaries of Charity and remained at its head until 1997, when she was elected to succeed Mother Teresa as Superior General of the institute.

The government of India bestowed the Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian award, on Sister Joshi on Republic Day (January 26) 2009 for her services to the nation. Her term as Superior General ended on 25 March 2009, and she was succeeded by German born Sister Mary Prema Pierick.

Joshi died on June 23, 2015 in Kolkata.

Sister Mary Prema Pierick
Present Head of Missionaries of Charity



Pics from the May Fair held on 15 May at the Homes

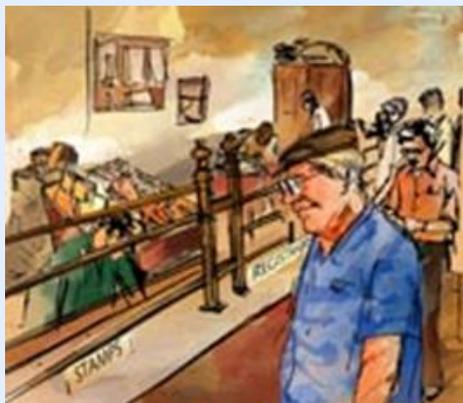




Calcutta contradictions continued from last newsletter

The stamp of babudom

In the final part of his account, Czech Mike Hruska talks about his trials at a post office in the city of his birth.



I have often mentioned with great fondness the jewel of Park Street, namely, the Oxford Bookstore. Every time I went to browse or buy books it was as if time had stood still. My last visit had been in the early 1990s. At the entrance customers were always greeted courteously by a turbaned man-mountain with a proud bearing, an impressive handlebar moustache and a Lee Enfield rifle.

The store itself was a labyrinth of deep canyons of books running from floor to ceiling. Browsing the top of the bookshelves required jeans and an old shirt, for dust was king there. Each customer needed to be something of a rock climber to negotiate the ladder that reached the upper shelves, where most of the treasures could be found. The Oxford Bookstore covered every

subject under the sun and it had many books that had “lived” on its shelves for decades. The staff were not just courteous and helpful: they were indispensable. If I was seeking books on Assamese umbrellas of the 19th century, they could direct me to the appropriate shelf unerringly. It was worth battling with the dust, for there were real treasures there.

After I had made a choice after an hour or two of pleasurable browsing, someone would say: “Sahib has made a choice, can I help?”

Handing him the books, I would accompany him to a bespectacled teller seated behind an elevated podium, surrounded by glass but with a little porthole for the ensuing transaction. At first an invoice book was prepared with at least four or five carbon copy papers placed symmetrically between the pages. The teller proceeded to enter the title, name, and price of every book on to the first page of the invoice book. Then the total was calculated manually and, as if the end result of this calculation was not to be trusted, out came the calculator for verification, a process usually repeated at least two or three more times for absolute verification.

Finally all the carbons were extracted and I would receive one invoice copy while the others were delivered to other parts of the bookstore.

I would take my invoice to pay and again there was another verification calculation using both principles of manual addition and the calculator. In response to the question whether I wished to pay by cash or credit, I would reply, "Credit, please" and hand over my card. My card would then be inspected to ascertain whether it was real or fake.

"This is a foreign card?" I would hear. "Yes, but it is a Visa card issued by the ANZ Bank of Australia and they own and operate ANZ Grindlays in India." The mention of "Grindlays" provided reassurance. I would pay; my invoice slip had now acquired a wonderful "PAID" stamp on it.

"Where next?" I would ask. "To the wrapping section." I would proceed to the section where the wrapping person checked the inventory of books on his invoice copy against my invoice copy. On verification that the books had been paid, my invoice was stamped again and he would put his invoice on a needle with other invoices. The books were wrapped and someone else took the books to another table where I would finally receive the books and have my invoice stamped once more with "Verified".

"Is it over?" I would wonder, moving to the door. But, no, the security guard had his invoice copy and would verify that it had been paid and wrapped and I would get another stamp on my invoice. Finally, I would emerge with my books and a multi-stamped invoice.

Why do I go into such detail about this process? It represents something I love about this country: the human face of business, a gentler way of doing things rather than the cold interface with a PC, barcode readers and printers spitting out bits of paper.

But the end result was the same, namely, I emerged with my books.

Alas, the Oxford Bookstore as I knew it is no more. The books now on sale represent those that you might find in any modern bookstore; its little walkways and corridors are now replete with popular history and travel, contemporary literature, coffee-table books, mystery novels, popular fiction, magazines, periodicals; it has a tea room and gift store. And I venture that no one will know where to find books on Assamese umbrellas any more. Something has been lost in this headlong drive for modernity.

Counter trouble

In 2006, I renewed my friendship with Calcutta post offices, where I was reminded that not all bureaucratic processes are as quaint and welcoming as those at the Oxford Bookstore.

I went to buy some stamps at Free School Street post office. Behind a huge counter was an assortment of staff spaced every few metres, occupying high chairs and looking busy. At a counter named "Stamps", I dutifully presented myself and was directed by A to go to B at the "Assessment Counter".

The clock started ticking!

B took my postcards — seven small and four large — and counted them. He put each one on a scale to weigh them, despite seven being identical. Every one of the 11 cards was weighed and verified. Then he pulled out an information sheet and advised that each card required a Rs 8 stamp.

B then directed me to C to actually buy the stamps. I asked for 11 Rs 8 stamps. C grew alarmed, as he noted that the cards were of two sizes. “Oh. No, sir! That is not possible.” He counted the postcards again and verified that seven were small and four large. “Can’t be right! I have to check.”

C then went to see his boss, D, to query if the larger postcards required more stamps. As I gazed at this bureaucratic tableau with my blood pressure slowly rising, I noted that boss D was unsure; he picked up the phone and called his superior somewhere within the bowels of the building.

Finally an answer — yes the larger cards required a Rs 15 stamp. Wonderful, I thought; so let us get on with it and buy the stamps.

But this was only the beginning. C at the stamp counter had to count the postcards again, seven small and four large. During the count he noted that some postcards were from Hong Kong; this seemed to puzzle him. I assured C that there was nothing sinister about this — we had had no time to post them off in Hong Kong.

Seemingly satisfied, he subjected the postcards to another count and finally opened the stamp book and counted off the requisite stamps. Finally, progress. I mentally calculated Rs 116 for the stamps and reached for my wallet. But, no. C at the stamp counter then had the nerve to ask me for my Biro so that he could do the calculations himself on paper. Not once, not twice, but three times! We agreed on Rs 116.

As I paid for the stamps, I noted that they had no adhesive on the back and had the temerity to ask if he had stamps that had an adhesive. C then calmly informed me that I would have to cross the street to a small shop and buy some glue.

At this juncture I exploded and asked him politely to get up off his rear and get me some glue immediately. After some protestation, he sheepishly walked to E at the “Registrations Counter”, only to produce a filthy bowl of glue and invited me to dip my finger into it, wet the back of the stamps, and affix them to the cards.

I had to wait another 15 minutes to ensure that all the cards were dry prior to proceeding back to F to get the stamps cancelled before placing them in the post box.

I was not surprised to note that there was no “Customer Satisfaction Counter”. This little episode lasted all of 55 minutes.

This love of the desk, paper, the rubber stamp, the process, the fear — often financial — that leads one to check and countercheck one's work seems to pervade virtually all sections of society. It may have originated in the bureaucracy of the Empire, or it may be a legacy of the Marxist culture and union power that threw a mantle of lethargy over virtually everything, encouraging inertia and stifling initiative.

Whatever its source, a cult of desk worship, paper generation, checks and counter checks has developed. Granted, the commercial sector appears to have become more pragmatic, but the government sector still appears to wallow in its dogma, process and paper.

Banners & bonhomie

Calcutta is a paradox, a city of contrasts, conflicts and contradiction. It is a city that engages you emotionally: it assaults all your senses

— the mass of people, the poverty, the noise, the traffic, the supremacy of the car horn, the pollution, the traffic, the feeling of decay, the street cooking, the overpowering smells, the banners and slogans, the street hustlers, the children, the crows, the cows—

but then it also surprises with moments of wonderful, unanticipated humanity, culture, humour and spirit.

It is this latter side of Calcutta that I treasure and that feeds the love and respect I still hold for the city of my birth.

Mike Hruska

Forthcoming Event

Birthday Celebrations

September 26 2015

Doors open 12noon

1 pm meeting commences

Room MUST be vacated by 5pm

Methodist Church, Hinde Street, London W1

Tube: Bond Street



YOUR FEEDBACK MATTERS

From : john@jcdempster.com

G`morning, Margaretta

I hope you and Vince are in good health and that life is being good to you and your loved ones.

Wow!

I've just completed reading your May newsletter (for which many thanks, for it is much appreciated and looked forward to) and that is what I said: Wow! It was full of stories, so many varied stories, that were exciting to read and photographs that compelled me to take my spectacles off and give them a special polish, before placing them back on the edge of my nose, to peer again and see whether I recognised anyone.

Gifting those sports items to the cottages was a great idea, and I just know that they would be so welcome.

Unfortunately I will not be able to make it to the Homes for this years Birthday celebrations. I see that it is going to be a special one in many ways and I hope a number of OGB`s and

friends are able to visit and participate and meet the staff and students. There is, also, nothing as sweet as those large yummy jellabies, or as smoky as that special mug of tea, enjoyed by all on the school sports field.

I was especially interested in the story about information from the Admissions Register. A photocopy of this Register is in the School Library/Museum.

I was wondering whether it would be possible for a copy of this Admissions Register to be available for OGB`s and their extended families, who may not be able to travel to the Homes, to peruse on the internet? I will be willing to contribute to the cost of such an enterprise if it is at all possible for it to be successfully done.

It will be the start of winter here in Australia in a couple of days. It is very sad to read about the many deaths due to the heatwave being experienced in India.

In the newsletter, I was thinking that the idea of loaning money to students to help them start their working life, was a brilliant idea. I was lucky in that it must have been Mr Crow who arranged for me to borrow quite a large sum of money from the Birkmyre Hostel to start me off.

I joined the British Merchant Navy as a Deck Apprentice, and needed to be kitted out appropriately. I was then measured up and suitably fitted up with all sorts of uniforms and so had no hang ups there, as the Birkmyre Hostel supplied the money.

When I started working, I forwarded half my monthly salary to the Hostel until the sum of money was repaid in full.

Needless to say, I always greatly appreciated the help given me by our School and the Birkmyre. I think Mr Alldyce/Allardyce (??) was running the Birkmyre Hostel in 1963.

Thanking you once again for another great Newsletter.

Love

John and Christine Dempster

From :

bernardbrooks81@gmail.com

Thank you for the Newsletter which I think is absolutely first class as it contains such a variety of articles submitted by such a large number of folk.



Landslides in DGH.

Finally the earth came crashing down above Woodburn Cottage. Lots of landslides in the hills so even KPG has not been spared.

Just wanted to update you all

Lolly Raphael



Lt-Col Jim Kelly

From David Gundlach (OGB).

Dear Margaret,

I was disappointed you did not include a photograph of Jim as a young man in your Christmas newsletter. Above is a picture of Jim taken while he was a serving officer. Jim always looked every bit the soldier, a soldier's soldier, immaculate!

Re the publication of Jim's obituary in the newsletter taken from The Telegraph. I feel it would have been appropriate for the newsletter to acknowledge the source. (*ed: our mistake; sorry David*)

When I first saw the obituary I have to confess to being fascinated by it. I even thought I had seen Jim sometime, somewhere in the past. Even now I still think that!

Since no one, no DGH connected person seemed to have heard of Jim, I did ask Ruth to look up the board in the Jarvie Hall to see (a) if Jim's name appeared on it and (b) in which year? I even had an educated guess that, if indeed his name appeared on the board, it would have been in 1945 or 1946 as the obituary refers to St Andrews! The board I am referring to is the one which sets out the winner of The Fairbairn (?) Prize which usually went to the boys' School Captain. No response so far from Ruth on this question.

Incidentally Jim Kelly was some nine months older than Bernard (Brooks).

Another thought: how fitting that JK ended up as Commanding Officer of the Gurkhas in Hong Kong! Such a shame he didn't keep in contact after leaving "St Andrews" now of course re-named Dr Graham's Homes.

David Gundlach

From : basilstonham@aol.com

Dear Margaretta,

Thanks for the recent newsletter containing my piece with reference to Jim Kelly. There was a hiccup in the piece because on P12 the text alongside the bottom picture was referring to the picture of the cast of the play of Twelfth Night, not the picture shown!

I think that there was a mix up because by coincidence, on the previous page it showed a picture of the cast of the same play but from the year 1939 when classes HG and JC provided the actors. That show was produced by Misses Rendill and Fraser according to the article, whereas our 1945 show was produced and directed by Nesta's mum, Mrs Lloyd.

The picture printed showed the full JC class of 1945, whereas some of the pupils were missing in the picture on page 13. I am sorry if I made an error in my email to you. It must be perplexing for the readers of the article. I am sorry.

But never mind eh? - at least readers have a great newsletter thanks to Alistair McCabe and his team.

Basil.

Helen Mini Steward (Nee Palmer)



3 September 1933 to 6 January 2015

From her sister, Catherine Palmer

Helen was born in Assam, India. From the age of 5, she attended Dr Grahams' home, living with me in Thorburn Cottage. Once she had finished school she attended the Steele Memorial hospital for about a year. She left India in 1952 for England and a career in nursing. She went to Central Middlesex hospital and qualified as a state registered nurse and Midwife.

Helen met her future husband Steve, at a nurse's party in Earls court. They wed in 1963 and spent a very happy 50 years together. After their children, Andrew and Nicholas were born, Helen had a brief time working from home so she could look after them.

Nicholas has grown into a good man, with a lovely wife, Ita and 2 wonderful boys, Oliver and Finn. Helen then returned to nursing as a school nurse in the White City and Shepherds Bush area. She was well liked and was affectionately known as the 'Nit nurse'. She retired in 1998. Helen and Steve then re located to Margate, Kent for a quieter life. They cruised the world and enjoyed their retirement together.

Helen died peacefully in the QEQM Hospital in Kent. She is greatly missed by Nicholas and his family. Also I miss her terribly as does my son, Nigel.

May she and her beloved husband, Steve, rest in peace.

JOANNE AUGUSTINE

From Lolly Raphael



I have the sad task to inform you that Joanne Augustine (Eddie's wife from Birkmyre) has passed away. May her soul rest in peace forever. Joanne passed away on 2nd June, 2015 at 11.20 am after a prolonged illness.

The younger generation fondly knew her as Auntie Joanne. Joanne served for more than twenty years looking after the students of Dr. Grahams Homes along with Eddie at the Birkmyre Hostel.

Heartfelt condolences go out to the family and especially to Eddie, Orlando and the children. She is now in a better place and free from all pain but she shall be missed by many and her contribution to DGH will live forever in the hearts of the young adults who have passed through her care and guidance.

May she Rest in Peace forever.

Lolly xx

Kolkata lies right on top of fault line, may face major quake in future



Joydeep Thakur,
Hindustan Times, Kolkata

A building collapses in Jalpaiguri district in Bengal after earthquake.

Every time the ground shakes beneath Kolkata, we move an inch closer to Dooms day, experts warned after Tuesday's earthquake in Nepal.

For there lies a 'faultline', a fractured zone, just 4.5km below the city, which has been lying almost inactive for years but could become hyperactive and trigger a massive quake measuring at least 6 on the Richter scale, seismologists claim.

"This could turn the 300-year-old city into rubble within minutes. It's just a matter of time," said Supriya Mondol, associate professor with Jadavpur University who deals with plate tectonics and quakes.

The fracture, known as the Eocene Hinge Zone, runs right through the middle of the city and then cuts across Rajarhat-Newtown and Ranaghat, in Nadia, before passing through Bangladesh and Myanmar and, further on, to Sumatra.

Experts say this faultline is lying almost inactive. Since it is not located on the edge of any tectonic plate, such as Nepal, the areas along this fault, including Kolkata, have not experienced

any major earthquake in recent times. Minor earthquakes, which humans can hardly feel, however, do take place. “But the Indian plate, which contains the faultline, is continuously pushing northwards and sliding beneath the Eurasian plate at a rate of 40mm each year. This is what resulted in the Nepal earthquake.

The Indian plate is also pushing against the Burma plate, which triggered the 2004 tsunami,” said Sankar Kumar Nath, an IIT-Kharagpur professor who has been teaching seismology over the past 27 years and has also received the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize.

Because of the stress and strain, the energy which is getting accumulated along the faultline will try to release itself through the ‘fracture’. This might trigger the earthquake.

Since April 25, when an earthquake measuring 7.9 on the Richter scale hit Nepal killing thousands, there have been more than 100 aftershocks.

On Tuesday, there was another quake measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale followed by at least six aftershocks within just two hours.

“This continuous stress and strain - the Indian plate rubbing against two others - could turn the faultline below Kolkata into a hyperactive zone and trigger a massive earthquake in future.

The energy thus liberated will be so huge that it’ll trigger an earthquake measuring not less than 6 on the Richter scale. I leave it to you to guess

what the results will be,” Nath said. Is an earthquake measuring 6 on the Richter scale strong enough to turn Kolkata into rubble? The answer came from different quarters. Both the quakes that hit Nepal on April 25 and on Tuesday measured more than 7 on the Richter scale at the epicentre, but the tremors felt in Kolkata and its surrounding areas were just 4-5 on the scale. Yet, they were strong enough to shake buildings.

“Now, imagine a quake measuring 6 with the epicentre just beneath Kolkata,” a senior officer of the Indian Meteorological Department’s regional office in Kolkata said.

A former senior director of the Geological Survey of India said, “The city had a close shave on both April 25 and Tuesday. The tremors felt in the city were not more than 5 on the scale. Kolkata won’t be able to withstand an earthquake beyond 6. A quake measuring 6 would kill a few lakhs and bring down several old and quite a few new multi-storeyed buildings.”

Scientists, however, failed to answer the biggest question of all: When?

Dear David and Basil (see page 20)

We make mistakes and I apologise, but let me say how much we enjoy editing this newsletter with such wonderful stories from the past and present, creating a record of the history of the Homes. Great credit goes to Margaretta and all of the contributors.

Alistair and Nada



Don't forget, you can find us on the web

www.kalimpong-association.co.uk



Kalimpong Association UK



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NEW FEATURES FOR OUR NEWSLETTER

We are looking for some new features for our newsletter and need your help! Could you make some suggestions e.g. “A day in the life of ...” or snapshots, latest achievement or things your children or you have done which made you smile. We are looking for upbeat, heart warming, positive stories so if you have any please email Margareta : purtills@btinternet.com

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