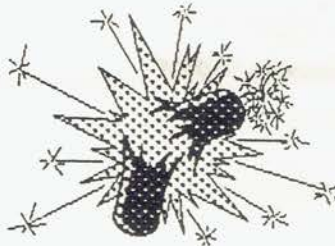




WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL CLUB

DELHI



October 1991

Dear Members,

Gunilla Kettis, our President, returns on the 9th evening to Delhi and by the time you read this at the general meeting she will be there to greet you in person, but for this newsletter I do so on her behalf.

This is going to be a very special month in the history of the Club. We shall celebrate our twenty-first birthday in style with a specially commissioned new Bharat Natyam work by Justin McCarthy, and combine it with our Divali festivities to make a real splash. But, as always, we need the enthusiastic participation of you, our members, to make it a truly memorable occasion.

The next ten years will take us to the year 2001 - do you remember the science fiction movie of that title? I wonder what sort of world we shall be living in then, and whether it will be very different from the one we know today. The pace of change seems to be ever-increasing: events on the world stage succeed each other at breathtaking speed. But somehow I feel there will still be a need for a Women's International Club of Delhi, and we must do all we can to ensure that the Club goes on from strength to strength, building on its past successes. Here's to the next twenty-one years, and may they be ones of achievement!

Yours sincerely

Halina Bialy

Membership Committee Member



WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL CLUB



NEWSLETTER

October 1991

Twenty First Year

ACTIVITIES FOR OCTOBER

GENERAL MEETING



21st BIRTHDAY DIVALI GALA
Wednesday 16 October, 7-9 pm
Home of Gunilla Kettis
Swedish Ambassador's Residence
Nyaya Marg, Chanakyapuri
Tel. 60-4961

The Club is combining celebrations of its twenty first birthday with the annual Diwali festivities to bring you the world premiere of Justin McCarthy's ballet, choreographed especially for the occasion. Justin is an American by birth but has lived for many years in India. He studied Bharat Natyam in Madras under Allaram-el-Valli, and then in Delhi under Leela Samson. He is also a concert pianist. He teaches and performs Bharat Natyam at Shriram Bharatiya Kala Kendra. Tonight's traditional *varnam* (dance drama) is entitled *Kumara Sambhavan*. In free *alap* style, it draws on verses by Kalidas to describe Parvati's devotional ecstasy at the sight of Lord Shiva and her penance to win his love. See 'noticeboard' on page 4 for details of arrangements.

THEATRE GROUP



KATHAKALI
Friday 4 October, 3.00 pm
Home of Annie Howard
50 Golf Links
Tel. 462-9272

Maya Rao, who taught acting at the National School of Drama, New Delhi, will give us a lecture-demonstration of this ancient form of dance whose name means 'story-play'. Dancers with elaborate and brightly coloured make-up and costumes perform a religious pantomime-dance to recount stories from the great epics. Training takes about 20 years, beginning in early childhood; preparation for each performance takes about four hours, and dancers need a high degree of dedication.

BOOK CIRCLE



'ALL THESE YEARS' by Raj Thapar
Thursday 10 October, 3.00 pm
Home of Jane Neale
1 Kautilya Marg
Chanakyapuri
Tel. 301-4062

Raj and Romesh Thapar were the central pivot of a social, intellectual, cultural and political circle in Delhi at its zenith from the late 1950s

to the late 1980s. They founded the discussion journal 'Seminar' and their home on Kautilya Marg became a salon in the manner of Madame de Sévigné's in seventeenth century France, thronged with poets and painters, ambassadors and politicians, journalists and cultural czarinas. They were at one time close to Mrs Gandhi and her family. Their daughter, Mala Singh, continues to publish 'Seminar' and is also Associate Publisher of the Business India Group of magazines. She has kindly agreed to talk to us about her mother's book: come prepared for a lively discussion about this fascinating insider's view of the way the Delhi world turns.

YOGA



TONING-UP ASANAS
Friday 11 October, 11.00 am
5 Gauri Apartments
South End Lane
Led by Indu Sahni
Tel. 23-1832

This first session will begin the initiation into the science of yoga by toning the body from head to toe in the yogic way through the asanas (postures) specifically designed for this purpose.

ARTS AND CRAFTS



ORIGAMI
Monday 14 October, 3.00 pm
Home of Deepak Chopra
E-2 Defence Colony
Tel. 61-7661

Sumiko Ishii and a friend will give a demonstration of Origami, the Japanese art of folding paper into decorative shapes. They will then help us as we try our hands at this exquisite art ourselves.

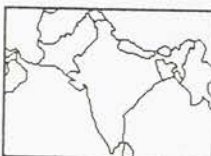
MUSIC CIRCLE



THE AMERICAN MUSICAL COMEDY
Wednesday 23rd October, 10.30
Home of Judith Clark
US Ambassador's Residence
Shanti Path
Tel. 60-0651

Rebecca McCullough will give a talk on the evolution of the American musical, illustrated with video excerpts. Unfortunately, for reasons of space, numbers must be limited to 40 - so if you would like to come, be sure to send in your reply cards promptly!

INDIAN CULTURAL



THE BANJARA TRIBALS
Thursday 24 October, 3.00 pm
Home of Nandini Pattani
5 Mansingh Road
Tel. 301-6713

This nomadic tribe originally came from Rajasthan, where they traded salt

and reared cattle. Now the largest tribe in India, thought to number up to 65 million, they are concentrated in central and southern India. They live in close-knit *tandas* (settlements) and speak their own language, *gor boli*. They move about the country in bullock carts decorated like the caravans of European gypsies, to whom they may be distantly related. Their dress and jewellery are magnificently bold and colourful: women wear a patchwork *langa* (full gathered skirt) of shocking -'Indian'- pink, mustard, emerald green and peacock blue; a *choli* (blouse) and an *odni* (shawl) edged with coins. Each has areas of beautiful embroidery which they work themselves, sewing from bottom to top to show the progress from earth to sky up the ladder of life, adding mirrors to ward off wild animals. Heavy silver jewellery - up to four kilos on a woman - adorns ears, arms, nose, neck and ankles. Ivory and bone bangles stretch right up the arm. Tassels and ornaments are tied on to hair worn in ringlets.

This afternoon's programme will describe the culture of this unique tribe who, although scattered throughout India, yet maintain a homogeneous identity. It will then focus on their experiences and problems in coming to terms with modern society, and to some degree assimilating, without sacrificing their rich traditions and way of life.

COOKING CIRCLE



POLISH SPECIALITIES

Friday 25 October, 12.00 noon
Home of Halina Bialy
Polish Ambassador's Residence
1 Tilak Marg
Tel. 38-6816

Halina will introduce us to some of the many varied delicacies of Polish cuisine.

OPEN FORUM



GREEK GODDESSES - WOMEN'S ROLES

Tuesday 29 October, 3.00pm
Home of Nima Malhotra
B-30 Maharani Bagh
Tel. 683-1080

Greek mythological stories provide a rich treasury of women's archetypal roles and identities: *Artemis*, the virgin huntress; *Aphrodite*, the goddess of love; *Demeter*, the goddess of plenty; *Psyche*, the sacrificial victim; *Hera*, the perfect wife; and *Hebe*, her daughter, the goddess of youth (to name but a few). Sofia Ortiz and Prama Bhandari will give a short presentation on the relevance of these archetypes to our twentieth century lives, comparing similar figures in Indian and other mythologies, and then lead a discussion.

FESTIVALS AROUND THE WORLD IN OCTOBER



In India, the big festival is Dussehra, which celebrates the triumph of Ram over Ravan, and of good over evil. In Europe and the Americas, October 31st is celebrated as Hallowe'en. This is the time of year when witches on broomsticks are about, candles are lit in hollowed-out pumpkins on windowsills, and children dressed as spooks ring doorbells demanding 'trick or treat'.




NOTICEBOARD




► We regret to announce the death, after a long illness, of Lily Jain. Although she was not a founding member, she contributed so much to the club in her work on setting up the regular programme of activities that she was made an honorary member. Several members who knew her have told me how much they will miss her. ◀

► Museum Study Group: The course will now begin in January. ◀


Change of address/telephone number




Frenny Billimoria's telephone numbers are now 462-8320 and 462-7745. Sumiko Ishii is now at B-62 Paschimi Marg, Vasant Vihar (Tel. 687-4262). Please correct the membership list: Harash Kapur's telephone number should read 61-5048, not 641-5855.




Resignations: Sadly, we said good-bye to several members this month. Aida El Zoaiby, Rayyan Eralp and Zhang Ye have all returned home; Christina Julin resigned at the end of August as she is accompanying her husband to Colombia where he has been appointed ambassador. Her address will be: Embajada de Suecia, Apartado Aereo 52966, Santa Fe de Bogota D.E. Tel. 212 3589.




21st Birthday Divali Gala: Tickets, which can be bought in advance from any committee member, will be Rs 150 per couple or Rs 100 for a single ticket. Admission is restricted to members only. Donations of drink (particularly wine and whisky) will be very welcome - even necessary, to make the party go with a swing! - and should be sent to Gunilla Kettis. We look forward to a really good turn-out to make the Women's International Club coming-of-age celebrations a great success and a fitting tribute to this splendid institution of ours.



General Social Meetings: Please try to arrive in good time for the main monthly meetings - between 2.45 and 2.55 - as the meeting itself is meant to start at 3 pm. As there is so much to do before the meeting starts - finding your badge, collecting your newsletter, paying your dues etc (not to mention saying hello to your friends!) it has been decided to experiment with signing the attendance register *after* the performance, rather than before, i.e. during tea.



Circle Meetings: The hospitality committee member is always looking for hostesses willing to offer their homes for the club's activities. Nothing elaborate is required in the way of food and drink: the convention is that tea consists of tea, coffee, soft drinks, one savoury and one sweet item per head.



November Newsletter: Your editor is 'going on leave' from October 1st to 22nd. I would therefore be very grateful if group leaders would be kind and let me have entries for the November newsletter by September 25th. I know this is a nuisance, but I promise after that (God willing) to stay chained to the editor's desk for the remainder of the club year! (If any group leaders will be unable to meet the advanced deadline, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can make other arrangements). Many many thanks.

GARDENING NOTES FOR OCTOBER



October is a month of brisk activities for gardeners. Work left incomplete in September due to the rains must be attended to now, if a well planned and colourful winter garden is your target.

Recommended soil mixture for flower and vegetable beds:

Well-decayed farmyard manure	2 parts
Garden soil	1 part
Leaf mould	1 part
Sand	1 part

Seedlings: Begin transplanting now.

Annuals: Sow all winter seeds before 10 October, or it will be too late.

Vegetables: Finish sowing batches of vegetable seeds by the middle of the month to ensure a continuous supply. Seedlings such as Beans, Carrots, Methi, Peas, Radish, Spinach and Turnips may be sown straight away in their permanent beds; the rest will need transplanting.

Chrysanthemums: Remove buds, basal growth and offshoots regularly, and apply liquid manure once a week.

Roses: Begin pruning roses about 10-15 October - depending on the weather. Stop watering the bushes 2 to 4 weeks beforehand. Avoid severe pruning of the bushes, unless the roses are to be exhibited, since heavy pruning drastically shortens the life of the plant in Delhi's hot summers. More flowers will be produced if the bush is pruned to only half its original size. For yellow roses only one third of the top of the bush should be pruned. Remove all woody, dead and sickly stems along with those that criss-cross the centre of the bush. Climbers need only trimming and removal of weak and spindly wood. After pruning add about 2 inches of well-rotted farmyard manure to the soil and flood the bed immediately after this.

Lawns: Weed and mow as growth increases. Give a light sprinkling of Ammonium Sulphate. An organic fertilizer such as Sterameal should be applied once this month.

Happy gardening!

Kavita Ratra

DELHI DAYS

Do you know the romantic story of Raziya, the only woman to rule over the Delhi Sultanate? Her father, Iltutmish, had nominated her to succeed him on his death in April 1236, but she had first to dislodge her half-brother, Ruknuddin, who had been quickly installed by the dowager queen with the connivance of the nobles. He proved a disastrous ruler and, with the support of the populace, Raziya assumed the throne ten months later. She took care to have Ruknuddin and her stepmother publicly hanged, mindful of the saying: 'Ya takht, ya takhta' ('either the coffin or the throne'). She had no time to build any lasting monuments in her short reign - she was too busy trying to hold on to power - but she tried to introduce economic and social reforms. Unfortunately, she made the other amirs jealous by choosing an Abyssinian slave, Jamaluddin Yaqut, as 'master of her heart as well as Master of her Horse, and rebellion was not long in breaking out. In 1239 the governor of Sirhind took the field against her; she was defeated, and her Abyssinian lover killed' (see HEARN - The 7 Cities of Delhi). The victor, Altunia, took her as wife [a potentially brilliant dynastic alliance], but the other generals combined and killed them in battle in October 1240. Her body was later brought to Shahjahanabad where her grave can still be seen.

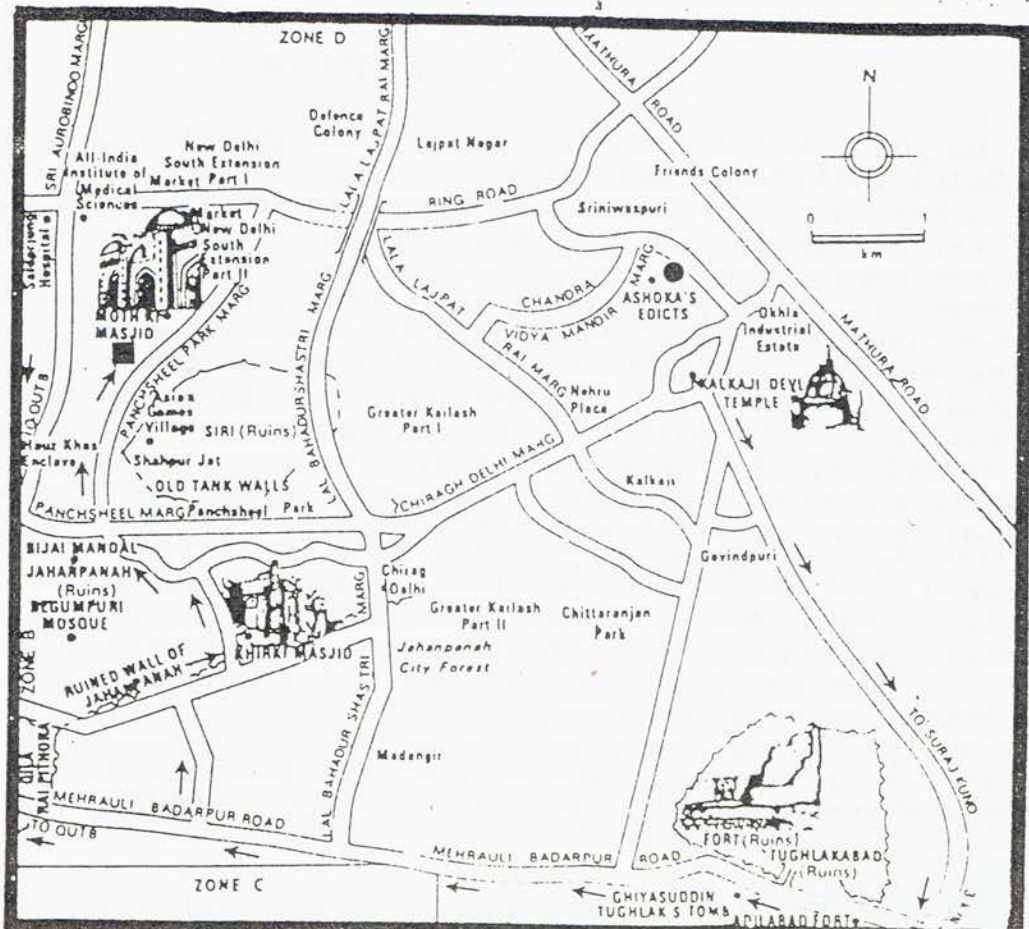
Raziya was not, however, the only woman to covet the throne of Delhi, as Jan Morris relates: "Ibn Batuta, the best travelled man in the world, describes the country of Tawalisi, a place otherwise unknown to geography,

in which he met a princess of warlike tastes, who commanded a corps of Amazons and often engaged in single combat herself. This fierce lady, who was Governor of Kaylakari, was much taken by Ibn Batuta's descriptions of India, and decided she would like to conquer that country. 'I must', she drawled, 'positively make an expedition to it, and take possession of it myself, for the quantity of its riches and its troops attracts me.' Ibn Batuta had been on the road for twenty years, and knew all about women. 'Do so', he simply replied, and left it at that."

Alauddin, the second of the Khalji dynasty, had to murder his wife's father, Emperor Firoz the Second, before he could ascend the throne in 1296. His reign lasted an almost record twenty years during which, as we saw at Qila Rai Pithora, he doubled the size of the mosque, built the celebrated Alai Darwaaza, founded a *madrasa*, built his tomb, and began the Alai Minar, grandiosely intended to be twice the size of the Qutb Minar, but died before completing the first storey. It is customary at this point in guide books to make some pious comment such as 'Man proposes, God disposes', but in fact there is an irony of history hidden here. Qutbuddin also only completed the first storey of his minar, yet subsequent rulers made a point of adding to it until today's awe-inspiring tower was arrived at. The Alai Minar, on the other hand, was left to languish. Was this judgement on aesthetic grounds? Or of the relative historical importance of the two men? Or what?

While all this building was going on, the Moguls were making increasingly frequent raids on the city. Alauddin therefore set up an encampment on the plains of Siri in 1303. After two months of siege, the Moguls inexplicably went away, just at the point when they were winning. This was ascribed to the prayers of the Chisti saint, Nizamuddin and Alauddin later built the Jamat Khana mosque next to the Nizamuddin *dargah* in thanks. Alauddin now moved his capital here and, at the same time, built the tank at neighbouring Hauz Khas to ensure the city's water supply. Ibn Batuta, writing in 1325, describes him as a benevolent ruler: 'he used to investigate the conditions of his subjects in person, and to enquire into the prices which they had to pay, and he used to send for the *muhtasib* [inspector of markets], whom they call the *rais*, every day for that purpose.' And keeping down the rate of inflation is still one of the major factors by which we judge the success of a government!

Ancient Delhi



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 1991-92

President	Gunilla L.F. Kettis	60-5749	(Sweden)
1st Vice-President	Mona Aggarwal	329-4482	(India)
2nd Vice President	Janet Chawla	61-1821	(U.S.A.)
Hospitality	Niru Kapur	641-5855	(India)
Membership	Halina Bialy	38-6816	(Poland)
Newsletter	Laura Sykes	67-6994	(U.K.)
Secretary	Nandini Pattani	301-6713	(U.K.)
Treasurer	Ramindra Ajit Singh	67-6507	(India)

GROUP LEADERS FOR 1991-92

Arts and Crafts	Claudia Deiss Savi Prakash	60-3965 331-1683
Book Circle	Nayana Goradia Jean Gurney	61-7859, 61-5703 687-5810
Chorus Group	Patricia Stephenson Usha Srivastava	680-2304 641-6621
Cooking	Raj Nanda Micheline St-Cyr	688-4833, 688-2395 683-0722
Dance	Kavita Ratra Blanca Schmenger	61-7252, 61-5662 67-5840
Excursions	Margrit Heydemann Sarabjit ('Gugu') Singh	69-3341 329-1788
Indian Cultural	Vinu Baig Pamela Evans	683-8946, 683-8501 60-4212
International Cultural	Sumru Fenmen Anginee Roma Dass	60-2803 67-1739, 67-6152
Museum Study Group	Bapsi Nariman	686-2980
Music	Audrey Fowler Zohra Shaw	60-1371 ext 494 65-0198
Nostalgic Singalong	Dolores ('Dolly') Dadachanji	67-3390
Open Forum	Prama Bhandari Sofia de Ortiz	686-2807, 662-525 687-6423
Theatre	Gita Devi of Kapurthala Surinder Dugal Jain	641-2029 69-9448
Yoga	Indu Sahni	23-1832

OCTOBER AT A GLANCE



<u>WHEN</u>	<u>WHERE</u>	<u>WHAT</u>
Wednesday 16th 7 - 9 pm	Home of Gunilla Kettis Swedish Embassy Nyaya Marg	***** * General Meeting * ***** 21st Birthday Divali Gala
Friday 4th 3.00 pm	Home of Annie Howard 50 Golf Links	<u>Theatre Group</u> Kathakali
Thursday 10th 3.00 pm	Home of Jane Neale 1 Kautilya Marg	<u>Book Circle</u> 'All These Years'
Friday 11th 11.00 am	Led by Indu Sahni 5 Gauri Apartments, South End Lane	<u>Yoga</u> Toning-up Asanas
Monday 14th 3.00 pm	Home of Deepak Chopra E-2 Defence Colony	<u>Arts and Crafts</u> Origami
✓ Wednesday 23rd 10.30 am	Home of Judith Clark US Embassy, Shantipath	<u>Music Circle</u> American Musical
✓ Thursday 24th 3.00 pm	Home of Nandini Pattani 5 Mansingh Road	<u>Indian Cultural</u> Banjara Tribals
Friday 25th 12.00 noon	Home of Halina Bialy Polish Ambassador's Residence 1 Tilak Marg	<u>Cooking Circle</u> Polish Delicacies
Tuesday 29th 3.00 pm	Home of Nima Malhotra B-30 Maharani Bagh	<u>Open Forum</u> Greek Goddesses