

# The Tadpole

W G A A N E W S L E T T E R - A G M S P E C I A L

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**2012-2014**

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Badhwar Mehra

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**MEMORABILIA**—Parbeen  
Kaur

**SECRETARY**—Shivani  
Anand

**EVENTS**—Sabina Sharma

**THE TADPOLE**—Manvi  
Sinha Dhillon

## P R E S I D E N T ' S R E P O R T

The Welham Girls Alumni Association has been working tirelessly for the past five years, since its official birth, to put together a strong network that the alumnae can be justly proud of, and also one that can actively participate in help taking our School forward to its natural place on the leader board for education

This simply cannot happen with the help of the handful that meet regularly and do their utmost to keep the fraternity alive and the Welham spirit soaring. It's been an uphill task for us and many times, a completely thankless one. While Welhamites are content to bond with their own class mates the larger picture in the interest of a strong network tends to get ignored and overlooked. I reiterate that this needs to change if we want to

become a strong and focused body with our aims clear and our intent to achieve the goals we set for ourselves.

Over the years we have come together sporadically many times. A short term goal has been achieved and we have retired happy and content with the odd fund raiser and happy event. But times are changing and we need to remain abreast with what's happening globally where School Alumni networking is happening and we need to understand clearly what we ourselves need to do.

Towards this end, some work has already been done by the existing committees and while we still have a long road ahead of us, I think we can be justly proud of what we have done so far and I would like to share this with you here.

*Hema Badhwar Mehra*



**AARTHA SHANTI PHALA VIDYA**

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## WELHAM GIRLS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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## NETWORKING

Networking is our most important and ultimately challenging job. Towards this END have managed to so far achieve a pretty good degree of communication by setting up a WGAA FACE BOOK PAGE, which can proudly boast of approximately 800 members on it. Active group discussions take place, many friends have been lost and found, and city wise chapters are in the process of being formed. It has been effective in actively letting me communicate with Welhamites across the ages and I find that today from just a shadowy name as part of the WGAA, girls are beginning to recognize and appreciate the efforts of the WGAA and its executive committee. Towards this end we also have a GMAIL group being managed by Abhilasha Bisht, batch of 1985. Although she has been posted overseas for the past two years Abhilasha has done this job single handed and we need to thank her for our growing email list.

However our networking has a long way to go yet in order to become truly effective. The aim is to have city-centric chapters that will be a part of yet independent from the central WGAA. WE need a chapter in every major metropolis in and out of the country. These groups need to be able to do the following:

- A. Hold annual get togethers in order to sustain networking and contact.
- B. Be available for the fresh alumni (or old) that may need assistance in these cities. '
- C. Help the WGAA with fund raising efforts where required and keep abreast with WGAA activities.
- D. Keep in touch with the School.

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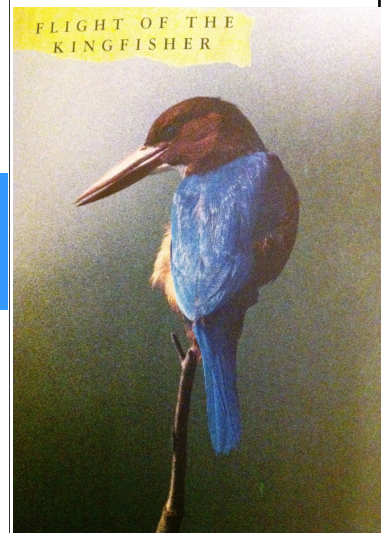
## FUND RAISING

Our Fund Raising efforts for WeCare have met with a fair amount of success. We've organized a successful Polo Match as well as two well-attended plays directed for WGAA by Aamir Raza Hussain. WeCare continues to support a few old staff members who retired with very small pensions and were found to be living in very sad circumstances. These old teachers meet us each year when we go back for Founders and it is heartening to see that whatever we are able to do for them manages to bring a smile to their faces. It is not much and we would like to be able to increase the amount that is being paid out to them, but for that we require a fresh input of funds. And on behalf of the WGAA I appeal to all ex Welhamites to come forward to help this worthy cause. I have attached the list with the WeCare accounts for all those who are interested in contributing.

We were also able to help with surgery of an old Bearerji's son. The boy was crippled and completely bed ridden. But with help from the WGAA to fund his surgery, the boy is walking again and when we meet Ranjit Bearerji now, who is one of the oldest bearers remaining at School today, the look on his face and his wet eyes convey more than any words can. It makes us feel proud to be able to do this. It makes us proud to be able to help those that cared for us without often getting so much as thanks in return, often remaining just familiar yet nameless faces to many of us. I appeal to everyone again, to help us with WeCare. This is where your assistance really is needed and we need each one of you take responsibility for the raising money for the WeCare Fund. Details are available with Sujata Kulshreshtha, who manages the fund single handedly for the WGAA. It's a lot of work and I would like to extend my thanks to her here.

In addition the WGAA also sponsors the education of one girl child at the Himjyoti School (Himalayan School Society). This amounts to a sum of Rs 50,000.00 and was started as a venture towards supporting the girl child to commemorate the School's 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday. However, we have not yet been able to increase the sponsorship due to lack of funds and once more I appeal to the alumni to help us with taking the venture forward.

FLIGHT OF THE KINGFISHER



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## INTERACTION WITH SCHOOL

**INTERACTION WITH SCHOOL** – The WGAA continues to interact with the School at several levels and we are happy to report that we have been effective on various fronts.

A. The WGAA co-sponsor the annual Golden Jubilee Inter School Basket Ball match held in March/April each year.

B. We have successfully introduced workshops and events to be held at the School. In October 2012 we sent up artist Padmajaa with her tribal art workshop on Gond Art. The workshop was well received and is now going to become an annual feature.

C. The WGAA committee members host students and staff when the School requires such assistance in Delhi and recently our homes played host to a group of class 11 girls and teachers who were in Delhi for an inter School Multi Media contest. Needless to say the Welhamites came away with laurels (they stood 2<sup>nd</sup>).

D. The WGAA also assesses what the School requires by way of upgrades and assists financially with projects to whatever extent we can. We saw a need to upgrade the Computer lab for the Multi Media students this year. I am happy to report that our suggestion to raise funds for this project was enthusiastically taken up by the batch of 1987, who are presenting the School with a number of Mac computers after consulting with us, to commemorate their silver jubilee.

## TADPOLE NIGHT

### TADPOLE NIGHT –

This has become our annual night! For two successful years Welhamites have reunited under the banner of Tadpole Night. Started as a simple way of getting together and having a fun night, Tadpole Night has turned into a successful annual event in Delhi. Each year sees us gathering greater numbers and more enthusiasm. The event has taken a life of its own and promises to become more and more entertaining with the passage of years and the innovative ideas of Welhamites.



## INDUCTION CEREMONY

### INDUCTION CEREMONY

our effort at reaching out to create a strong network of ex Welhamites has now taken a new and happy direction. The WGAA has been in touch with School to allow us to interact with the graduating class from School. I am happy to say that this interaction between the Executive Committee of the WGAA and the Graduating Class from School has been included on the School Calendar as an annual feature. Our very first official Induction Ceremony of the graduating Welhamites into the fraternity of Ex- Welhamites will take place in early February. We greatly look forward to the incoming sorority and have even designed special sorority bracelets to present on the occasion!

## REUNIONS – 50 GOLDEN YEARS

### A GOLDEN REUNION

#### (50<sup>th</sup> Reunion – Class of 1961 & 1962)

The class of 1961 and 1962 decided to celebrate their 50 years of 'school leaving' at their Alma Mater, and this was done over 2 glorious days during the Founders Day celebrations, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2012. The response was reasonable as two attended from the 1961 batch and six from the 1962 batch (the batches of the earlier years were small as school was in its nascent years).

Despite our age, we were very excited when we got to school on Sports morning. Here we were given the VIP treatment. There was a staff member to meet us, give us our name tags with a golden ribbon and the badge was outlined with gold. We were seated in the front row and the area was again marked in gold. Once on the field it seemed that we were students once again, as we were jumping and cheering for our respective houses. The finale for us was when we took part in the March Past dressed in our red polo shirts with the Kingfisher in gold, blue trousers and white sleeveless jackets with the gold Kingfisher. It did not seem that we had left school 50 years ago!! After sports, a scrumptious lunch had been laid out for us. Not only did we enjoy it, but the accompanying spouses also felt they were back in school and had a hearty lunch. There were four brave husbands who accompanied their wives!

The evening was again a jamboree, the evening entertainment by the Junior school was followed by the Old Girls dinner, where the retired staff were invited, but few from the earlier years. Everyone was delighted to meet Mrs Pandit and Mrs Mathur (nee Miss Jayal) and it was like old times .

On November 3<sup>rd</sup> we were kept busy visiting the exhibitions in school which were very advanced compared to our times, lunch and then the evening speeches and entertainment. After the Founder's Day speeches and entertainment the school band played a special song and sang for us in the dinner area. We greatly enjoyed ourselves as the song was of our vintage, and we greatly appreciated it.

Thereafter we had our class dinner, which was graciously hosted by Sunita Garware Bakshi batch of 1961 at her beautiful home. This was the grand finale to our memorable two days spent together. Narrating forgotten tales, pulling each other's leg and a lot of laughter. God knows when we will meet again??

It would be remiss of me, if I were not to mention that Sheila Mamik (nee Gyani, Batch of 1962) celebrated her birthday in school after 50 years on Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>. Mrs Brar had very kindly organized a lovely birthday cake for her, which she cut in the main dinning hall, like she had done when little. Excited and happy, we sang to her like we always did.

Neelam Missal (Batch of 1961) had fought all odds to be in school. She lives in the U.S. and was booked to arrive on October 30<sup>th</sup>, to make it to Dehra Dun in time. But with the 'Sandy' playing havoc in the U.S. airports were shutting down and flights were not taking off. She was determined and alert to the situation, and managed to pre-poner her ticket with a lot of perseverance. Neelam got on the last flight out of the U.S. to be a part of the 50 year celebrations. That is a true Welhamite -THREE CHEERS to her!

We thank Mrs Brar, staff and students from the bottom of our hearts for the wonderful arrangements, thinking of every detail and giving us the VIP treatment throughout our stay.

The campus is so different from the time we were there. Properties have been bought and buildings added. 'NASREEN' or No 12 as we knew it has been restored to its earlier splendor. The dormitories have moved to newer buildings and the 'dungeons' are no more. The main building is now the school library, computer lab, AV room, conference room, with the Principal's office on the ground floor. We have a five star hospital and the campus development is still continuing, with the much awaited swimming pool and games complex on the drawing board stage. Do visit school whenever you can. It is home to us as our lovely formative years were spent there. Three cheers for WELHAM. God Bless the school.

*Asha Chaudhri (nee Khanna, F-162, Class of 1962)*

*Class of 1961*

*Sunita Garware (nee Bakshi), Neelam Missal*

*Class of 1962*

*Gauri Keeling (nee Charat Ram) , Deepak Chopra (nee Gurbax Singh) , Meera Bhadwar (nee Bhadwar), Riva Chabbra (nee Puri), Sheila Mamik (nee Gyani)*

*The Welhamite I know is  
who knows who she is and  
where she comes from. One who  
stands rooted in her values but  
looks ahead to tomorrow, one  
who knows that she has the  
power and the ability to face  
the world outside. She is  
confident and independent.  
A go-getter.  
An Individual*



*"Help us to keep ourselves  
mentally awake and morally  
straight, so that we may better  
maintain the Honour of our  
School..."*

*Grace Mary Linnell*



## WHEN WE MET AGAIN – 25 SILVER YEARS

### BACK IN SCHOOL 25 YEARS LATER!

#### (25<sup>th</sup> Reunion – Class of 1987)

The class of '87 celebrated 25 years of passing out of Welham. Un-believable! It seems like we left school just the other day! Nearly 30 of us reached Dehra Dun on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012, our hearts filled with nostalgia, memories and excitement. A special mention must be made of the girls who made it from overseas just for Welham. Years of separation were drowned in tears of joy on seeing each other after 25 years!

We stayed at the Pacific Hotel in Dehra Dun and in the evening of November 1<sup>st</sup>, we hosted our class party at the hotel. Music, fun, laughter and a lot of drinks made it a memorable night. The highlight of the evening was the presence of three generations of Sekhris – Mrs Sekhri, Nirupama Sekhri (from our batch) and Nirupama's lovely daughter. Mrs Gairola joined as well and the party was a real riot.

On the morning of November 2<sup>nd</sup>, we were off to the field for Sports' Day. What an amazing welcome by Ms Sen and Mrs Brar! Dressed in our fleece jackets and hot pink scarves, were really were the stars of the day. "Kadhi Chawal" for lunch was the icing on the cake! It was an amazing experience to sit in the beautiful, new dining hall. School looked its best ever. A beautiful library. Lovely dorms filled with cheerful faces of Welhamites.

The night of November 2<sup>nd</sup> was the Principal's Dinner. It was an extremely warm and welcoming feeling. It was great to meet old teachers like Mr Gangwar, Mrs Bhushan, Mrs Jugran, Mrs Nathani, Mrs Mathur and, of course, 'Manji Boy'! We were happy to make a substantial contribution to Welham towards upgrading the computers in the school.

With heavy hearts, full of even more memories and stronger bonds of friendship, we returned home on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. This was, indeed, the most special moment of our lives and an unforgettable experience for each one of us! MAY THE SPIRIT OF WELHAM LIVE ON!

Sunanda Mehta (nee Sabhlok, W-343, Class of 1987)



## CHOOSING THE HARDER RIGHT

Making news currently is our very own Rajni Sekri Sibal, Batch of 1975. Welhamites can be justly proud of her at a time when scams are crawling out of the woodwork and corruption seems to have reached new highs. It's alumni like Rajni that leave us with our heads held high and pride in the fact that we continue to hold up the ideals of the School, as taught by Miss Linnell - "*choosing the harder right than the easier wrong...*" Given below is the article that appeared in The Tribune. Rajni, Kudos to you, you make us so very proud and leave us with hope in our hearts!

### Lone heroine against 55 'villains'

Pradeep Sharma  
Tribune News Service



Chandigarh, January 16

The investigations into the infamous JBT scam, which resulted in the conviction of former Chief Minister Om Prakash Chautala, his MLA son Ajay Chautala, and two senior IAS officers, seems to be the tale of 55 'villains' and a heroine-senior IAS officer Rajni Sekri Sibal. Sibal, currently posted as Joint Secretary, Union Ministry of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, was reportedly instrumental in bringing the matter to the Supreme Court which ordered its investigation by the CBI.

The 1986 batch IAS officer was the predecessor of IAS officer Sanjiv Kumar, who has also been convicted along with Chautala, as Director, Primary Education (DPE). In January 2000, Sibal's predecessor RP Chander had received the selection list of the 3,206 JBTs, which were advertised in November 1999. Before the selected candidates could be appointed, Chander was shown the door. Sibal was brought in his place apparently under the impression that she would toe Chautala's line, who had formed the government by that time.

Considering her to be pliable, the government put a lot of pressure on Sibal to change the lists, so much so that a senior functionary is reported to have shouted at the lady officer in her office. However, Sibal proved a tough nut to crack. Instead of succumbing to the government's pressure tactics, Sibal brought cotton bandages and sealed the steel almirah in the presence of five employees of her office, making it virtually tamper-proof. Besides, the keys of the almirah were also reportedly sealed in an envelope.

In a few days' time, Sibal made way for Sanjiv Kumar as DPE. A senior bureaucrat informed The Tribune that sealing of the almirah made it tamper-proof which made it difficult for his successor or other functionaries to replace the original selections.

### **Four babus were witnesses**

Four senior bureaucrats - two serving (Sanjeev Kaushal and PK Mahapatra) and two retired (Prem Prashant and Vishnu Bhagwan) were CBI witnesses in the court. At one stage, a petition was filed to treat them as accused. However, the court ruled that the witnesses could not be tried as they were exempt under the Indian Evidence Act.

## TILL WE MEET AGAIN

### END NOTE

The past two years have been challenging ones for me. It's not easy to juggle being President of the WGAA, holding a job, (even though part time), managing a family and looking after several dogs and ageing parents. But then each member of the Committee is a multi tasker, (Welham taught us how to do that!), and somehow we have managed to hold it together. The 'committee' is totally 'committed' to making the WGAA a strong body and we are happy to see some of our efforts rewarded.

On behalf of the Executive Committee and myself I look forward to an active, happy and inter connected alumni body, helping each other to maintain those bonds that we formed back in School and which we take into the future with us.

Cheers! Till we meet again.

Hema Badhwar Mehra  
President WGAA 2013—2014

## CARE FOR THE CAREGIVERS

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.

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201307, India

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ONCE A WELHAMITE ALWAYS  
A WELHAMITE

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