

W I C NEWS



October 1995

Dear Members

I am so grateful to the executive committee and others in Delhi during August who have got the jubilee year off to such a fine start, in my absence. I hear that Vimla Rajan is much to be congratulated for her talk on cosmetic surgery, which made more than a few pull their tummies in!

Our visit to Denmark (Elsebeth Ostenfeld sent her love) was most rewarding, both culturally and for the gloriously un-English weather, which strangely was also gripping UK for the month of August and turned out to be Britain's warmest since meteorological records began. But normality has now returned and it is raining there too.

The Silver Jubilee event on 15th November is looming large and all offers of help of time on make-up, costumes, and other theatrical expertises will be gratefully received by Bina Deogan. She has many signed up already in her little book but can always do with more. Do step forward.

Then Diwali, on 23rd, hosted by Darshi Singh,

will be full of surprises, leaving most foreigners boggle-eyed at this traditional and enchanting Indian spectacle - not to be missed.

The members' directory will be re-issued towards the end of October, so now is the time for anyone intending to propose a new member to come forward. Proposal forms are held by Josefina Young (tel : 678 593). We have seen quite an efflux of foreign members of late and, for balance, we particularly need some more younger foreign members; so thinking caps on please.

Until we meet again, with the reservoirs over-flowing again,

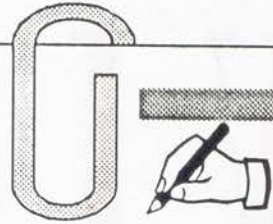
let us all mention sunny weather in our prayers.

Yours sincerely,

—Annie Howard



Editor's Note!



Dear Ladies,

October, for me, marks the beginning of a season full of festivity and gaiety. Once again, the adrenil rushes through the blood, cleansing the heat and dust from the mind and body. Preparing us to enjoy the sugar, the spice and everything nice!

Therefore, in keeping with the spirit of this, we have for you a truly wonderful mix and match of programmes this month. There is something to appeal to every palate and I hope that you all will enjoy the items as much as the circle leaders have enjoyed putting them together.

You will find that this Month, in addition to the news-letter, there is a supplement. Mrs. Bina-Deogan, our First Vice-President, has done some research on the forth-coming eclipse and has prepared an article, explaining the Nature and Social Implications of such an Eclipse. We will also "SHARE A THOUGHT" sent to me by Mrs. Nayana Goradia. Thank you ladies.

Before ending, I would like to bring to your notice, that as announced at the August General Meeting, Hostesses for Group Circles are advised to only serve two items for tea. One savoury and one sweet. It will be appreciated that all must abide by this. Thank you.

I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Diwali and may the Lord Ganesh and Goddess Laxmi bring good -luck and wealth to you and your families!

Surinder Dugal Jain

GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, October 11, 2.00 p.m.
at the Hungarian Cultural Centre, 1-A Janpath New Delhi

"Bandit Queen"; We will have the opportunity to watch this highly publicised & interesting film and also listen to its producer Mr. Bobby Bedi who has kindly agreed to give us some more information about it. Everybody should be seated by 2.00 p.m. and because of the great interest shown, please do not bring any guests.

Duratio : 2 hours.



Special Diwali Programme

Wednesday, 18th October 3 p.m.
63, Friends Colony (East)
Home of Mrs. Sudarshana Singh
Phone No.: 6844204

Diwali ! A tripple-ripple of flowers, lights and music! come and witness a visual delight and be part of the gay festivities, being held on this day.

Diwali is also the festival of good will and exchange of gifts. So, members attending this function, please do bring one small-gift-wrapped item from your own state/country. The value of this gift should not exceed Rs. 20/- . You will bring a gift and take back a gift in return. You will be told when and how to exchange these.

Request No. I. Ladies, Please come Dressed to kill!

Request No. II Do bring Guests!

Request No. III Photography is encouraged!

Request No. IV All members, Indian & Foreign be dressed in something Indian!

This programme is combinedly organized by the "VISUAL ARTS" and "FOLK-MUSIC" groups.

Special Programme-1

Saturday 14th October 4 p.m.,
at the Sri Fort Auditorium
Asiad-Village Complex, Khel-Gaon Marg.

"How to Live and Die in a Better way".

His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, is going to give a talk on the above mentioned subject.

Those of you who are interested may please contact Mrs. Prama Bhandari at 686-2807 and collect your invitations from her.

This programme has been arranged courtesy Mrs. Prama Bhandari, Circle-leader for the performing arts.

Focus



Tuesday, 17th October 11 a.m.
131, Sunder Nagar
Home of Mrs. Annie Howard
Phone No. 463 1143 - 4611750

A Roof-Top rendezvous with the famous Tarot-Card reader-Ma Prem-Usha! Here is your chance to work with her and the cards, and find out what is in store for you. Or then just satisfy your curiosity on how cards can tell a person's life-past-present and future. Or then just sit back and enjoy her discourse, followed by a snacky lunch.

We have a limit here for sixty ladies only !

Book Circle

Friday, 20th October 3. p.m.
The residency US Embassy
Shanti Path, Chanakyapuri

"BATTLE CRY OF FREEDOM" has earned praise like — "Its magic" — "absolutely brilliant" — "a vivid portait of antebellum America."

H.E. The American Ambassador will be discussing the book and sharing his views with us on this day. So, those interested, do read the book and come ready to share some of your thoughts too.



Cultural



Wednesday, 25th October 3 p.m.
20-E, Prithviraj Road
Home of Mrs. Pushpa Vedera
Ph. : 301 2021; 301 4552

Mrs. Yashodhara Dalmia will give a talk on the "WARLI - PAINTINGS". The Warlis are tribal people, living in the hills of Maharashtra. They are famous for their paintings on the walls of their huts, using white rice-paste on cow-dung.

Mrs. Dalmia is a Journalist and has done much field research on these people.

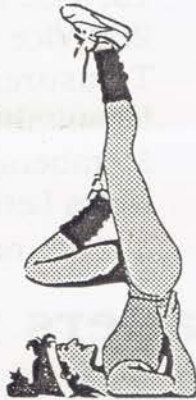
Limited to 25 ladies.

Yoga



Tuesday, 10th October 10.30 a.m.
145, Sunder Nagar
Home of Mrs. Nayana Gordia
Ph.: 461-7859, 461-5703

Peace of mind is happiness. Yoga shows the way. The teachers of the International Shivananda Centre will introduce us to this ancient science of Yoga through a specially condensed 5 point Yogic plan for a wholesome living specially suited for the Modern times.



They will demonstrate some of the most gainful easy to practice Asanas including those for a well tuned supple body and the show beautiful and glowing.

The highlight however will be the stress on the **Yogic Diet** specially designed for physical health and mental balance.

There will be Branch cooked the Yogic way - Delicious and Nutrituous cakes (eggless) and savouries and Recipes to Top it all!

A few minutes of Yoga a Day keep the Doctors and beauticians away.

Limited to 25-30 ladies only!

Garden & Gourmet

Friday, 6th October 3 p.m.
F-21/22, Hauz Khas Enclave
Home of Bapsi Nariman
Tel. : 6862980, 6964718

The "National Electric Cooker - Warmer" is such a versatile Cooking Gadget. Come and see its performance and taste some of the gorgeous food cooked in it. It will be interesting for many a gourmet cook!

Excursions

Thursday, 26th October 8.45 a.m.
meet outside 131, Sunder Nagar
(near Delhi Public School)

This excursion is quite different from the normal visit to Delhi historical monuments. We are going 80 kms out of Delhi on the Grand Trunk Road (N.H.1) towards Ambala to a village called Chilkarna. The farm belongs to a gentleman farmer-Mahinderpal Singh. "And on this farm we have Martin Howard's Bees"!!!

I will leave the rest of the explanations to Martin when we get there. The visit is restricted to 20 ladies so please book early. And do bring your sandwich lunch and drinks as we will get back to Delhi only by 3.30 p.m.

Excursion in November

A three-day-two night excursion is planned to Gwalior and Shivpuri on 17-19 or 27-29, aboard the prestigious Shatabadi Express train, to visit the famous Gwalior Fort, palace and other historical monuments. In Shivpuri we see exquisite craftsmanship of the "Chhatris" of the royal family of Scindias and tour the new game sanctuary.

For more details contact Gugn Anup Singh - 5563788. 8340365.



WIC Executive Committee 1995-96

Annie Howard	President	4631143
Bina Deogan	1st Vice President	6832736
Chrysanthe Epaminondas	2nd Vice President	6830153
Connie Gupta	Treasurer	4618459
Harash Kapur	Hospitality	4615048
Josefina Young	Membership	678593
Surinder Dugal jain	News Letter	4699448

Circle Leaders for 1995-96

Book Circle	Vinu Baig	6835801
	Nancy Gooch	3792137
	Annie Scott-Morey	4610556
Performing Arts	Prama Bhandari	6862807
Excursions	Sarabjit (gugu) Singh	5563788
	Nancy Gooch	3792137
Cultural	Mona Aggarwal	3293824
	Maggie Kenward	6436288
	Gisela Elias	384188
Focus	Rupa Sahni	4619553
	Ina van der Struik	6118580
	Sandra Maxwell	4618510
Gourmet and Garden	Bapsi Nariman	6862980
	Kiki Theophilou	6874892
Films	Sigrun Srivastava	6468908
	Frenny Billimoria	6882520
Yoga	Indu Sahni	6841840
	Indra Rani Jerath	
Indian Folk music & dance	Usha Ventateswaran	2250730
	Kavita Ratra	012832244
Visual Arts	Shakti Gupta	6913136
	Sudarshana Singh	6844204
Chorus	Zora Shaw	6960198

MONTH AT A GLANCE

CIRCLE	WHAT	WHEN	WHERE
General Meeting	“The Bandit Queen” Film	Wednesday, 11th Oct. 2 p.m.	Hungarian Cultural Centre 1A, Janpath Road
Special Programme-I	Discourse by Dalai-Lama	Saturday, 14th Oct. 4 p.m.	Siri Fort Auditorium Asiad-Village Complex Khel-Gaon Marg
Visual Arts & Folk Music	Diwali Special	Wednesday, 18th Oct. 3 p.m.	House of Sudarshana Singh 63, Friends Colony East Tel : 6844204
Focus	Tarot-Cards with Ma Prem, Usha Lunch	Tuesday, 17th Oct. 11 a.m.	House of Annie Howard 131, Sunder Nagar Tel : 463-1143, 461-1750
Book-Circle	“Battle Cry of freedom”	Friday, 20th Oct. 3 p.m.	The Residency US Embassy Shanti Path, Chanakyapuri
Cultural	The Warlis Paintings	Wednesday, 25th Oct. 3 p.m.	House of Pushpa Vadera 20-E, Prithviraj Road Tel : 301-2021, 301-4552
Yoga	The 5 Point Yogic Plan and Yogic Diet Towards Good Health	Tuesday, 10th Oct. 10.30 a.m.	House of Naina Goradia 145, Sunder Nagar Tel : 461-7859, 461-5703
Gourmet & Garden	“The Magic Electric Cooker Warmer.” Demonstration	Friday, 6th Oct. 3 p.m.	House of Bapsi Nariman F-21/22, Hauz Khas Enclave Tel : 6862980, 654718
Excursion	Visit to Bee-Farm	Thursday, 26th Oct. 8.45 a.m.	Outside House of Annie Howard 131, Sunder Nagar Tel.: 463-1143, 461-1750

Total Solar Eclipse — 24 October, 1995

*F*rom my school days I remembered that this eclipse is caused when the Moon comes between the Sun and the Earth, but somehow this information was not enough, so I decided to do some fact finding. Let me share this information with you.

Solar eclipses are of 2 kinds—a total one which covers the Sun's disk fully and an annular one where the Sun's disk is only partly covered. There cannot be a SE unless the moon is new and the Sun less than $18\frac{1}{2}$ from the node of the Moon. A century can witness 66-70 total SEs — in India there were eclipses in 1980 and 1955. Though the duration of a SE may be a few hours, the actual period of totality is never more than $2-7\frac{1}{2}$ minutes. Moreover, since the paths of totality generally fall over oceans, in polar regions, or, over other inaccessible parts of the earth, in any one century the total number of minutes available for studying a totally eclipsed Sun is very small. Important conditions for observation of a SE are duration of totality, the weather, and position of the eclipse site — it is best seen when the zone of totality falls near the Equator. Due to a fall in temperature within the shadow, clouds generally form and ruin everything but under dry conditions, over water, in the desert regions, from mountain tops (due to atmospheric steadiness) observations are good. Since 1963 especially equipped supersonic aircraft, which keep pace with the Moon's shadow, are used to ensure prolonged observation — the Moon's shadow moves at a speed of 350 kms per second! During eclipses in the 19th century, observations helped to study the stratum on the Sun containing most of the elements of the Solar spectrum and in the 20th century they were used to test Einstein's theory of Relativity.

A total SE is seen only from a narrow belt on the earth and there are different phases of the eclipse. There is a 'first contact' — a moment when the disk of the Moon, (which till now has been invisible due to the immense light of the Sun) just touches the disk of the Sun. Then, there is an indentation on the western rim of the Sun which changes to a crescent. Light falling on the ground through the leaves of trees throws crescent shaped shadows. When totality is imminent, and only a small crescent of the sun remains, one can see undulating variations/shadow bands, often a few inches wide, on plain wall and floor surfaces. The direction and velocity is dependent on air currents. Water waver get projected on the bottom of sunlit swimming pools, baths etc. too. An eclipse truly provides awe-inspiring sights! A 'flash spectrum' is seen at the beginning and the end of totality. Light and colour change at a fantastic speed — the landscape takes on a purplish hue and soon the whole region is swallowed in a night-like darkness, and man, birds and animals cringe in fear. As the narrow crescent of light disappears, little bright specks remain and these are called 'Baily's Beads', but soon these too disappear and totality sets in. This is the climax. During totality one can see the most beautiful natural phenomena — the solar corona against a deep blue darkened sky, its streamers and scarlet prominences or tongues of fire. Normally, the corona, being less brilliant than the Sun, is faint and its details are hidden. If the sky is clear then planets/bright stars near the Sun are visible. In the path of totality, not only does the temperature fall by degrees, but the light of totality is much brighter than of a full Moon. Soon the reverse order starts — Baily's Beads

appear, the Sun's crescent grows again, the corona disappears and daylight brightens. Lastly, the Moon's shadow leaves the Sun. It is important to protect the eyes against injury from the intense light of the Sun just before and after totality. Filters, smoked glass, fogged photographic plates etc. can be used. Ancient civilizations were familiar with the phenomena of eclipses. In China references are found dating back to 1217 B.C. In fact 'eclipse' is said to be a Greek word meaning 'abandonment'. The Assyrian eponym canon refers to a SE in 763 B.C. and in the Bible it says, "And on that day, says the Lord God, I will make the Sun go down at noon, and darken the earth in broad daylight." (Amos 8:9). Homer's Odyssey too mentions "the sun being perished out of heaven". The Babylonians roughly calculated an eclipse after 18 years 11 days and called this period a saros. Indians have been familiar with eclipses since the Vedic time — 1500 - 1000 B.C. The Rig and the Yajur Vedas mention 3 types of eclipses. Those who are interested astrologically, please note that the eclipse i.e. the conjunction of the Sun and the Moon on October 24 will take place in Libra (Tula rasi) in the constellation of Virginis Spica (Chitra nakshatra). This year the eclipse will be visible in N.E. Africa, Central and East Asia, N. Australia, West Pacific Ocean and in India. A narrow belt running through Rajasthan, M.P., U.P., Bihar, and West Bengal will fall in the path of totality, therefore, places like Bharatpur, Agra, Fatehpur, Allahabad, Daltonganj, Purulia, Diamond Harbour will witness a total eclipse, while the rest of India will see it only as a partial one. The beginning and ending of the eclipse differs from place to place, but India, as a whole we can take the duration to be from 7Hrs. 22m till 10Hrs. 24m. (It is now possible to predict years in advance with an accuracy of a few seconds.

According to the Indian Ephemeris —

- In DELHI : The eclipse will begin at 7Hrs. 27m.0s and end at 9Hrs. 52m.0s
- In ALWAR : It begins at 7Hrs.24m.26s and ends at 9Hrs.51m.43s.
(totally begins at 8Hrs.33m.03s and ends at 8Hrs.33m.53s within the period)
- ALLAHABAD : It begins at 7Hrs. 27m.03s and ends at 10Hrs.02m.08s
(totally begins at 8Hrs.39m.28s and ends at 8Hrs.39m.41s. within the period)
- Generally we AVOID : Cooking food; eating/drinking; all sexual activities; looking at the sun even through smoked glass etc. (but one may see its reflection in a pool of water).

Its better to BATHE : At least after the eclipse, so the sages say.

Its wise to STORE FOOD in airtight containers or to put blades of kusa grass on it. During the eclipse, and when its over to cook afresh again. Throw all previously cooked food.

PREGNANT WOMEN : Remember not only not to look at the Sun, but to sit as still as possible to minimize disturbance from vibrations, so don't go traipsing all over the place. Holding kusa grass helps to protect against harmful rays. (Kusa grass is the grass used to make prayers mats)

The 12 hour period before the eclipse (Sootak) makes us vulnerable too, therefore precautions should be taken from then, if possible.

I do hope that at least some of you will find this of some use!.

Bina Deogun

"Half-Past Twelve Rupees"

by Nayana Goradia

In mourning my grandfather who died at the age of 86, I was also saying a requiem to an era in my own life. It was of a childhood in the Saurashtra town of Jamnagar; in a colonial style mansion with high ceilings and long, aimless corridors.

Many years have but the remembrance of things past comes swift and vivid to the mind: of high-backed ungainly Victorian chairs lined stiffly against the wall with portraits of pugried, whiskered, unsmiling ancestors hung above, of Ormolu clocks, stuffed birds in glass cases and recocco brass bedsteads. All this must have been at odd variance with the inmates of the house.

Over thing domain presided my grandfather. A highly successful physician and surgeon, he had taken to studying Sanskrit at the age of 45 in order to translate the 3,000 year old medical treatise, the *Charak Samhita*, into English. To look at he was every inch an intellectual; haughty gaze from a pair of hooded eyes, a prominent, hooked nose and flaring nostrils. To meet he could be alarming. Everybody had to play second fiddle.

This did not, however, apply to my enchanting, petite grandmother. My grandmother came from a family of bankers from Rajkot and like all Rakotwallas may have tendered to look upon the Jamnagaris as provincial folk. She had some reason to. In her father's house they had an English lady teacher

some man but the diamond like brilliance of his intellect must have been apparent even then.

To begin with, Jamnagar must have been a bleak change for my grandmother. Her in-laws had money but little style. Besides her husband, there was a father in-law, several unmarried sisters in-law, and a quarrelsome step mother-in-law in the house. On her arrival a clothes line had fluttered in the front verandah and in the drawing room the tables were covered with dusty old railway-guides. Besides, it was a tacitly understood rule that women had to be content to languish in the zenana wing. My grandmother soon made changes. The washing was banished to the backyard, the guides swept into a dustbin and the family made to sit together-albeit ill at ease-in the high backed Victorian chairs every evening.

For all her claims to having an English governess, my grandmother could not have mastered the language too well. The proof being a long-standing joke in the family about the time when Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt came to tea. Apparently my grandmother, in her best pearls and French chiffon, had received her in the hall and taken her indoors. Mrs. Roosevelt complimented her on her home spotted an embroidered Kutch cushion cover and casually inquired its price. My grandmother is said to have majestically answered. "It cost, half-past twelve rupees".

Courtesy : The Statesman



Courtesy: Desmond Doig

When Mrs Hillary Clinton came on a visit to India, I was reminded of my family's brief encounter with another First Lady of the WhiteHouse.

coming every morning, and the girls were encouraged to play badminton and read poetry.

When my grandfather came to see her with a view to matrimony, she had been carefully arranged behind a sitar. She was sixteen and he ten years older. She has the temerity to raise her eyes to his face and ask about her future home. My grandfather was not a hand-