

OLD COTTONIANS (SIMLA) summer bulletin

I surrender my thought to tell you the **Spirit of BCS** dwells deep in the midst of OCA(UK) as we shared another successful Reunion luncheon at our favourite venue The Bombay Brasserie – 28 June 2014. We truly missed the many regulars but I was heartened to meet and greet new comers, generating much joy and hope you will return and support our love of memory and dear Patina!

Previously I had been informed Headmaster Robinson and a Master had been invited by the Committee to attend 2014 Reunion. Sponsored very kindly by the generous hospitality of Chairman Kuljinder Bahia through his Southall enterprise. Only Mr Bhardwaj arrived, unfortunately the day after Maggie & I hosted our final *khana on the lawn* Fairlands as it commonly became known. But fraternal thanks to Secretary Gursant and his charming wife Herjit who came and managed to persuade Kuljinder from his hectic business life to spend the afternoon with a few OCs in Whyteleafe, Surrey. As usual Maggie made me feel proud again putting on a nice home cooked spread and I seconded as barman. A deserving final - the weather blessed us with a glorious day. From mid-week we moved to a very wet Saturday morning and caught in a shower as we approached destination Courtfield Road!

The buzz in the Conservatory of the restaurant was enough to lift any Old Cottonian's heart as I signed the adsom register and introduced Maggie & myself around. Refreshed with drink in hand I circled to finally meet Mr. Bhardwaj, recalling having met him on the several occasion visits to BCS. The master has been on the School Staff for many, many years. Among the guests we had 5 OCs from India – Gurpartap Sahi, Dhiraj Sardana, Sudhir Manchanda, Asoka Katakam and his brother. Two brothers Edward & Denzil McGrath from Bishop Cottons –Bangalore. Chris Kishanan from La Martinea (Lucknow), finally Peter & Elisabeth Johans from Switzerland. I wish to mark your attention letting you know our oldest Cottonian, 90 years Lance Jones (L35-39) attended with his daughter Lorna, grandson and young wife and his younger sister. But adding to this seniority Edward McGrath I was informed is 92. So cheer up veterans there is still life being young at heart!!

Joginder Chahal softly said a Latin grace and then we all tucked into the Brasserie's special treats and good as every year. I falter to remember the many speeches given but for me the spotlight was on the School Master- He was asked to speak and delivered not a speech written on paper but with simple humility written in his heart. It brought all of us to sober thought and for me moisture to my eyes, to know our ALMA MATER still has masters like him who are dedicated to serve in the best BCS tradition.

In passing on behalf of OCs and especially us 7 who attended the Spring annual get-together at Sheila Reed's Watchbury Cottage, Barford Warwickshire I share grateful thanks. A promise to her late husband Robert, Sheila and her two daughters Caroline and Jansis have welcomed OCs and wives in his memory when Bobby left us in September 2006.

28 May only four OCs attended the Himalayan Hill Schools final Reunion at the Clay Oven, Alperton near Wembley. It is beyond doubt, even though the years have gathered for each one of us having left our School, we still willingly with pride share in this very unique celebration. A constant reminder of the rare privilege to have studied at these Indian centres of educational excellence, we did rejoice in good company and feasted and danced to our favourite live music.

Enjoy your summer and remember all is not lost because of England's early exit from the Football World Cup, Andy Murray bowing out early from Wimbledon, our Rugby and Cricket teams leave letting down their fans – we all enjoyed a Star in our social calendar last Saturday in June. I have been warned not to miss the "OC Boys' NITE-OUT" dinner first week in December. See you then.

Cordial good wishes

Yours fraternally

Peter A Stringer (Lefroy 43-47)