

# The Tadpole

W G A A N E W S L E T T E R - A G M M A R C H 2 0 1 5 S P E C I A L

**OFFICE BEARERS**  
**2015**

- PRESIDENT—Hema Badhwar Mehra
- VICE PRESIDENT - Anjali Sapra
- TREASURER—Renee Chandola
- SUPPORT GROUPS—Sujata Kulshreshtha
- 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**

*Dear Exies,*

We come to the end of yet another year and in many ways its been an extremely rewarding and exciting one for us at the WGAA.

Our efforts at connecting the Alumni have been successful this year with perhaps the largest turnout in the last one decade at Founders! We saw a crowd of atleast 200 odd exies celebrating their 50th, their 25th and their 20th reunions with great good cheer, warmth and typical old School Welham Bonhomie:)

The School Dining Room was witness to uproarious laughter as exies tucked in with gusto to revive and refresh their palates with the 'most delicious Kadhi in the world', the 'yummiest' dahi chicken and rounded off with the best 'gulabos' in the Universe. Yes we are given to hyperbole, but what would Welhamites be without that?



**AARTHA SHANTI PHALA VIDYA**

Each of the returning classes were generous to a point with their contributions towards common school and alumni causes and each year sees more and more contributions flowing in which help us to continue to bond, increase our reach and create resource pools for various essential activities., without which no alumni body can hope to survive.

We are still struggling with our FCRA clearance even at the time writing this, but I'm happy to inform everyone that the paper work is all ready and now all that remains are final Government approvals.

At the end I'd like to remember those that have passed on. Mrs. Pandit who will forever remain in our hearts and our very own Dillu Mukerjee, batch of 1965. In her we lost one of our famous alumni faces. They will be remembered.

Cheers our next issue then!

*Hema Badhwar Mehra*

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE :**

- President's Report
- Networking
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- Diaspora

**WELHAM GIRLS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**  
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## NETWORKING

Networking is our most important and ultimately challenging job. Towards this end we have managed to achieve a pretty good degree of communication by the setting up of our new [Website—www.welhamgirlsalumni.com](http://www.welhamgirlsalumni.com) which was generously donated to the WGAA effort by the class of 89. A big thanks goes to them for this wonderful and creative approach towards remaining connected and we request one and all to log in, register and start interacting.

The WGAA FACE BOOK PAGE, which now boasts over 1200 members continues to see great activity. 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 (or should I say Welhamite Women??) are beginning to recognize and appreciate the efforts of the WGAA and its Executive Committee.

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.

There is a Facebook Page for the US and I often navigate through it and leave updates, which is great!

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## FUND RAISING

We ALWAYS need Funds!

**For Scholarships** at Himjyoti and Mr. Martin's School

**For WeCare.** We need to give a little more each year to those teachers who simply do not have enough in order to beat inflation and take care of medical needs. It hurts them to ask us for more. We need to be able to do more without them having to ask. So please donate generously. Right now we are giving 3,500.00 per month. We'd like to take it up to at least 5,000.00.

**For Scholarships at School**—Lets try and collect enough to put atleast two underprivileged girls through Welham through the WGAA. That way we'd really be making a difference!

**To help School with new Projects**—This one's a biggie and we need big time sponsors for this. Those of you with Industry Contacts please do your bit.

Swimming Pool & Gym Project needs 4 crores. Lets make it happen!



*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*

## 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-sponsors 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. Exies continue to go up to School for talks and creative workshops.
- C. The WGAA committee members host students and staff when the School requires such assistance in Delhi
- D. The WGAA also assesses what the School requires by way of upgrades and assists financially with projects to whatever extent we can. At the 2014 Founders the Class of '89 presented a Cheque to School through the WGAA for an amount of Rs 10,00,000.00, out of a total collection of approximately 16 Lakhs. (The balance amount went into sponsoring the new website and was donated to the WGAA for various activities!). The Batch of '64 presented the School with a cheque of 2 Lakhs and the Batch of '94 presented the WGAA with an amount of 2 lakhs for the WeCare Fund, Keep up the good work Ladies!

## TADPOLE NIGHT

To put Tadpole Night into words would be a sheer waste of time and energy. So here is the story in pictures:



## 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.

This year was the third such ceremony to take place and was as usual a great one, with an Ex Welhamite Speaker, which is the norm and the Sorority Bracelets being handed over as part and parcel of this now annual event which is not just a complete tear jerker ceremony, but a very proud moment for each Welhamite as they step out into the world and become part of the growing community of responsible Exies that are hell bent on making the world a 'better place for you and for me...'

## REUNIONS – THE BATCH OF SILVER

For most of us from the class of '89 the once familiar trip to Dehra Dun was taken after 25 years. Too long a wait to revisit our childhood, adolescence and the place where we took your first steps towards adulthood. Welham was our life for all our formative years and more.

More than 50 excited and rather hyper girls met at the New Delhi railway station to embark on the journey of a lifetime. An event that took a year's planning was finally about to roll.... The noise decibels in the coach were frightening. It was an eventful journey for the few non-Welhamites in the coach. For the few co-passengers who dared to complain, the TT only had to say, "They are meeting after 25 years, I refuse to tell them to clam down!" Yo! Yo! Mr. Ticket Collector!

The reunion proved that nothing had changed. We were a lot older, most of us, unfortunately, a lot heavier, but our true blue Welhamite hearts were still in the right place. We marched on Sports Day with the same gusto; dug into our kadi chawal with scant regard to the calories consumed and still sang "Khada Himalaya" with carefree abandon. The gossip sessions at the Summer House were still just as riveting! Ah! The simple pleasures of a Welhamite's life!

We had an amazing party for the teachers and were overjoyed to meet the people who made us what we are today! Mrs. John, whose sari we clung to when our mothers left us in school for the first time was now so frail, but the years had not dimmed her love for us. She received a "Lifetime Achievement Award" from a very emotional batch of 1989. There wasn't a dry eye in the hall, when Mrs. John held up the award and told us in a quivering voice just how much we Welhamites meant to her. It's a moment all of us will cherish for our lifetimes.

Our batch did a pretty commendable job of giving back too. We presented the school with a cheque of Rs 10,00,000, donated 3,50,000 to the Welham Girls Alumni Association supported the We Care Fund and we even gifted a fabulous website ([www.welhamgirlsalumni.com](http://www.welhamgirlsalumni.com)) to the WGAA.

What is it that Welham taught us above all? Was it learning how to rough it out? Was it learning how to eat fried eggs cooked the night before? Welham gave us all that and more.

It taught us how to live with one another, to make friendships that have no boundaries, your deo is mine and my kaajal is yours. Your nani is mine and my bua is yours. Lost your chunni? Here is half of mine... does that get me into trouble? Sure does, but who cares? What's a bad mark for a pal?

It's been 25 years and the time has flown as we have got caught in lives. Over the years we have lost two classmates, seen success and failure, but what has kept us together has been our love for all things Welham.



*Bharti Rawla*



*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*

## REUNIONS – THE BATCH OF GOLD

Coming together 50 years after leaving School is perhaps one of the most poignant reunions of all time and at Welham it all becomes that much more special...

The grandest part of the Golden Jubilee for our class of '64 was at the Sports Day 2014. Our name badges were given to us at the entrance and the first row seats were reserved for us. Then, going on...when the March Past began it was breathtaking. The entire school, parents, staff and visitors all stood up to give our small squad a standing ovation. School had made a Flag which said 50 years and Golden Jubilee under it. It was an honour to be there. We all had tears in our eyes with joy and nostalgia.

Lunch was again special as we were in the centre of the huge new Dining Hall. What a meal we had which was yummy and we forgot we were the 50<sup>th</sup> Batch. We ate as if we were in school.

It was a very heartwarming evening at Jyotsna's residence; meeting a few staff members from our time. Mrs. Khanna, Mrs. Mathur, Mrs. Mehra. They were so warm and excited as they could remember our names till now.

We were a small batch and almost 16 of us were in touch to get together for the Founders Day 2014. However, we were only seven who made it, Meera Kamlanand (now Chandra), Kinnie G. Singh (now Shivinder Singh), Bindu Chabbra (now Kriplani), Jyoti Baroda (now Raichand), Hanit Chugh (now Mangat), Kusum Kohli and Geeta Johar (now Nanda).

We spent a great time together and had a wonderful guided round of the school. Must say the entire school looked beautiful and we were very happy to see every corner neatly landscaped. Most of us had not even seen the new look of the Auditorium which was very impressive. All of us were delighted to see from where we left school to what Welham has become... Unreal!

The missing friends who couldn't make it due to personal or work related reasons were also sad to have missed it; Radha Roy, Tavleen Singh, Raymon Singh, Alice Khanna, Maitrey Lawyer. Don't know when we can meet again to feel as if we were Welhamites back in school all over again!

*Gita Nanda Johar*



### *We Care Makes a Difference*

Earlier this year, WeCare was approached by Mrs. Brar, to assist with the hearing Impaired son of Chand Mia, one of the cooks at School.

We reproduce the mail received from Mrs. Brar on receiving the contribution from the WGAA.

**"I write to thank you on behalf of Chand Mia. He took his son yesterday for getting the hearing aid fixed as per the advice of Aziza Tyabji. They have given the child exactly what she had advised and Chand Mia came to me today looking excited that for the first time his 7-year old son was turning his head towards sounds! Now they will start the speech therapy sessions and I have told Chand that he and his wife must always both go and also LEARN how to teach their son. He is a quiet and decent man and has promised to do so. The School will support the cost of the therapy.**

**Thank you for this wonderful New Year's Gift for Chand Mia's son Sahil.**

**With warm good wishes and a big God Bless!**

**Jyotsna"**

**NOTE: The WGAA contributed a sum of Rs 30,000.00 for the Hearing Aids. We understand that Sahil is progressing well!**

## REUNIONS – THE 20TH YEAR

### Class of 1994:

A twentieth year reunion brings many emotions to one's mind. For one it hits you that you are now OLDER by those many years. Two, when you are meeting many of your classmates for the first time in twenty years, you are a little apprehensive about how it will be.

However, all these tensions and apprehensions dissipated the minute we set foot in Madhuban Hotel on the evening of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2014, for our batch dinner. Our Welhamite traits were still intact – we giggled and screamed as we had always done, and ended the night's revelry singing "We are the Welhamites, mighty mighty Welhamites".

Sports day saw a big representation of our batch- about 45 of us were there, which is half our batch size. All through the AIs to SC years, I remember watching the Ex-ies doing the march past with sheer awe – this time I was one among the Ex-ies representing a wonderful alumni community and feeling utterly proud of my school.

After gorging on several rounds of chikki and scandies, we headed for the dining hall, which has changed tremendously since the last time we ate there. The food was still as finger licking, with a lovingly selected menu that was sure to touch any Welhamite's heart – the famed kadhi chawal and an equally delicious variety of other dishes. An amazing feeling all throughout our stay at the school was that the teachers, past and present, and the current students made us feel so special in every small little way. The buildings and infrastructure had changed, but the things that we had cared for were still the same. It was homecoming, twenty years later.

These special touches continued later through the evening, during the Ex-ies dinner as well. The evening was a moment of pride for our batch as we presented a class gift worth INR 2.2 Lakhs to the school to support two of WGAA's most meaningful causes- an increase in the pension of our dear teachers and sponsorship of education of girl children.

Over the past few years, I have told my kids about the excellent displays we had during the Founders' day exhibition and how their schools could not match up. My claim was reaffirmed after seeing the quality of exhibits at Welham. Finally we ended the evening with Mrs. Brar's and the chief guests' speeches. A lot of us could not stay back for the evening's programme and the Bada Khana, but we have promised to be back in full swing five years later, for our twenty fifth year reunion!

*Namita Garg*



# THE DIASPORA

You can say anything of a Welhamite except that she “does nothing”. Always in the news one way or another. Always making waves...Here are a few vignettes of what our Welhamites are doing the World Over... Not in any particular of fame, name and /or wealth, just their news as it trickled in over the year...

**ARTI DOGRA batch of '96** – DM Bikaner, has put her effort behind a scheme to build toilets in remote villages of this district. She took up the cause long before NaMO became an exponent. Today Arti is doing an incredible job in this field.

**ANEZ KATRE** - Anez (Sikand) Katre is one of India’s leading livesavers and she has officiated at the Commonwealth Championships at Australia as one of the two technical officials from India in a group of over 250 officials from all over the world. She won the Life Saver of the Year 2014 award at Pune in June 2014. (photograph below)

**SHALINI VERMA Class of '91**, who has launched a programme to teach village children computer and English skills in her native Bihar.

**NIDHI KHURANA batch of '99** - is now a practicing artist who does interesting things with fabric, cowdung, foil etc.

**ISHITA SINHA** - Watch this one - the Berklee ensemble singing Jiya Jale - where Ishita Sinha has a solo!  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZy8115sNXM>

**DEEPIKA O/406** – Ashtanga Yoga expert did a Yoga-Dance performance the UN in 2014. Overcoming great odds she has now become one of the most sought after Yoga Teachers in the world.

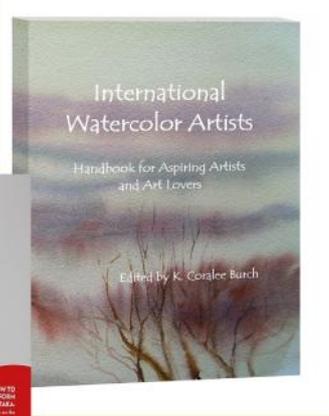
**ANANYA AGARWAL batch of 2004** , who has just completed her training at the LBS Academy is the first Welhamite to get into the IFS after studying Law at Jodhpur NLU.

**JYOTI BURRETT** has been selected for the Indian women soccer team at the Asian games at Incheon. **MANDIRA KALRA KALAN batch of '95** has helped produce a Hindi Serial (featured below, the name is evocative of Welhamites) . **NINA DAS's** works were featured in an international production of water colours.

Rajat Kapoor has released his new film Aankhon Dekhi which has got very good reviews Why I have written about it is that a significant role has been played by our **MAYA SARAO**. Rajeev Masand has called her performance "splendidly spirited".

On 31st December Discovery Channel aired a documentary called Himalayan Tsunami. Among the people featured at great length was **LIBNI GARG batch of 2014** - who was stranded there with her family. Those who saw the documentary were amazed at her poise and eloquence. The documentary was made by Robin Roy.

**SUMAYA SALUJA batch of 2007**, has been very active on the Youth Parliament and she attended the Davos Conference as part of the task force of the UN Secretary General. She is also an articulate and aware young woman - just the sort of Welhamite we can be proud of.



And last but not least **Hema Badhwar Mehra** batch of 71, joined AAP to be roundly defeated in the Lok Sabha elections but Welhamites rarely say die and she is now part of AAP SHAKTI, a unit of AAP relentlessly working on Women's' issues and Gender Training.

## IN REMEMBRANCE

Each year is replete with both joys and sorrow. This space is dedicated to those Teachers and Ex Welhamites who have completed their life's journey and gone on to what we hope is a beautiful alternate Universe, from where they watch with gentleness as we carry on with Life, its struggles, and our own journeys. We remember you with love, with joy, with gratitude and wish you well wherever you may be.

**Mrs. Pandit**—Brilliant Teacher of Hindi & English and great Guide, who lived with grace, dignity and humour and taught us well.

**Mrs. Naithani** fondly known as Natthu passed on at the grand old age of 90 after a brief illness in June 2014. She was a brilliant Hindi teacher.

**Mrs S Mukherjee**, who taught junior craft and Bengali from 1982 to 2007 passed away in Lucknow mid 2014.

**Mrs. Promila Pandey**, who taught Kathak until the 1990s, passed away after a being in a coma in late 2013.

**Mr. Bahuguna**—Journey incharge for 25 years, who passed on after a protracted illness in late 2014. Many batches will remember him fondly.

**Dillu Mukherjee**— Batch of 65. One of Welham's Who's Who and well remembered by her batch for her intelligence, her creativity and her inborn talent.

**Veenapani Chawla**—Batch of 63. Akadami Awardee and acclaimed theatre and dance personality. She founded the Adishakti Laboratory for Theatre.

## 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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ONCE A WELHAMITE ALWAYS A WELHAMITE

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