

Women's International Club, Delhi

Minutes of the Annual General meeting held on May 5th, 2014 at 2 p.m.

The meeting was opened at 2.30 with 73 members present, thus presenting a quorum.

The president Mrs Sebnem Akcapar opened the meeting with a warm **welcome** to all. She expressed her feelings of thankfulness to her accompanying Executive Committee, joy to have passed such a wonderful WIC year and sadness at the same time, that her presidency was now over.

Approval of minutes:

Before this, Mrs Smita Divan wanted to make the observation that in the minutes of 2013, people were often referred to with their first names only. This should be changed to full names. Furthermore she expressed that the wording "visibly foreign" should not have been used. But several voices from the audience confirmed that these words in fact had been used, so no correction of the minutes necessary. However, Smita Divan pointed out, that the term "foreign" should not be used at all, but rather "international" in context of non-indian members. Mrs Sebnem Akcapar responded, that the 2014 Executive Committee did not refer international members as 'foreigners' as this may have negative connotations and Mrs. Antje Bornhoeft-Lux took minutes in full names.

Mrs Nina Dey Gupta pointed out that the last year's minutes did not mention the reasons for the resignments that happend within the last EC. Resigning throughout the year should not be allowed and the constitution should be altered accordingly.

The previous minutes were approved.

Then Mrs Shovana Narayan, 1st VP was called to the microphone.

She expressed the joy she had in the job, with 11 circles, some of them without leaders but very enthusiastic members nevertheless and active participation. Shovana then brought back into everybodys memory the typ of circles we have had and their activities per month throughout the year.

- Book Circle
- Mind, Body & Soul
- Indian Heritage
- Globetrotters
- Munch Lunch
- Home Cooking
- Arts& Museums
- Cultural Kalaeidoscope
- Interaction Through High Tea
- Let us Learn
- Current Issues

There have been 75 activities of which only 3 got cancelled.
She got a big applause.



After the First VP, the **Second VP**, Mrs Gladys Abankwa Meier-Klodt reported upon the past year.

Eight General Meetings have been held with different and interesting subjects:

The new club year began with a tribute to 100 years of Indian Cinema. Presented by Anuradha Prasad, it was accompanied by Rene Singh in the Cinema Hall of the Sloval Embassy.

In October, Karthak Dance was on the agenda, with a performance by Shivana Varma in the Hungarian Information and Cultural Centre.

In November, the editor Vinita Nangia challenged us in Anita Meattle's garden, to re-examine our lives under the heading "It's Your Life"

In December, the German Embassy hosted a presentation on Indian Miniature Paintings, where presenter Seema Bhalla revealed the unfathomed role of women in the secret language of Indian miniatures.

In January the Blue Voyage took us to the Mediteranean region. Hosted by the Egyptian amabassadorial spouse Mona Mansour, eight different countries around the mediteranean sea were presented on a culinary tour.

Nutrition was also the subject in the Febuary GM, when Ishi Kosla talked about "Mindful Eating and Weight Watching Post Menopause" in the lovely courtyard at Brenda Beck's home, the Canadian Ambassador's residence.

The Colours of Holi, a sensory extravaganze, unfolded at Taru Kanwar's farmhouse to celebrate the colourful spring festival of Holi at our March GM.

In April, Delhi's religious syncretism was uncovered in unexpected places by Robinson in a talk held at the Bangladesh High Commission, courtesy of Naghma Karim.

In addition to the General Meetings there were a couple of Special Meetings:

Diwali Crafting with Bina Deogun , hosted by Veena Das. Bina guided us as we created our own decorative items, from dyyas to idols, to celebrate Diwali in our homes.

Lise Frederiksen invited us to her home in line with true Danish Yuletide rituals. We went dancing and singing around her towering and beautifully decorated Christmas tree and refereshed ourselves with seasonal delights.

And last, but not least, we have had the GALA NIGHT, "Mystique of the Ancient Spice Route, hosted by our President Sebnem Akcapar, the wife of the Turkish Ambassador. Inspired by flavours, colours, aromas and mystiques of the ancient spice route, which stretched out from the western tip of the Mediterranean in the West through the East Coast of Africa and the islands of South Asia to China in the East, we enjoyed a pageant of pungent pleasure at the Turkish Ambassador's Residence on Saturday, April 12th, from 7:30 until midnight. It was liberally peppered with the foods, sounds and fragrances of the souks, bazaars and markets that supplied the trade, and prizes galore awaited attendees, who came clad in clothings inspried by the many traditions of the route and danced the night away – following Marjan Franzen's lead in the Dutch Clog Dance or to the sounds of the DJ, after

enjoying delicacies prepared by the Metropolitan Hotel, the Turkish Residence and the Indonesian Embassy with Taru Kanwar.

Gifts and prizes were supplied by Turkish Airlines, Karan Grover (wines), Zo Cafe (meal voucher) Anu PD (saree), Chinnar Spices (spice sachets and hamper), The Hiatus (meal voucher and chocolates), Habbibi (meal voucher), the Embassy of the Netherlands (key rings), the Turkish Embassy (key rings), Olive Beach and Guppy by Ai (vouchers), ISAAC spa (vouchers), Ishi Khosla and Bubbles Suneja (hampers) and Gladys Abwanka Meier-Klodt (wine for table prizes)

Closing, Gladys thanked her fellow EC members and all of the audience.

The **Report of the Treasurer** was next on the agenda. Mrs Serita Kakar presented the figures for the year 2012/ 2014.

This year we had 168 members who paid Rs 4,20,000 as membership dues (2500 Rs each). Guest fees totalled Rs 5,600, paying 200 Rs each, thus 28 guests attended throughout the year.

The general meeting expenses include Rs 90,868 this current year, with an additional Rs 1,10,000 from the previous committee AGM at the Hyatt Hotel. This year's AGM at the IIC has been paid in advance prior to March 31st, an amount of Rs 23,000.

Circle Expenses amount to Rs 45,115

Additionally Rs 5,506 had to be borne from the previous committee.

Membership Expenses have been Rs 37,687 and include the printing of the membership directory (Rs 33,600) The printer company should be kept, as he is very reasonable.

For the Newsletter the cost per month are approx. Rs8,000 for the printing and an additional expence of posting the uncollected copies. The total of Rs 89,653 are also a result of the courier expenses for the first and the last newsletter.

Gala Expenses and Income were even! We had a fantastic response, so 151 members attended (Rs 1,35,900) plus 11 guest making a total income of RS 1,54,000.

Total expenses incurred Rs 1,53,773, leaving a balance of Rs 627 to the club's favour.

The catering was done by Hotel Metroplitan at the prize of Rs 1,26,113.

At the end of the financial year, the outgoing EC is handing over Rs 1,42,605 in the savings account and Rs 1,15,362 in cash. The fixed deposit is Rs 2,58,962.

The report of the auditors is attached for further reference.

Mrs Babsi Nariman pointed out that the Gala Night was very good and unususal.

Mrs Smita Divan reminded that WIC should not have reserves, for tax reasons the money should be spent and not 4 lakh should be kept. She suggested to give bigger gifts and more lunch.

Mrs Sebnem Akcapar pointed out, that in connection with the registration of the club, she will refer to the deposit and tax issues later in her speech.

The **balance sheet was approved**. Mrs Gugu Singh proposed, and Mrs Mona Aggarval seconded.



The **change of bank signing authority** to the new committee (president and treasurer) was proposed by Sheila Gathate and seconded by Ashima Singh.

The next EC member to report was Mrs Leena Singh, **membership** chairperson. She pointed out, that the year was wonderful for her, and she would like to acknowledge the membership sub-committee, Dr. Shanno Khurana, Sohinder Nabha, Nandani Pattani and Sarah Schwering, whose had work, support and sound advice has facilitated her work.

During the year the committee has printed and handed out the updated membership directory 2013-14.

The membership numbers are as follows:

WID today has members from 39 countries, providing a wonderful platform for understanding & appreciation the huge cultural diversity of the world we live in.

The membership count as on date is 177 ladies and the break-up is as follows:

International members	59
Indian members	95
Permanent Residents	23

The membership committee is happy to announce that they have inducted 34 new members during the year,

International members	27
Indian Members	6
Permanent Residents	1

During the year, 21 members have resigned, of which 15 were international members and 6 were Indian.

The General Meeting Attendance was generally good. The average attendance was 90 – 100 ladies. Against this, the membership committee received RSVP's from only 35-40 ladies. That is less than 50%!

Once again the membership chairperson requests all ladies to please RSVP and well in time to allow the hostess to be able to make proper arrangements.

Then it was Mrs Neena Malhotra' turn , to give **the report on hospitality.**

She expressed that the year was immensely rewarding for her under the umbrella of wide ranging programmes of the Circle Meetings. The Circle leaders initiated programmes and dialogues centered around heritage and civilizational strengths, art and museums, book readings, Current Issues, Health etc engaging with leading minds in their respective fields.

We had a total of 67 circle meetings. Our members were totally committed for any help we sought for the circle and general meetings. Neena expressed a big thank you for supporting us with snacks and opening homes and heart whenever we needed you.

There were some special programmes like the two sessions of Reiki. A talk by the Bangladesh High Commissioner H.E. Tarig Karim and the Ikebana demonstration at the Maurya Sheraton. Not to forget the Apeejay Kolkata Literary festival and many more.

The attendance of the circle meetings was good throughout the year varying between 20 to 50 members. There were 8 Indian members with no show at all and 15 International members with no attendance.

Three fun filled trips were organized by the Globe Trotters this year. Bhutan; Gujarat and the 12 day cruise to Australia and New Zealand.

Neena emphasized that she is thankful to her committee members and the great leadership of Sebnam.

The report of the **newsletter** editor, Mrs Vibuthi Sharma, was next on the agenda.

Vibuthi outlined the responsibilities of the editor as being as follows.

- collecting information from the circle leaders and the 1st VP
- collection info from 2nd VP of GM's
- collecting president's message
- adding any other matter for the section "Club Matters"
- preparing the newsletter 6 weeks in advance of GM's

She counted almost 400 emails during the year between committee members related to the newsletter and expressed thanks to Sebnem Akcapar for her editing skills and finishing touches to each version, thanks to Shovana Narayan for reminding and coordinating the circle information and the rest of the Executive Committee for putting up with her and her tight schedule in the healthcare industry.

The last EC member to report was Antje Lux, the **secretary**.

She compared her time in the EC like an arranged marriage, where the elders (Nomination Committee) had made the match in their wisdom and the work in the committee turned out to be like life in a great family, with fun and fights, with work and love.

Finally Sebnem continued her speech mentioning that during the last year the club had to face some issues, of which the registration of the club was the most important one. The bank closed our account, and issued a cheques for the remaining balance, as we could not present a PAN number, which in return is not available unless the club got registered. We had to contact the lawyer, Mr Arvind Chadha to prepare the necessary documents and a special thank goes out to some former presidents and long-time members who helped to get the paper work done. The Ladies who helped with the registration of the club in particular were: Gugu Singh, Mona Agarwal, Vinu Baig, Shovana Narayan, Frenny Billimoria, Gita Devi Kapurthala, Bapsi Nariman, Sohinder Nabha. Special thanks to Nayana Goradia and her daughter Madhavi Goradia Divan who helped us find a new lawyer.

Sebnem pointed out, that the club is in transition, and modern communication tools are available to almost all WIC members now. That is why the EC wanted to encourage to save paper and money and move to a soft version of the newsletter as well as handing over all papers, reports and minutes of the outgoing EC on a memory stick to the incoming EC. And in order to be tech-savvy and adapt to modern times, a website for the club is needed as soon as registration is effective.

The current EC had a new directory printed which was well received but the original intention to include more information about each member such as hobbies and interests did not meet

much response. Some older members know each other since childhood, but new members and especially international ones would love to learn more about all these interesting ladies in the club.

Then Sebnem stressed the fact that membership dues have to be paid on time and that there are certain rules regarding attendance to GM's and other events if one likes to continue to be a member. She thanked Leena Singh, for her good work in the Membership Committee.

The Circles and the ever so active circle leaders were the next for Sebnem to express gratefulness to. Without them the EC could not have managed. Then she asked the 1st VP, Mrs Shovana Narayan to present small gifts to all circle leaders.

The next lady to be honoured by Sebnem was Gladys Abwanka Meier-Klodt, the 2nd VP, who organized the gala so successfully and was then requested to honour the other gala committee members with a little token of appreciation.

All gifts were organized by Seritar Kakar, from a friend of hers who is a designer.

Sebnem then honoured all those generous ladies of the club who opened their houses for WIC activities and those who contributed to snacks. She explicitly thanked Neena Malhotra, the Hospitality Chairperson for her efficient organization.

Then she expressed her gratitude to Vibuthi Sharma who underwent lots of trouble to get the newsletters ready in time and to the secretary, Antje Lux for keeping up the German values in the EC.

Finally Sebnem called Mrs Gugu Singh on stage to announce the **new EC members**. Gugu, in her function as head of the nomination committee had the pleasure to introduce:

President	Mrs Kiran Anand
1 st VP	Mrs Maria Allgeier
2 nd VP	Mrs Anita Dua
Membership	Mrs Sundanini Kapur
Treasurer	Mrs Aruna Mehta
Newsletter	Mrs Sarah Schwering
Hospitality	Mrs Isabelle Lenseigne
Secretary	Mrs Sheena Sharma

Mrs Kiran Anand, the new president, came on stage to thank the outgoing team and the nomination committee. The new executive committee wants to be the gateway for every member to fun times, for a great year ahead, for their interests. Nobody needs an appointment. The circles are the backbone of the club, they will soon be presented. Three new circles are planned, and details will follow soon.

Women of Substance
Special Events
International Cuisine

The meeting ended at 4 pm with High Tea.

