

# The Tadpole

W G A A N E W S L E T T E R

## OFFICE BEARERS

2011

PRESIDENT—Hema  
Badhwar Mehra

VICE PRESIDENT - Anjali  
Sapra

TREASURER—Renee  
Chandola

SUPPORT GROUPS—  
Sujata Kulshreshtha

MEMORABILIA—Parbeen  
Kaur

SECRETARY—Shivani  
Anand

EVENTS—Sabina  
Sharma

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hi Exies,

The Tadpole is a WGAA attempt to reconnect with one and all.

The Alumni Association has been working from their headquarters in Delhi, slowly and steadily over the years. However, we came together as an official body only four years ago, when the School turned 50.

While the Delhi Chapter of the alumnae has been very active in hosting social events, fund raisers and done their bit to keep connected...I regret to say that it is not the same elsewhere.

Welhamites are scattered across the globe, some we know of, some we've lost touch with. A lot of us feel the disconnect sorely, a lot feel that School and the WGAA hasn't done enough to keep in touch. God knows, we've tried, but ever so often all we've

encountered are brick walls. While most ex Welhamites are happy to connect with their own batches, the larger picture gets ignored and we definitely need to address that.

Truth be told, we, the WGAA is sorely in need of support from the Alumni body. We are a handful of 7 (which expands to ten in times of need), who organize everything as best we can. It's time now for everyone to come together to keep the Kingfisher soaring!

We need School and our memories as much as the School needs us. As we move forward a lot needs doing and if we want to keep abreast with the best, we've got to BE the best. And each one of us can contribute towards that.

This is just a beginning...may it be a great one!

Cheers!

*Hema Badhwar Mehra*



AARTHA SHANTI PHALA VIDYA

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## WELHAM GIRLS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Suite - 4A, Plaza M-6 Jasola, New Delhi-110025  
(Society Registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860)

[www.welhamgirlsalumni.com](http://www.welhamgirlsalumni.com)

Email : [hemabadhwar.mehrab@gmail.com](mailto:hemabadhwar.mehrab@gmail.com)

## REUNITED WE STAND!

## CLASS OF 70

## 40 YEARS LATER...

Ok, so I wasn't a star in school.

Not a School captain like Seeta, a House captain like Van or Kaw, a 'girl from abroad' like Rooney or the daughter of the most imposing teacher like Chow. But what the heck, come 40 years after we all went on with our lives, guess who's the star that gets voted to write about the Reunion of the Class of 70?

So I will tell all you guys who missed it, what you guys really missed. Hopefully it will propel you all to Goa next year!

You missed the most amazing vacation in the lap of luxury for the price of peanuts! Rooney's guest house is a misnomer for a plantation like villa with fabulously luxuriant grounds that end where the beach starts and has a huge pool and many coconut trees which provide sweet coconut water, almost on tap, through the day.

You missed the sight of 6 bathing beauties hitting the pool ever so often, dressed in a variety of costumes, thanks to Kaw's Sophia Lorenish collection. In this wonderful pool, intrepid Chow mastered the breast stroke with face in the water - in just two days. Rooney showed off her Mediterranean white costume and athletic body. Seeta swam with great purpose twice a day, while yours truly gave a memorable display of water ballet learned from many Olympic telecasts through the ages. And what was so liberating was to know is, that at this point in life, nobody gave cellulite or saggy parts a damn. Not even our men who just sank deeper into their deck chairs and frothy beer.

You missed the great music and dancing, when nothing was extra ordinary - girl jiving with girl like in school, Van dancing with strange Goa man and all of doing strange steps with local men gently reeking of musk based aftershave and copious sweat.

Most of all you missed the laughs and camaraderie of friends who offer each other comfort and support even when they are sniping at each other:)The healing comfort of being among those who have weathered life and still have enough love and care to share, so you know you always have a shoulder.

It was a reunion which I'm sure was as great as the last one and the next one. I missed the last. You guys don't miss the next. Wherever or whenever it happens.

I swear it's a life affirming experience.

Ajanta Khasika - Batch of 70

*It was a reunion which I'm sure was as great as the last one and the next one. I missed the last. You guys don't miss the next. Wherever or whenever it happens.*

*I swear it's a life affirming experience.*



70 batch reunited!

## REUNITED WE STAND!

## CLASS OF 71

40 years seems to be the defining moment for ex-Welhamites.

Close on the heels of the 70s batch reunion, the 71oners decided on theirs—and though I swear we had no intention of copy-cattin' their experience, we too headed for Goa. There's something about Goa that assures a good time, promises anonymity and generally provides the perfect setting for the perfect Mad Hatter's Tea Party.

For many of us it was the first time we were meeting up after School. But 40 years fell away in forty winks as the Taj Village (which played host to us at some ridiculous off-season rates) came alive to shrieks, hugs, old nick names and damp eyes.

So there we were, 25 of us, 40 years away from what we left behind, reliving the experience of being together, being just us (it was a spouse-less moment!), being kids again—never mind the sag and the cellulite!

A hired mini bus materialized, driven by a bewildered driver who probably has never gotten over the experience of 25 ageing but mentally youthful women, singing 'we are jolly girls from Welham', with Paddy giving us her tour-guide version of Goa's history. Paddy also tried to tap dance in the lurching bus, and was generally the show-stopper. She chased a bather in the swimming pool insisting that the man had forgotten his bow tie (he was in a diving suit!!). The moment has been captured on camera forever...

## The 71 Programme Guide!

● PROGRAMME ●	
22 <sup>nd</sup> Friday:-	All arrive in dribs & Drabs
8.15 :-	* Assemble in lobby :
	* Departure for dinner :
	"Souza Lobo" in ----
	"Calangute Beach" ----
23 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday:-	* Breakfast in the Hotel
10.45:-	* All those interested in Sight
	- Seeing Assemble in the
	Lobby( Old Goa, Mangueshi,
	Temple, Dona Paula, Miramar)
	* Lunch recommended at
	The " Ritz Classic", Panjim
	* Those who have not gone
	for sight-seeing can join the other
	others at "Ritz Classic"
	on their own steam
	* Followed by shopping
	5pm:- * Approximate Return
8.15 pm:-	* Assemble in Lobby for
	Dinner at Cape Town, Baga
	♪♪ * Followed by music
	and dance at "Cavala" ♪♪
24 <sup>th</sup> Sunday:-	* Just chilling and hanging
	out in the morning &
	afternoon ! Games?!!
☺	(*or anything you want to
	do independently)
☺	* Independent Lunch
	arrangements
8.15pm:-	* Walk to "Chalk & Cheese"
	for live music & Dinner
♪♪	25 <sup>th</sup> Monday:- * Please Eat a heavy
	Breakfast / Brunch
	* Depart for the Airport ♥
All programmes subject to change	

*We sat by the pool and talked into the wee hours of the morning, reliving the dorm days, the camaraderie, the warmth. Remembering, recalling, sharing—and for a while we were kids again, back in the secure comfort of what we called 'prison' back then.*



71 batch reunited!

As were many others. Never let-her –hair-down Geeta Obhrai (School Captain our batch), climbed atop a table to dance, followed by yours truly, whose fingers got caught in the ceiling fan and had to be dunked in an ice bucket to stem the bleeding, someone then put the ice in their drink...! Amar and Sukhi shed their grandmotherly defenses and danced way into the night while Sangy treated us to her routine belly dance item number.

Ameena chose to organize games (she wouldn't let go off her games captain tag!), and we sportingly got dragged into pen and paper guessing games, while beers were downed, inhibitions were shed and time simply stopped. Not just stopped but rewound itself.

We sat by the pool and talked into the wee hours of the morning, reliving the dorm days, the camaraderie, the warmth. Remembering, recalling, sharing—and for a while we were kids again, back in the secure comfort of what we called 'prison' back then.

Some old fights re-erupted, some new bonds were formed, but mostly it was time-out. And mostly, all we did was laugh. I don't think I have laughed as much in 40 years. Specially when we reformed our Pop Rock Band (creatively titled the Yusufzais), consisting of Mallu, Giri, Paddy and self and sang a completely off-key version of THOSE WERE THE DAYS, to a hysterical audience ...

For those of you that missed it—we missed YOU! Be there for the next one, whenever we plan it—it gives you a high that will last at least an entire year...by the time you get over it, we'll plan the next! To Madhu Kuthiala, Ameena Faridi, Nitty, Geeta and Mallu we owe a huge debt....They were the ones that got this show on the road!

Basically guys — reunions are IN. So when's the next one?!!

*Kema Badhwar Mehra—Batch of 71*

## THE WE-CARE INITIATIVE

The WE-CARE initiative was started four years ago by a group of us from within the Alumni Association, whereby we worked out a complete scheme for ex-teachers and ex-class IV employees. The scheme essentially benefits those who really need our help .

All these years one has been hearing that the pensions for the ex-staff is very meager but it was a greater shock to actually see the numbers on paper. Teachers who taught generations of us and have given 25 years of unstinting service to School, get as little as Rs. 800. Ayahjis & Bearerjis with over 20 years of service get between Rs.175 & Rs.500.

Sponsor one teacher for a year (Rs. 36,000)

Sponsor one staff member for a year (Rs. 12,000)

Make a contribution of ANY sum that you are comfortable with

The above can be done by you individually, as a group or as a batch.

I would like to specify that though we will be acknowledging the contributions wherever possible, they will be acknowledged as contributions to WE-CARE and not to the individual teachers/staff member by name, since this is a matter of great sensitivity and has to be done with discretion so as not to affect the dignity of the teachers in the slightest way.

We have had some very generous donations to our We-Care initiative in the past and are currently sending a supplementary pension amount to four teachers, to be continued through their life-time. We are also sponsoring the education of one girl child from Uttaranchal at 'Himjyoti', a residential school meant for girls from low-income families (under Rs 5000/- per month). The contribution is Rs. 50,000/- a year for education plus complete living expenses.

Today we are reaching to the whole Welham family. Let's all join hands and help all we can in this hour of need and show that that we really do care!

### A WE CARE SUCCESS STORY

*"Ranjeet Singh bearer has been working at Welhams for the past 35 years. During my visit to School for the Music and Dance comp last month, Mrs. Dutta and Mr. Vacchani asked me to help out his son who required a bilateral hip replacement surgery. Sandeep, the 18-year-old son developed a debilitating disease - Ankylosing Spondylitis, 2 years back. The disease has destroyed both hip joints, and left the child immobile. He has to be carried in a stretcher all the time. This surgery would change his life and allow him to walk and live a decent life. He would require life-long physiotherapy and medications, but would at least be able to live a life of dignity..."*

This letter was received by We Care last year from a concerned ex-Welhamite, Shruti Lakhanpal, which we floated over emails to several exies. Today, with assistance from Welhamites across the globe and timely medical aid from Fortis Hospital, the youngster is walking again. Please see the newspaper article overleaf...

Contribute to the We-Care initiative by sending a cheque in the name of **Welham Girls Alumni Association**, and mail to the address below. Do put your Pan no. and contact details (address & cell no) at the back of the cheque.

All donations made to the WGAA are exempt from tax u/s 80G(5)(vi) of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

Sujata Kulshreshtha, A-32, Sector 56, NOIDA 201307, India

Phones: +91-9810222305, 91-120-4280388

WE'RE ON THE WEB  
WWW.WELHAMGIRLSALUMNI.COM

## NEWSWORTHY



## THE POWER OF I PLEDGE

The WGAA introduces a new concept of community service called I PLEDGE. This is a step all of us can take towards supporting the WE CARE effort. Many of us can't send in large amounts and small amounts seem insignificant—But here is a simple way of making a small contribution go a long way. PLEDGE your support and make a difference.

*Rs 10.00 per day or Rs 500.00 per month*

*For queries and I PLEDGE Support Forms  
write to sujata.kulshreshtha@gmail.com*



ONCE A WELHAMITE ALWAYS  
A WELHAMITE

Please send in your news, views,  
articles and ideas to The Editor at  
hemabadhwar.mehra@gmail.com

We look forward to sharing your  
stories in our next issue.