

THE KALIMPONG ASSOCIATION (UK)

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2006



Heathland Cottage

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MICHAEL ROBERTSON –

Chairman Board of Management

I have been blessed and privileged to serve as Chairman of the Board of Management and President of the Homes for the past 10 years and as a member of the Board for 15 years. I have learnt a considerable deal about the Homes, its administration, its politics and its being. The greatest joy, however, has been to serve the children of the Homes and to watch how they have responded in a very active and ever changing environment of an exciting and emerging India, sometimes completely oblivious of the problems in which they are growing up. Young and healthy. Full of hope and confidence. To keep it that way and enhance their aspirations is the first priority.

When OGBs get together there is but naturally a reason to reminisce of the past. The role of the Board of Management is to look to the future and equip and secure the coming generations for what lies ahead. There are also new ways of working, new ideas to pursue. India has dramatically changed in the last few years and in serving the children we must remember that the Homes cannot be isolated from the social fabric of the Hills. Whilst the Homes has withstood difficult times in the changing political context we need to constantly remind ourselves that the wellbeing of the Homes is intimately linked with the wellbeing of Kalimpong.

In the last decade we have seen three new cottages on the campus. The first since those competed by Dr Graham. We also own our own Ladies Hostel in Kolkata – a long fulfilled dream. That means more children can be taken in. We, however, have to keep a balance between supported and fee paying children. It must be emphasised that whilst we take in at least 35 new supported children each year it takes at least 6/12 months to find a sponsor and in case there is no sponsor then the Homes supports the children from funds internally generated. Therefore, income generated from fee paying children is used to support children who have no sponsor. The extended sponsorship programme where any supported child wishing to go through college is also funded from the Homes if the sponsor is unable to continue support is also funded by the Homes. This means not only tuition fees in college but board and lodging expenses and pocket money. Higher education amongst our supported children has also received top priority. In India you cannot get by without a college education today and we need to constantly inculcate in our children the need to study hard. I have never found a child lacking in intelligence. It's only a question of application and we constantly push and motivate the children towards aspiring for a better life. We need to ensure the quality and commitment of the teaching staff.

Supporting a large campus is one of the most difficult aspects of the Homes. Space is costly and expensive and whilst the openness and vista is unique, size does cost a lot of money. Sustained power is a problem. Electrical lines, water, sanitation are old. We have to constantly examine and review and where funds permit replace. It is no easy task. Where should the money be spent?. On education or on facilities? Again a balance has to be achieved.

Caring and sharing has been the bedrock of the Homes. With the exodus of missionaries the cottage parent approach to caring is the way through which we work, We as a Board often feel that often love and parental feeling is blurred in dealing with children some whom have been scarred, abused and therefore react in various difficult ways. It is very easy to play it by the book - but what if the child was your own? Would you apply the

same criteria? We do accept the universal school norm that when a child fails a class twice he or she must be removed from the rolls. We have questioned the teaching practice and asked the administration to enquire into the circumstances as to why the child has fallen back. We are arranging special coaching classes during the holidays. Remedial classes are the direct responsibility of the Headmaster. Yet I have often found myself intervening in a number of instances which sometimes upsets the administration who admittedly have an unenviable task in keeping things on even keel. This problem has been churned around for some time. How do we improve the Cottage Parent system? Often those in charge are not sufficiently educated or equipped or trained to handle a situation. Mistakes do occur. The responsibility is finally the managements.

A thought is being pursued. We are in talks with a very prestigious organisation to see if we can set up a Senior Citizens facility on our campus; the object of which will be to twin caring through a Senior Citizens and Young Peoples mentor programme. Those who stay on the campus will be required to give mentor time to the children – either in their studies or in caring. The children in turn will be required to provide therapy to senior citizens through affection and bonding. This will mean no financial involvement of the Homes but if the programme is carefully evolved could mean a new vista, possibly for OGBs, who wish to return one day.

Putting the Homes on a strong financial and administrative footing is a long term objective. The affairs of the Homes are closely monitored and the Board of Management is not a mere rubber stamp of any action or demand. It constantly endeavours to reinforce itself with very qualified professionals with backgrounds in finance, human resource management, education and engineering. Each is asked to contribute of their time and also to seek to project the public image and fund raising work of the Homes. Overseas Committees have also expressed a concern that younger professionals need to get more involved in the affairs of the Homes. Times have changed and often work pressures result in lack of time to be involved in a social cause. It is difficult and sometimes frustrating to find people who can give quality time. As it is finally a social responsibility each must adapt and give what they can. Our committees are our support and future. We will continue to liaise and work closely with them. We would welcome the formation of new committees and people who have recently left the Homes to take a more active interest as they spread to various corners of the world.

An institution such as ours can never live in isolation. The Homes continues today to have considerable respect in the Government and the Bureaucracy for the role it plays in education and in the upliftment of children. We welcome many interested visitors and supporters who pass through.

Finally Dr Graham's Homes has survived the test of time. A 106-year history of service is a testament to generations of commitment to a cause. We have every confidence that it will continue to grow and evolve.

Best wishes Michael Robertson January 25, 2005

Some Silly Signs:-

ON MARKS & SPENCER BREAD PUDDING - Product will be hot after heating
ON BOOTS CHILDRENS COUGH MEDICINE - Do not drive car or operate machinery
ON NYTOL (A SLEEP AID) - Warning: may cause drowsiness
ON A SWEDISH CHAINSAW - Do not attempt to stop chain with your hands



Darjeeling Brass Band??

REMINISCING

Florence Snell

It is always nice learn about the other OGB groups and associations and how they function and fund raise. Florence Snell gives us a picture of how the Australian Dr Grahams Homes charity works and gives her some information on her interesting life and times:-

"There is no KPG OGB Association in Australia. Sydney was the original DRG committee (early 1950s), although the charity was not registered as an official Overseas Aid Fund. There were also committees in Adelaide and Melbourne. Committee members were OGBs and ex-staff.

In 1985 Dr Grahams Association Overseas Aid Fund (ABN 36 559 072 846) became a registered Australian charity (Melbourne, Victoria address). Thus all donations made to the DGH in Australia are granted a tax exemption. No other DGH organisation in Australia has this status. This means that for any Australian donation to the DGH to be tax-free they must pass through the Victorian Committee's books. The Australian committee supports the Dr Grahams Homes by seeking sponsors and publicity, collecting donations and passing the funds onto the DGH. The total funds raised are forwarded to India once a year. In 2005 \$30,060 was remitted. The Committee, who are honorary members, donates administration expenses.

The Melbourne Committee meets four times a year. The Australian Grahamite newsletter is sent to benefactors, some are OGBs. It is not a KPG-OGB newsletter. The cost of producing, printing and mailing of the newsletter is paid for by Ted Stuckey.

OGBs on the Australian (Melbourne) Association committee are: George Smith, president; Penpa Namgyl, vice president; Lynette (Smith) Ridler, secretary; Eleanor (Patter) Marazzi, Rachel (Fairservice) Stuckey and Sharon (Michael) Halstead. Other Committee members are: Errol Augustus, treasurer and public officer; Siva Nathan, auditor; Jill Cantwell, Rachel Hudlestone and Ted Stuckey, editor. The Australian Committee (Melbourne, Victoria) is seeking new committee members. Anyone prepared to join the Committee should contact the Secretary: Mrs Lynette Ridler, 16 Laverock Court, Taylors Lakes, Vic 3038, Australia. The secretary has a lot of work sending out Case Histories, letters, school reports and Christmas cards with photos. Receipts are sent out for sponsorship and donations and overdue sponsors are sent reminders.

I was a Committee member in Sydney until I moved to Melbourne in 1979. I was secretary of the Australian Committee from 1984-1994. Our objective was to increase the number of sponsored children. During my time as secretary I was host to principals Bernard Brooks and the late Howard O'Connor. On each of the fund-raising visits by the Principal the Melbourne and Sydney Committees arranged various media, church and Sunday School fund-raising events, which increased the number of children sponsored. OGB gatherings were held during these visits.

When I retired there were 180 sponsored children (Australia-wide). Many of the sponsored children have benefited from the UK extended sponsorship scheme when they have had further education after completing their years at the Homes.

I married Gerry Snell on 28.12.1994 and came to live in Britain in January 1995. The Australian Association advertised, through the Grahamite newsletter, for a replacement secretary. It was hoped an OGB would volunteer - but none were forthcoming. Jill Cantwell (a sponsor) very kindly took on the task. Jill (Australian), a retired school Librarian, was secretary of the Association until 2005. There is no longer a committee in Adelaide. Perth (Brenda (Stokoe) Haseldine and OGBs) and Sydney (Ivan Holland and OGBs) Committees do raise funds. The Perth and Sydney Committees arrange reunions, which are enjoyed by OGBs. Some of the Perth and Sydney Committee Members are sponsors and there are OGB sponsors in other parts of Australia.

I sponsor two children, one 14-year old boy through the UK Committee and continued sponsorship of a girl through the Australian Association. Thanks to the UK extended sponsorship scheme Andrea, who has lived in the Dr Grahams Ladies Hostel in Elliot Road, Calcutta, will graduate as a primary school teacher in March.

Further clarification: The Australian Association has been termed the Victorian Committee because it is located in Melbourne, Victoria. The affiliated NSW Committee is in Sydney and the affiliated WA Committee is in Perth.

I have been blessed and enjoyed trips to India, New Zealand and Australia, along with many visits to homes in Britain, where I have received the utmost kindness from my Kalimpong family, for which I am very grateful. My precious memory is of being Chief Guest at the Homes Birthday celebration on the compound in 1984 and 1994.

Florence Snell (nee Hopper) – Batch of 1962 (Mansfield Cottage). Married Carl Evans in Sydney in 1968; (son Neil); widowed in 1986; married Gerry Snell in 1994 and now resident in Wales, UK

Florence Snell

Roy Harding – Grandpa's Schooldays

My eldest grandson, Elliot, was asked by his teacher to get his grandpa to write an account of his early schooldays. It was to be read out at assembly to let the children get an insight as to what their grandparents experienced as children. The following was my contribution.

Born in 1936, I was lucky enough to witness the final glorious years of the British Empire, especially so in the so-called "Jewel in the Crown"...India.

The ex-patriates, army and civil personnel and the supportive Anglo-Indian community were more than determined to have a good time while the British Raj still ruled India. Parents were more than keen to put their children into boarding schools, usually citing the reason that it would be an uplifting experience and would make men of their sons. I suspect that there were more selfish reasons for their decision.

At just over four years of age, while we were stationed in Karachi, I found myself being taken off to nursery school. The school was a few miles away from our house. My elder brother and I would go to school on horseback accompanied by two Pathan guards. I remember playing games and singing nursery rhymes and sleeping in the afternoon.



Shortly after turning six years of age and, with the impending independence of India and the subsequent partition, which created Pakistan, my father opted for India. We re-located to Calcutta, West Bengal, India. After a period of settling in our new location, my elder brother Bert, my sister Diana, and myself were sent to St Andrews Colonial Homes as boarders. The school is now known as Dr Grahams School, in honour of the founder. The school attracts worldwide support for its innovative approach to education and its intake of orphaned and/or children from destitute families without regard to race or religion. The school is co-educational and in my time had 30% fee-paying children (Rs 56,000 per annum). Fee-paying parents were told that their children would have to live under the same stringent conditions as the free-school children. That meant, among other things, no shoes! All children were given certain jobs to do...sweeping, polishing the wooden floors of the dormitory, gardening, helping in the kitchen etc. Saturday was sports day. Sunday was bible study day, church and evensong.

There was a tradition that on one's birthday, you had tea with the house parents. You were allowed to take just one friend with you. Any uneaten cake or biscuits were wrapped up in a napkin for you to give other friends.

Each cottage where the children lived (30 to a cottage) had quite a sizeable piece of land attached to it. One area was a playing field and the rest gardens. There were also small allotments where you could grow orchids or peanuts or create a play area. I learned to grow peanuts by the dog-rose bushes. Children would exchange produce or give it to the house parent who would give you some pocket money in exchange. It was great fun.

You may be wondering how large the school is. Well, it is bigger than the borough of Merton. The school, besides its cottages, has its own hospital, farm, a dairy herd, bakery, swimming bath, a playing field enough to stage 7 football matches, a parade ground, Church and cemetery. My uncle, Nelson Sparkes, is buried in that cemetery. He died of hydrophobia having been bitten by a rabid dog. He was 14 years old.

Schooling was co-educational. You were taught the three Rs (reading, writing and arithmetic) plus how to sew and knit, help with cooking, wild berry picking in the forest...basically you learned to survive as an added extra to your academic studies. At sixteen, if you were bright enough, you were enrolled in a college to sit your Overseas Cambridge examination. A minimum of eight subjects to be examined in was the norm and a pass in English and Maths was compulsory or you failed the exam and had to take all eight subjects again. Wasting your time was not an option.

At the time of my joining the Homes, we had a cadet force complete with pipes and drums and real rifles. Holiday time was great. Not all children managed to go home for the holidays, but for the ones who stayed behind there was plenty to keep us occupied. We would be given sandwiches, told where we could go to for the day and warned to be back by 5 o'clock sharp. How we achieved this I'll never know for not one of us had a watch. A favourite spot was the Rilly valley. A beautiful place with the fast flowing river running past the fruit orchards on one bank. There were mango trees, peach and pineapple groves and a calm pool where we could have a swim. I am told that the Rilly is now no more than a trickle. From Laidlaw to the Riley was about 3 miles downhill. It was quite a steep slope all the way down and an arduous climb back to the cottage.

Kalimpong is a plateau and reasonably cool the year round. As such, during the hot season in the plains, tigers, usually female, would come up to Kalimpong. I would imagine that they went into the forest north of Laidlaw or beyond for obvious cover. During this time and until the tigers returned to the plains, we were never required to go out to collect firewood. On occasion, usually on a moonlit night, we would be woken from sleep to see a tigress and her cubs leisurely walking past our cottage. It was an awesome sight and one that I have never forgotten. Some education!

The school day began with a muster of the boys and girls on the parade ground that was adjacent to the school. We assembled facing the Kanchenjunga massif and many other mountains forming a natural barrier guarding the Tibetan plateau from the Indian sub-continent. A magnificent panoramic view of some of the highest mountains in the world. The scene was especially spectacular at the morning muster because of the early sun glistening on the peaks making the snowcaps sparkle. In very bright sunshine, the reflections would make your eyes quite sore. You may think that a lot of us got rather blasé about the spectacle. Not so. Every old boy or girl I've spoken to remembers the sight, the grandeur and majesty of the mountains they faced.

The school day started and ended with a short prayer. Pupils were encouraged to read the Bible daily. The prize of a new Bible was given to any pupil who could recite the books of the two Testaments in the correct order. Erin, my niece, has my prize, presented to her on her first communion day. Miss Reeves, my housemother at Laidlaw would have approved.

Schooling was really enjoyable, especially so when you had a few friends you related to. I remember Helen Brown and Barbara Ridgeway sitting behind me and Ken Rose and Piggy Grant in the front row. Of the senior boys I remember Ronnie Edwards, Gilbert Speed, Charlie Weedle and Charlie Braid, and Denis Brogan, and a couple of the Princewright brothers, Larry Jarman, and the Paceys, my cousins. I enjoyed my schooldays at the Homes. Discipline was expected from you and indeed enforced, but never in a heavy-handed manner. Bullying was not tolerated and bullies soon found, to their dismay that they were called upon to explain their actions by an elder boy like Gilbert Speed who was built like a Sherman tank. Repeat offenders were usually expelled.

After school we would walk back to the cottage and indulge ourselves on what the forest had to offer...dog strawberries and raspberries, which were quite abundant. We would capture elephant

beetles and all those sorts of things that little boys gather and then exchange with their friends. On arrival at the cottage we would be given our chores to carry out. My first job was to clear the drains of leaves and then, with a bunch of other boys, go into the forest to collect firewood. At the height of the berry season we would be given buckets to collect raspberries. The berries would then be sent to the hospital to be made into ice-creams and jams and distributed to the cottages. A lovely treat and great fun picking. In autumn, while gathering wood we would be in awe of a tree called "the flame of the forest" whose leaves were flaming red. Then, back to the cottage, dinner, homework, prayers and then to an early bed. Reveille was at 6.00am. We had to make our beds, clean the dormitory, polish the wooden floors and then collect our uniform for the day. We then had a meagre breakfast, usually porridge and a bit of fruit or bread. After a short break we set off to school in groups for safety reasons.

As I mentioned earlier, Saturday was sports day. When we first arrived at the Homes, a couple of senior boys asked my brother and myself whether we could swim. We said we could not. Off to the baths they took us and promptly threw us into the deep end. Very effective unless of course if you drowned. But, we learned to swim in one lesson. As the pipes and drums interested me, I was given lessons after school in the pipes and drums and dreamed that one day I would play in the band. The cadets marched to all the Scottish marching tunes. The sight of precision marching by our cadets to the tune of Bonnie Dundee is something I will never forget. It has to be one of the most endearing memories of my stay at Kalimpong. I was taken out of the Homes in 1949.

My parents decided to send me to La Martinierre, Calcutta, as a day-scholar. There are two other schools of the same name, one at Lucknow, and the other at Lyon in France. La Martinierre, Lucknow, is the only school in the world that has its own Battle Honours, the boys having defended the Viceregal residency during the Indian mutiny. La Marts, as we boys called the schools, was founded by Claude Martin, a high-ranking and very wealthy officer in the French army. He fought against the British in India, but when hostilities ended he offered his services to the British. His ambition to build educational institutions in India and France was soon fulfilled given his enormous wealth. Quite a few boys and girls from Kalimpong would sit for their Senior Cambridge exams at La Marts, Calcutta. It was always a matter of joy that boys from the Homes would swipe the swimming trophies.

Having been tutored in my formative years in the most congenial of environments, I found adapting to city life rather intolerable. The soul needs something other than education, education, education! One beautiful sunny day, a friend and I decided to do a bit of fishing in the small lake that was close to the girls' school. Unfortunately for us the Headmistress spotted us, complete with caps and blazers playing hookie. We got six of the best at the girls' school and more of the same by our housemaster. All the contact sports were played and there was lots of competition with other schools especially in rugby and boxing. Boxing, by the way, was used as a means of controlling fights between boys. You went to the games master who fitted you with oversized gloves and allowed to have a three minute punch-up after which he would declare a draw. The boys would usually become friends after that.

Then, in 1951, I was sent to Bishop Westcott, Namkum, Ranchi. Westcott was immediately adjacent to the Eastern Command headquarters of the Indian Army, Bihar. Back in a countryside location was fine by me. I thought it strange that there was barbed-wire all around the school grounds but very soon realised that it was there to keep the boys off army property and not the other way around. On nights when the moon was in semi-lune mode we would go scrumping for fruit and sweetcorn by the pillow-case full. One night we were caught. We were brought before the headmaster in the morning wondering how he knew who went on the raid as none of us were asked our names by the guards. The Headmaster pointed out that our names were on our pillowcases and that he was going to cane us, not for scrumping, but for stupidity! In future raids we always took someone else's pillow-case.

I sat for and passed my Senior Cambridge exams in 1953 and in the same year won the United Nations essay competition on that organisation. My prize was a very martial collection of books, all about war, from an organisation promoting peace. Ironic.

Then on to a naval dockyard apprenticeship. At the interview following the entrance exam for the apprenticeship, one of the panel remarked about the Homes, Kalimpong. He said that quite a few

boys from Kalimpong had served their apprenticeships at the Garden Reach workshops and he hoped I would make `thorough` use of my time. "Report to the foreman on Monday morning, 7am sharp" I did and never regretted it.

June 2006, I will be 70 years of age, and my treat will be to go to the Homes for a much yearned for visit, especially to my old cottage, Laidlaw, and of course the most beautiful surroundings I've ever known.

Roy Harding



Smile Please

THREE VISIONS FOR INDIA

Dr Kalaam's Speech -

An excerpt from a speech made by the President of India to its citizens DR A P J Abdul Kalaam's Speech in Hyderabad – the full text of the speech can be read on www.hints-n-tips.com/kalaam.htm

"I have three visions for India. In 3000 Years of our history, people from all over the world have come and invaded us, captured our lands, conquered our minds."

From Alexander onwards, the Greeks, the Turks, the Moguls, the Portuguese, the British, the French, the Dutch, all of them came and looted us, took over what was ours. Yet we have not done this to any other nation. We have not conquered anyone. We have not grabbed their land, their culture, and their history and tried to enforce our way of life on them. Why? Because we respect the freedom of others.

That is why my first vision is that of FREEDOM. I believe that India got its first vision of this in 1857, when we started the war of independence. It is this freedom that we must protect and nurture and build on. If we are not free, no one will respect us.

My second vision for India is DEVELOPMENT. For fifty years we have been a developing nation. It is time we see ourselves as a developed nation. We are among top 5 nations of the world in terms of GDP. We have 10 percent growth rate in most areas. Our poverty levels are falling. Our achievements are being globally recognized today. Yet we lack the self-confidence to see ourselves as a developed nation, self-reliant and self-assured. Isn't this incorrect?

I have a third vision. India must stand up to the world. Because I believe that, unless India stands up to the world, no one will respect us. Only STRENGTH respects strength.

We have now developed for Agni a re-entry structure, for which we have developed this new material. A very light material called carbon-carbon.

One day an orthopaedic surgeon from Nizam Institute of Medical Sciences visited my laboratory. He lifted the material and found it so light that he took me to his hospital and showed me his patients. There were these little girls and boys with heavy metallic callipers weighing over three Kg. each, dragging their feet around. He said to me: Please remove the pain of my patients. In three weeks, we made these Floor reaction Orthosis 300-gram callipers and took them to the orthopaedic center. The children didn't believe their eyes. From dragging around a three kg. load on their legs, they could now move around. Their parents had tears in their eyes. That was my fourth bliss!

We have cut Dr Kalaam's speech to fit the newsletter but you can read a complete transcript on the Internet at www.hints-n-tips.com/kalaam.htm

Dr Abdul Kalaam

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EIGHT GIFTS

Margareta Purtill –Kalimpong Association President

- 1) **THE GIFT OF LISTENING**...But you must REALLY listen. No interrupting, no daydreaming, no planning your response. Just listening.
- 2) **THE GIFT OF AFFECTION**... Be generous with appropriate hugs, kisses, pats on the back and handholds. Let these small actions demonstrate the love you have for family and friends.
- 3) **THE GIFT OF LAUGHTER**... Clip cartoons. Share articles and funny stories. Your gift will say, "I love to laugh with you."

- 4) **THE GIFT OF A WRITTEN NOTE**... It can be a simple "Thanks for the help" note or a full sonnet. A brief, handwritten note may be remembered for a lifetime, and may even change a life.
- 5) **THE GIFT OF A COMPLIMENT**... A simple and sincere, "You look great in red," "You did a super job" or "That was a wonderful meal" can make someone's day.
- 6) **THE GIFT OF A FAVOR**... Every day, go out of your way to do something kind.
- 7) **THE GIFT OF SOLITUDE**... There are times when we want nothing better than to be left alone. Be sensitive to those times and give the gift of solitude to others.
- 8) **THE GIFT OF A CHEERFUL DISPOSITION**... The easiest way to feel good is to extend a kind word to someone, really it's not that hard to say, "Hello" or "Thank you."

Margarettta



From The Editor's Desk -

This month's issue features an extract from Abdul Karam's inspiring speech. Some of his statements and criticisms could apply in many countries around the world, not just India.

The response to the last issue's request for feedback was a bit less than hoped for but we have included one contributor, Douglas Evans's responses. The questions raised are all of them important ones so more responses please.

New this month - A couple of Brain Teasers. Answers to the editor-

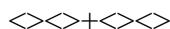
Finally a plea for a successor; this is the last issue that I will be editing, so if you want a rewarding and interesting hobby the job is yours. I have enjoyed my time on the committee and found the work very satisfying. I wish my successor similar rewards !

The current committee has been in office for some time now and we all feel that we need a change. New blood is needed. Please consider standing, its good to give something back. Help keep John and Kathleen Graham's vision alive. If you yourself are unable to step in perhaps you know of someone else who might be ideal. Candidates need not be OGBs.

Links to full transcripts of shortened articles and links to various Dr. Graham's related websites can be found at www.hints-n-tips.com/drgraham.htm

We are constantly updating our mailing list and do try to keep it as accurate as we can. We apologise if there are any errors. Please can you phone or e-mail me with the details so we can correct the information.

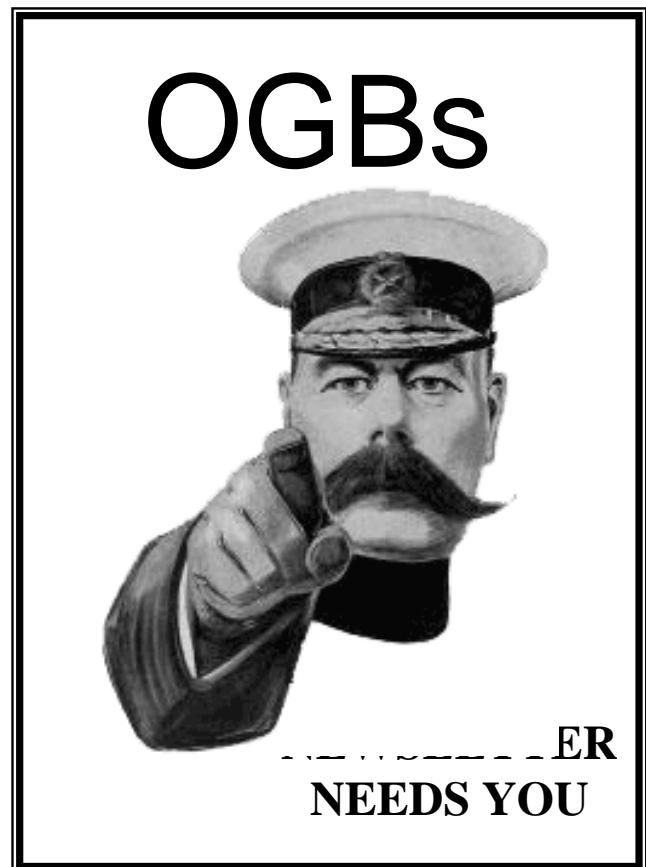
Dave Edmund Editor (Temporary)



FEEDBACK

In the last newsletter we asked a few questions regarding the Kalimpong Association and our relations to Dr Graham's. The questions were:-

1. Should we, the OGB Associations attempt to influence the management of the homes or stand well back from such matters?
2. How best can we attract younger members and the second generation? Look around at the next meeting; we are getting older with very few sons and daughters present.



3. How better can we coordinate our activities with the other UK organisations and other OGB Associations?
4. Perhaps the most important one: Is our primary function raising funds for the Homes or should we simply be a social organisation?

Unfortunately we had only one serious effort to address the questions and that came from one of our committee members, Douglas Evans.

Please let us know what you think. Answers to the Editor
edmunds.david@googlemail.com

Replies

DE. Question 1 I have been browsing through the Christmas newsletter with particular interest in the item "FEEDBACK" The first question it raised caused me to ponder as to whether or not it was the right question to ask. Surely the question should be something along the lines of "Does the present state of the Homes satisfy the hopes, intentions and requirements Dr. Graham had in mind when he founded the institution in 1900?" I think the answer to that question must be an emphatic "NO" for the following reasons but first I would like to make the following points: -

- a) I am not an Old Grahamite so I don't carry any nostalgic baggage.
- b) I have been a regular visitor to the Homes on an almost yearly basis since about 1992.
- c) I always stay at Ahava so I am not influenced by any of the staff or management.
- d) I have probably visited the Homes more times and more regularly than most OGB's in a similar period of time.
- e) I go with my eyes and ears open to the REALTY of the place.
- f) Any and all observations and criticisms I may make are meant to be, and I hope will be, accepted as CONSTRUCTIVE and with the best interests of the Homes at heart.

Now to get back to my own question and why I think the answer is "NO"

Dr. Graham founded the Homes particularly for the welfare of Anglo-Indian children deserted by their European fathers when the latter returned to the UK or elsewhere in Europe. Quite clearly the present mix of pupils does not represent the intention of Dr. Graham. Last October or November Vince asked Vera Cassie on my behalf for a breakdown and was advised nit was 50/50. The article in the Daily Telegraph of November 16th 2005 states, "377 sponsored children or 'free boarders' live equally alongside more than 1,000 fee-paying children...." Those figures presumably given to the reporter by someone in Kalimpong or Kolkatta are clearly more in the ratio of 30/70, which bears no resemblance to what Dr. Graham had in mind.

Clearly times have changed. India is a free and Independent State, which no longer has a large ex-patriot population the Homes, could rely upon for donations (guilt money?) and as Michael Robertson remarked, "without the fee-payers the Homes would collapse." Since Independence there may have been legislation which obliged the Homes to open its doors to a wider section of the population. Nevertheless, and subject to legislative limitations, if any, I think strenuous efforts should be made to at least balance the position to the 50/50 Vera thought existed. If we were to go down that road then the answer to Dave's question 1 would be "YES" but to achieve that target would require many more sponsors.

DE. As to Question 2 there's no easy answer. The children of many OGB's, who now live in different parts of the world were no doubt born outside India and quite probably don't even think of themselves as Anglo-Indians. Although I knew my mother was born

at Rawalpindi and my grandmother at Allahabad it was not until I began to research family history in my 50's and realised so many of my ancestors worked in the so-called reserved occupations of the railways and post and telegraphs that I began to think of myself as an Anglo-Indian. Possibly the only way is for parents to actively talk about and educate their children on Anglo-Indianness and the part the Homes played in their lives in the hope it will stimulate some interest. Given the attractive entertainment and other opportunities available in the west it won't be an easy task.

DE. Question 3. I think the answer lies in the creation of a Federation of all the international OGB organisations. The Federation should have a President who speaks and acts on behalf of the international groups. This, in terms of numbers, would represent a considerable body of people and thus carry more weight than any individual association such as ours. At the moment I feel that all the world-wide Kalimpong Associations are like the pieces of a jig-saw puzzle, they make no sense until they are fitted together to make a recognisable picture.

DE. Question 4. I feel the primary function of all the worldwide associations should be to raise funds for the benefit and betterment of the Homes and the children it was created to support.

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OBITUARIES

DOLLY SAMSON

25 January 1925 - 19th January 2006

Georgina (Dolly) Samson passed away peacefully despite battling with arthritis and other ailments. She rarely complained about her pains.

"Aunty Samson" worked as a House Aunty in Dr Graham's Homes, Kalimpong from 1954 to 1962 in Calcutta and Elliott Cottages. Then from 1963 to 1968 she worked as Matron in Bishop Westcott Girls School, Bihar, India. She also worked at Welland Gouldsmith Girls School in Calcutta, India for a couple of years.

Georgina was born in Dinapore; she was the oldest of seven children. Her only surviving sibling is her sister Julia Wight who lives in India; she is survived by her two daughters, Joy and Yvonne, and four Grandchildren.

Dolly was the daughter of Mr & Mrs Pitts who were Houseparents in Wiston Cottage during the 50's and 60's, her parents retired and purchased a property in McCluskiegunj where they settled down. Mr Pitts looked after the property while Mrs Pitts, who had not quite reached retirement age took up employment as a Matron in Bishop Westcott School in Namkum, (near Ranchi) in Bihar.

GLYNN HARTLESS

We must also report the passing of Glynn Hartless, a staunch "old school" OGB on Sunday February 19, 2006 in Pickering, Ontario, Canada. Glyn was 85 years old when he passed away.

Glynn is survived by his wife, Myrtle and extended family members.

A funeral mass was held on Friday February 24 at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 35 Church Street North in Pickering (11.00 a.m.). The family has requested donations to Kalimpong Homes in lieu of flowers.

Condolences may be sent to: Myrtle Hartless, 1000 Esplanade North, Suite 509, Pickering, Ontario, L1V 6V4, CANADA

ROBERT SLAUGHTER

by Eddie Lamb.

Robert died in hospital in Barking, Essex 30th December 2005 age 74. We regret his passing and convey our condolences to Hazel and daughters Liane and Adele brother Peter and a sister. It is Hazel's wish that we keep this notice short, but in doing so we have to leave out most of the tributes to his memory which have flowed in to us from a few of his contemporaries.

There were many KPGites at Robert's service at in Barking United reformed Church conducted by the Rev Michael Potter who commented on the turn-out.

It is a far cry from the Bengal Dooars tea estate Robert was born with his younger brother and two sisters. Their father was a good man being one of the very few British tea planters who took their children home for the long winter holidays, even providing Robert with a pony and Syce.

JOHN NUTTALL – "I knew Robert in school. He was four years my senior and excelled in the sports field. But he was best known for his prowess with the "catty". When he came to the UK he held a position in the tea broking division of Inchcape. He remained with them till his retirement and was highly regarded for his dedication and loyalty. Our two daughters grew up as close chums of theirs until adulthood. He always had a deep and caring concern for the Kalimpong Homes. We miss him and treasure our relationship."

PERCY FRIZZELLE – " I knew Robert during my early years in the Homes, and the thing I clearly remember him for was his skill with a catapult. I got to know the great deal more during my Birkmyre days, mainly because he was a good Christian person who tried desperately to convert us youngsters and others and get us to attend church on Sundays. Robert was a keen sportsman and was rather good at footie, hockey badminton and tennis and represented the Birkmyre football and hockey team in the lower divisions. He was always immaculately dressed. He was known (in KPG slang) as Mrs Hardy's "Chussie". Sadly, another stalwart of the UK KPG association has departed. He will be remembered by all."

NORMAN HUTCHINSON- "On leaving school at the end of 1948 we shared a dormitory at the Birkmyre hostel. He was a very shy, complex young man bedevilled with a serious speech impediment. He was much liked by senior contemporaries especially those concerned with religious matters like Angus Meikle and Colin Crowfoot. He married a girl I had greatly admired, and I feel sure that Hazel changed his life. When they came to Britain and we were able to renew our old friendship, I was struck by the quality of his presence. An extremely intelligent mind, able to cut away the fat of irrelevance in any matter. We enjoyed his company when he visited us here in France we found him to be a very considerate and well-mannered guest. We had great fun; a quality that was at the root of our friendship. Gloria looked upon Robert is 'top of the pile' among my friends. I feel privileged to call him friend for he was a little giant who bravely fought disadvantage to become a noble man of the family a great father and devoted husband to dear Hazel. At this time of our lives many of our friends pass away passed away, and

we miss them; but this time can say of Robert - I shall miss him seriously."

JIM STAPLETON

We recently learned that Jim passed away in September 2005. He was buried in Melbourne; he is survived by his wife Mary (Stares) and brother Robert. Florence Snell who notified us remembers the fun had with Jim and Mary in Australia and Kalimpong and the special friendship.

SHEILA MASTERTON

An ex teacher, Miss Sheila Masterton, passed away on Sun, 5th March in Scotland? The funeral took place 18th March 2006.

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Miss prentice's album

The sketch adorning the front cover of the newsletter is from a photograph album from the late 1930s and early 40s. Images from the album are to be found throughout the newsletter.

My brother John Edmunds who is based in Edinburgh and a co-worker; Joanne discovered they had a common Kalimpong connection; Joanne's aunt, Miss Prentice and our Mother had both been House Aunties around the same time.

Miss Prentice's niece, Joanne had inherited the album. I hope to put a selection on the Internet at some time in the future.



Miss Prentice and her boys

Thuten Kesang writes:

Nothing much has happened since I last up dated you all with my trip to Kalimpong last year, having said that we had few visitors to our country. We always say, this is a small world and we get to know people some how. I was talking to member of our tennis club about where I came from and where I was educated and to my surprise he said I have a very good friend in London who taught in Dr Graham's Homes, his names is Mr Freddy Pakinathan, I said what a small world and said that he taught me in school in the late 50's and he actually got me interested in collecting stamps, which I still do today. He said that Freddy and his wife is visiting Australia and they'll be here for few days. So when they arrived he rang me (Noel Hensman) to say they were here and are staying with him, so I made a time to meet them at his house. It was very nice to see them and we had a very nice evening reminiscing our old days in Kalimpong. Beginning of this year Bernard Roxborough and his wife was here visiting their son and daughter who have settled in New Zealand again here we had get evening get together at their sons house, I put him in touch with number of OGB's who are here and his sister came from Australia (Sarah) and she knew the Harris girls who live here in New Zealand. So we had a great evening, all talking about good old Kalimpong. Those who were there, Nancy Erickson (nee Harris) and her husband Pat Green (nee Harris) Mayble Afele (nee Macey) and her husband. Myself and Gwen. Bernard's son put on a great Bar-B-Q on for us and we all had a great time.

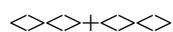
Just for your interest about number of OGB's that are living in New Zealand, with whom I am in touch with every now and then are :- Horace Weber, Paddy Mackie, George Borthwick, Ashley Hogg, Lionel Landale, Nancy Halliday, Loraine Law (nee Rogers), Patsy Fitzgerald (nee Royston)

Josephine Reilly (nee Francis) Janet Baptist, Pat Green (nee Harris) Nancy Erickson (nee Harris) Mayble Afele (nee Macey) Sheila Kirk (nee Nichols) Rima Hanmer (nee Lama) Tashi Hishey, Ron Gamie, Ashima Witsunberg (nee Lama) Charles Jordon, The two people whom I've never managed to meet are John Langham and Bob Harris both live in Auckland area. Few ex staff that I am in touch with is Mrs. Hazel Skilton and Mavis Mardon both of them are in their 90's and still very active.

Any one interested in getting touch with any of the above people please get in touch with me and I will try and link you all.

Best wishes.

Thuten Kesang



WORTH A MENTION

Sedhar Chozam Ball

Some will remember Sedhar as one of the first Tibetan refugees who graduated from Kalimpong. Her husband John is a world renowned Mathematician and a Professor at Oxford University. He was honoured with a Knighthood in the Queen's New Year Honours list; he is also president of the International Mathematical Union (IMU), which promotes co-operation between mathematicians around the world. Professor John Ball is active in supporting the advancement of mathematics in developing countries.

Sedhar and her daughter accompanied Sir John to the ceremony.



Kalimpong town

QUIZ CORNER

A couple of puzzles to get your 'little grey cells' working.

1 – The Microsoft Test

This is said to be the actual test given by Microsoft to prospective employees.

"U2" has a concert that starts in 17 minutes and they must all cross a bridge to get there. All four men begin on the same side of the bridge. You must help them across to the other side. It is night. There is one flashlight. A maximum of two people can cross at one time.

Any party who crosses, either 1 or 2 people, must have the flashlight with them. The flashlight must be walked back and forth, it cannot be thrown, etc. Each band member walks at a different speed. A pair must walk together at the rate of the slower man's pace.

Bono: 1 minute to cross
Edge: 2 minutes to cross
Adam: 5 minutes to cross
Larry: 10 minutes to cross

For example: If Bono and Larry walk across first, 10 minutes have elapsed when they get to the other side of the bridge. If Larry then returns with the flashlight, a total of 20 minutes have passed and you have failed the mission

Note: There is no trick behind this. It is a simple movement of resources in the appropriate order. There are two known answers to this problem.

Answers to the Editor edmunds.david@googlemail.com

2. – What do you know?

1. There is one sport in which neither the spectators nor the participants know the score on the leader until the contest ends. What is it?
2. What famous North American landmark constantly moving backwards?

3. Of all vegetables, only two can live to produce on their own for several growing seasons. All other vegetables must be replanted every year. What are the only two perennial vegetables?
4. Name the only sport and which the ball is always in possession of the team on defence, and the offensive team can score without touching the ball?
5. What fruit has its seeds on the outside?
6. In many liquor stores, you can buy Brandy; with a real pear in the bottle and the bottle is genuine; it hasn't been cut in any way. How did the pear get inside the bottle?
7. Only three words in Standard English begin with the letters "dw" there are all common. Name two of them.
8. Name six or more things that you can wear on your feet that begin with a letter 'S'
9. It's the only vegetable and fruit that is never sold frozen can process could, or in any other form but fresh. What is it

Answers

1. Boxing –
2. Niagara Falls; The rim is worn down by 2½ feet each year because of the millions of gallons of rushing over in every minute. –
3. Asparagus and rhubarb. –
4. Baseball. –
5. Strawberry. –
6. The pear grew inside the bottle. The bottles are placed over buds when they are small, and then wired in place in the tree. The bottle is left in place for the whole growing season. When the pears are ripe the stem is cut.
7. Dwarf, dwell and dwindle
8. Shoes, socks, sandals, sneakers, skis, stockings.
9. Lettuce

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ASSAM COTTAGE APPEAL UPDATE: MARCH 2006

The donations received so far for the Assam Cottage Appeal fund now stands at an impressive £698.00 BUT we could do better! Calling all friends and relatives of ex-Assamites, all donations no matter how small, will be gratefully received. Special thanks to Charles Ponting (Arizona, USA) for his generous support.

BOOKS FOR SALE

- Century of Children - £ 6 (Author: Simon Mainwaring)
- Dr Graham of Kalimpong - £ 5 (Author: James R Minto)
- Daddy Graham's Homes - £15 (Author: Jyoti and Friends)
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(All can be obtained from Vincent and Margaretta Purtill – just make a phone call)

Forthcoming Events	Dates	Venues
AGM • The Kalimpong Association (UK) • The Kalimpong Association (UK) Charitable Trust	Saturday 17th June 2006 Doors open at 2.00 p.m. Meeting commences at 3.00 p.m.	Methodist Church Hinde Street, London W1 Tube: Bond Street
BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION Donations of items for the Raffle would be most welcome.	Saturday 23 September 2006 Doors open at 2.00 p.m.	Methodist Church Hinde Street, London W1 Tube: Bond Street

KOLKATA – KATHMANDU – KALIMPONG - TWO WEEKS' TOUR – NOVEMBER 2006

“More than a holiday – an unforgettable experience”

“Immensely enjoyable as well as rewarding”

“Returned spiritually and emotionally stimulated”

“An experience we wouldn’t have missed for anything in the World”

Experience something of the:

Pride and Poverty of Kolkata

Mystery and Mountains of Kathmandu

Children and singing of Kalimpong

You won’t forget it!

The tour culminates in a visit to Dr Graham's Homes in Kalimpong where we enjoy the delights of this “Children’s Village in the Himalayas”. This will be the 5th highly successful trip organised and escorted by Rev. John G. Webster whose knowledge and love of the region is unrivalled.

COST: NOT IN EXCESS OF £1,550. ANY SURPLUS WILL BE REFUNDED (INCLUDES ALL FLIGHTS, TRAVEL, ACCOMMODATION AND EXCURSIONS).

ENQUIRIES TO AND BROCHURE FROM JOHN G WEBSTER, KING'S CROSS, ISLE OF ARRAN KA27 8RG. PHONE: 01770 700747

This Newsletter is printed by Mr John Webber of Transtech Services Ltd., Unit 6.0.10 Greenwich Commercial Centre, 49 Greenwich High Road, London SE10 8JL Email: info@transtechservices.co.uk
Tel: +44 (0)20 86929722. Mr Webber has been printing the newsletter for a number of years and has donated the money to DGH for children in need. We are greatly indebted to Mr Webber for his generosity and practical help.

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The Kalimpong Association (UK) Charitable Trust – Registered Charity No: 292325

Trustees:

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Thuten, Gwen Kesang	18 Valhalla Drive, Birkenhead, Auckland 1310, NZ	64 9 483 6066	Fax 64 9 483 7275	kesang@pl.net
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