

CAREER FAIR AUGUST 25-26, 2007

Mother's Blossoms and The Mother's International School together in August this year to organize a Career Fair for the students of Class IX to XII.

From getting experts from the fields of Civil Services, Engineering, Architecture, to name a few, to interactive detailed sessions with institutes that were called in to give specific information about their own courses like Merchant Navy, Army, Foreign Studies - everything was planned.

The idea behind the whole show was that in recent years, a deluge of career options has created confusion in young minds. Lack of awareness and structured guidance often prevent them from making the correct choice in keeping with their interest and aptitude. Moreover, gathering information from various sources also proves to be a cumbersome task. Therefore, in an endeavour to help the children, we planned a career fair in the school so that parents and their wards could be updated with all the latest courses being offered in the market.

The idea was great. Now began the whole exercise of trying to balance what we thought the children wanted to do and what the children actually wanted to do. The Headboy and the Headgirl were called in and assigned the duty of getting the students' preference on paper. Soon the lists came back and the difference in opinion was not as difficult to handle as we had presumed. Students mostly wanted to get into careers that pay well and pay soon. There were not many takers for the Armed forces and even for medicine. Areas like IAS, Law, Architecture, design and Foreign Studies were found to be the favourites.

A balance was struck between the two sides and invitations were drafted and sent. The response was overwhelming. We had students changing their schedules to fit this event. People like Mr. Sujit Ghosh (1988) for Law, Mr. Deependra Prasad (1990) for Architecture, Ms. Bhavna Vij Aurora (1987) for Journalism, Ms. Manisha Saxena (1989) for IAS and Mr. Akshay Gupta (2005) for Commercial Pilot were kind enough to come to the school and address the children.



Sujit Ghosh addressing the students.

The Hall of Aspiration was used to set up stalls for various other institutes to talk about their courses. We had representatives from Delhi University, IGNOU, Paramedics, Biotechnology, IIT, Foreign Studies – US and Canada and the Armed Forces to name a few.

At the end of the event the feedback we got from the students was good. Some thought that a few things could have been done differently and we completely agreed with them. So, hopefully the event next year will cover more areas and have more to offer!

General Secretary

Forthcoming Activities

Annual Alumni Reunion on January 26, 2008
MKV Trip to Akshardham in January, 2008
Basket ball Mens and Womens Matches - MIS vs Mother's Blossoms

MKV Trip to The National Science Center August 10, 2007

I remember my father telling me that we were going to perform some kinda community service in his famous non-emotional-to-the-point kind of way. I needed to get away from work and take a short break. I did not know what I was doing until the day before, and when I learned that I was going to be chaperoning little kids to a museum, my stance did not change. I believed it was going to be an entertaining journey. Looking back, it was a nice change and was quite interesting; however, it was also hectic and very stressful to control the 40 plus kids even with a few teachers. Yet it was all worth it to know that one has made a difference in their lives.

We woke up quite early like we usually do and drove to Ashram to await the kids - these kids were economically challenged. I already knew this, however, this did provide a slight language barrier for me. I was born in India, yet I left India when I was six years old and have forgotten most of the language. Now, when I speak Hindi I speak with a slight Delhi slang with the vocabulary of a 6 year old! We were later greeted with the kids and the few teachers and volunteers that we were gratefully thankful for, and then went on the bus to go to the National Science Center.

The bus journey was quite interesting since there seemed to be about five games of Antakshari going on at the same time and there was a barrage of music or noise - call it what you will. The kids did not get to go on buses much so they were quite psyched about the trip, going over bridges, and seeing airports - all things that we take for granted were an amazing sight for them!

We then finally reached the museum and my father started leading them to different areas. The kids were quite troublesome to keep in control, and were always up to some kind of mischief, yet they had great fun seeing the sights of the museum. And since my father was at the front I was kept in charge to see that no laggards were left behind. I had the task of telling the kids to go on forth - this was the hardest for the kids. They wanted to see more, play with the exhibits and were continuously asking questions wanting to know more and more. However, there was only so much time that we had. In the end we saw a 3-D show, which was an out of the world experience for them.

After all that they finally ate and we went home with the same joyous atmosphere in the bus. After reaching the Ashram they said thank you and we said goodbye, entered the car, and did not turn on the radio, quite sick of noise.

This was an adventure that I had never anticipated. And I know that few have. This saddens me since I learned so much from these kids. It amazed me that how we fail to enjoy simple things because we take them for granted. It also put me in touch with a part of India I knew little about. Many more people can do what we did and let more kids and even adults experience something new.

Akshay Ahluwalia

Akshay is 17yrs old, lives in the US and was doing an internship in India during his summer break. He is the son of Aditya Ahluwalia, alumni 1980 batch)



The football teams of MIS and Mother's Blossoms with Mrs. Mahrukh Singh, Mr. Harpal Bhalla and Ashish Sir and Mr. Gulshan Rai on November 29, 2007. Ashish Sir coached the Alumni team for this event.

Surabhi

a newsletter of the Mother's Blossoms (Registered under the Societies Registration Act)



For those who wish to live according to truth, there is always something to learn and some progress to make.



The Mother

Ambition and Aspiration



Ambition is a strong desire to achieve. It may be a desire for power, for riches, for fame. It could be one's ambition for one's children and the like. The word aspiration is often used interchangeably with ambition. The Hindi words make the difference more clear. In Hindi we use the word *mahatvakanksha* for ambition and the word *abhiksa* for aspiration. They signify two very different things.

Normally an ambitious person sets goals for himself. He doggedly pursues his goals. It is the one single aim of his life. In the process of pursuing his goals, he may ride roughshod over others. His ego is the propelling force. It seems to him that whatever he is doing is right. If anything goes against his will he is angry. Such a person, in the words of Sri Aurobindo is, "mundane and pragmatic, regards the fulfillment and satisfaction of the mental, vital and physical ego sense, individual or collective, as the object of life and looks no further, while the other philosophic or religious which regards the conquest of the ego in the interests of the soul, spirit or whatever be the ultimate entity, as the one thing supremely worth doing....if our aim is a spiritual release or a spiritual fulfilment, then the exceeding of this little mould of ego is imperative".

One may ask - 'What is so special about you that every wish of yours should be fulfilled? You are just one of the billions who populate the world!'

Aspiration, on the other hand, is the soul's desire to give itself. True self giving is without reserve, without demand, without any condition, without any bargaining. With the soul touch, it is a new paradigm. Any work we are doing gets done better. Aspiration shows us the way. Circumstances of life change on their own. Life becomes more meaningful.

In Sri Aurobindo's terminology, man aspires from below – the movement given the name of *ascent*, and the Grace answers from above, the *descent*. If you put your trust in Him, He will do what is best for you – best for your growth. In all vicissitudes of life He will be a source of strength for you.

The Mother says:
"In aspiration, there is what I might call an unselfish flame which is not present in desire....aspiration is self giving always."

Indu Pillay

Lunch Time....After Decades....07 October 2007

From 1956, when I joined "Aurobindo Ashram" in the nursery section, to 1966, when my Higher Secondary Batch (11th Class) passed out along with me from The Mother's School, I could hardly visualize a day without meeting my batchmates. But when we all parted company to chase our individual dreams and destinies we drifted apart, paying very few visits to our alma-mater or even to each other.

We do tend to forget that the world is round and rotates all the time. So even if you stand aside and see it spin, one day, it will have to happen that you re-visit your childhood through inexplicable set of circumstances (which in hindsight I would call a *supraconscious force*).

How else do I explain what happened on 7 October 2007 when four of thirteen batchmates of 1966 Batch could meet up for lunch at the Airforce Officers Mess at Dr. Zakir Hussain Marg, New Delhi, some after a gap of four decades. Pradeep Chopra, Sunad Biswas, Vinod Kashyap and I, talked incessantly, so much like the scene in the classroom decades ago. Did it really matter that balding pates and greying hairlines competed with bulging waistlines as old friends tried hard to recognise each other! The wives present looked on quositively.

In our days at school we used to have Houses named as *Gratitude, Peace, Patience, Courage* and such like. I could use the same words to describe our meeting as well as our feelings on that day. We again could have fun remembering our Mentors and Teachers with great fondness as well as with genuine regard while the spouses present exchanged notes/telephone numbers. Being the better halves of the 'Mother's Blossoms', they generally poked fun at the behaviour of their child..hubbies and could only shake their heads over incomprehensible names like ...Mr. Pearson, Mr. S. N. Jauhar, Sh Lal Singh Bhagowalia, Mr. Prasher, Ms. Lata Madam, Ms. Indu Madam, Mrs. Banerji, Sh Om Prakash Sharma – Aditya, the Hindi Teacher/Poet, Mr. Pradhan and Mr. Madan. Mrs. Parthose, Mr. Imam, Mr. Verma, Mrs. Popli and Mr. Katyal (English Teacher who went up in a glider and came down vertically but safely at Safdarjung Airport when the glider crashed!).

Nobody present minded that the drinks went from chilled to warm and the lunch from hot to cold while we reminiscenced about the cricket googlies and flag kicks, debates and recitations, dramatics and *shram daan*.

For 10 long years in school was I vainly exhorted to write a 'precis' well. So now I must cease writing more. Like they say, "Be brief and be-gone!" Before we dispersed, we all were found exclaiming over copies of the senior 1964 batch passing out group photograph which my mother had preserved to show to her grandchildren and to my wife. How I looked without my moustache and how Pradeep and I kept a respectful distance from co-ed.

Thank you 'Mother's School' and 'Mother's Blossoms' and all the persons present whose efforts paid off rich dividends and made the day a memorable one for all of us. I am grateful to those who came and also to those who tried.

.....Air Commodore Pankaj Mehrotra was awarded *Vishisht Seva Medal* by the President of India on 26 January 2007 before he retired from Indian Air Force on 30 April 2007 in the Aeronautical Engineering Branch. The medal was presented to him by the Chief of Air Staff on 8 October 2007. He had joined Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1956. His admission number was 15. He is presently staying in Pune and visits Delhi/Gurgaon regularly. His contact details are: Mobile: 09325642024. E mail: pnkjmehrotra@yahoo.co.in

Pankaj Mehrotra, Class of 1966

Whither Happiness?

Ramesh Bijlani
Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch, New Delhi 110 016

Be simple. Be happy. Remain quiet. Do your work as well as you can. Keep yourself always open towards me. This is all that is asked from you.

– The Mother

"Be happy" says the Mother. Is it possible to will ourselves to be happy unless we have what it takes to be happy, such as objects of desire, good health, and the love of our near and dear ones? In order to answer this question, let us first have a look at a popular notion of happiness. It is commonly believed that happiness resides in all the things that money can buy, which is not far from its simplified version that happiness resides in money. The simplified version is so seductive that money becomes an end in itself – even the stuff which it can buy and the happiness expected from it are forgotten. The result is that there is intense competition for courses such as management, medicine and engineering, which invariably lead to well-paid jobs. Inevitably, the majority of seekers are disappointed. But what about the few who get what they wanted. They earn degrees, titles and money. They acquire all the things that money can buy. They get everything in which they think resides the universal goal of happiness, but paradoxically they are also unhappy. There are MBAs under twenty-five, still single, whose parents expect nothing from them, getting more than Rs. 25,000 a month. They are unhappy because they are broke, heartbroken, or both. There are successful senior professionals in their forties who are unhappy because of disappointments, jealousies and rivalries at the workplace, domestic disharmony, or poor health. There are retired people in their sixties who apparently got in life everything they wanted, but are unhappy because they suddenly feel unwanted both at their workplace and at home, and do not know how to fill the vacuum in their lives. Obviously, there is something wrong with the notion that happiness depends on what we get in life. Suppose I want a car very badly, and I am sure that the car will make me happy. My mind dwells on the car for a few years. Finally, when I get a car, I am happy. Does it mean that happiness resides in the car? Since I have struggled quite a bit to get the car, when I do get it, I feel fulfilled. For some time, I do not want anything else. Till I am in that state, I am happy. The happiness lasts exactly for the interval between getting the car and wanting something else – may be, an air-conditioner. What it means is that happiness resides not in the car, but in 'not wanting anything'. 'Not wanting anything' is an inner state. The conclusion is that happiness is within us, not in the object outside. A person goes and donates a unit of blood. That makes him happy. He has not got anything – in fact, he has given something. The person is happy because while donating blood he thought of another individual in need. In the process, he got so completely absorbed in somebody else's need that he forgot what he himself wants. In other words, he was once again in a state of 'not wanting anything'. Thus, to be happy, we need not get anything at all. In fact, the joy of giving is much greater than the joy of getting.

The above discussion points to one fundamental truth: the source of happiness resides within. But what we generally do is to look outside for happiness – in objects that we want, in the work that we do, in the people to whom we are attached, in being healthy, and so on. These are all entities which are inconstant, unreliable, erratic and unpredictable. The objects that seem to give us happiness are perishable, the happiness they give is short-lasting, and the list of still more objects that we may want is endless. For very few fortunate ones in the world, the work that they enjoy doing coincides with the work that they have to do for a living. Even the fortunate ones cannot go on doing the same work for ever: enforced 'superannuation' or bodily disability might force them to give

up the work. People to whom we are attached do not always behave the way we would like them to. Further, these people cannot be always with us. Life events keep taking them away from us, and finally death brings irreversible separation. Nobody can be sure of being healthy for ever. On the contrary, we can be sure of getting some of the diseases to which the body is vulnerable sometime or the other. In short, a person who depends for his happiness on what he has makes his happiness vulnerable to factors beyond his control. The way out of this fragile state is to realize the limitations of the pleasure we get from outside, and not to mistake this pleasure for happiness. If we realize these limitations, we may enjoy outer objects and conditions but we will not be dependent on them, we will not be attached to them. In fact, we can enjoy them better if we are not attached to them because then we are free from the nagging feeling of insecurity: 'how long will it last?'. When we are free from our dependence on external circumstances, we can will ourselves to be happy whenever we want. That is why the Mother has asked us to "be happy". So different is this inner state from what is commonly mistaken for happiness that words such as joy, delight and bliss have been coined to describe it.

The purpose of human life is not happiness but spiritual growth. To complete the journey of spiritual growth, a whole lifetime is generally not enough. But far before we complete the journey, we experience joy and delight. Thus happiness itself may not be the goal of life, but a superior version of happiness is a natural by-product of pursuing the ultimate goal of life. In fact, joy and delight are a perfectly valid compensation, justification and motivation for embarking on the journey and sticking to the path.



If real joy lies in giving and sharing, in spreading happiness and in bringing smiles on faces then I did experience the most joyous moments of my life this XMAS. Fortunately for me, the opportunity came in guise of none other than Santa Claus himself, as I got to dress and act as one myself and was asked to share with children of MKV small "goodies/gifts" - which enthused and brightened their innocent faces and made them enjoy those few moments in a very lively and fun filled manner. There are no words to describe the emotions that I felt at that particular point in time. To have about 100 kids singing, dancing and rallying around you is indeed a moment worth experiencing and I hope I'll be fortunate enough in future too, to be able to spread smiles around.

Atul Sud
Class of 1989

The Society would like to thank Mr. Nav Ratan Gupta for sponsoring the education of 10 underprivileged children by contributing Rs 1.5 Lakhs. Mr. Gupta is from the 1981 batch and is based in USA.



Memories

Writing a few lines for the Mother's Blossoms Newsletter takes me back into long corridors of memory - way back into those initial years when I had freshly joined the school. I think I was destined to come to MIS and it was not just a matter of chance. Coming straight from the boisterous atmosphere of Delhi University, North Campus, the first thing to hit me was the calm, peaceful and serene atmosphere of the school campus – a place which was strikingly dotted with lush green trees everywhere and cool breeze blowing through them all the time. The peaceful ambience of this place actually touched me instantly and I took to this place as a fish takes to water and there has been no turning back since then. Over the years, this place has grown on me and has given me a lot in terms of physical, mental and emotional maturity.

I vividly remember the Table Tennis matches I used to have with my students in the initial years. I was an avid player of this game in my school and college days and missed no opportunity at having a match or two at the slightest possibility. I also remember the day I had a class with VII A and a cow stood right in front of the door and refused to budge. A few students and I just stood there and then finally I had to cancel the class!

I also remember I was once politely told by the Principal (Mr. Madan at that time) not to talk in the morning assembly! I was more of a student than a teacher in my early years but gradually I sobered down and learnt the rules of this place.

My trip to Pondicherry – with memories of the Samadhi, the seaside café, the upcoming place called Auroville, the eleven-days return journey to Delhi by the School's Khatar bus – is still there with me. On the return journey by bus, we used to stop in a school or college (pre-arranged) for the night stay and again start in the morning with sight seeing stopovers on the way - out of which I still remember the amazing huge marble rocks of Jabalpur. The trip was fun and enjoyment came free and undiluted.

The work-culture in the school was governed by rules and regulations but the entire routine was carried out with a relaxed and easygoing spirit. We used to stay back after school for some 'House-work' or other activities and have samosa party at 4 pm from nearby cafes. The long practise sessions for the Annual Day and Physical Demonstration were invariably converted into small picnic sessions in groups.

I have had a long innings here and I have seen this place develop and expand with the passage of time. My strong bonding with the essence, spirit and roots of this place has given me a lot of internal strength to remain centred within and cope successfully with all situations – odd or even – across this long journey called LIFE! I hope and pray that all our Mother's Blossoms also feel the same way and help MIS to bloom and grow from strength to strength with each new phase!

Mrs. Archana Chugh

Mrs. Archana Chugh joined MIS staff in 1973. At present she teaches Mathematics to classes IX-XII in MIS.

New Life Members		
Arun Kumar Bansal	1961	Rajan Wanchoo 1984
Geeta Narayan	1972	Shruti Sood Kapoor 1984
Dr. Harish Gulati	1973	C. Sessa Sai 1986
Praveen Kumar	1975	Faraz Hasan 1986
Urvashi Jain	1975	C. Sri Satya 1987
Sanjay Leekha	1976	Vidhi Trikha 1987
Sunil Wadhwa	1976	Sunil Goel 1988
Rina Surana	1977	Vikas Sahdev 1989
Monty Bedi	1979	Randeep Miglani 1991
Nav Ratan Gupta	1980	Aniruddh Choudhary 2000
Anil Sharma	1981	Pranay Soni 2002
Ravinder Mittal	1983	Akanksha Munjhal 2003
Sangeeta Chadha	1983	Vasundhara Bhatnagar 2003
Jaideep Mukherjee	1984	Vrinda Khetan 2003
		Ritik Wadhwa 2006

Talent Festival - November 14, 2007

It all began in May when some members of our Governing Body met with the Principal of MIS. During this meeting it was decided that the Society would sponsor and co-organize the annual Talent Festival held in the school. Subsequently, the Society and the school both got busy with their own agendas and nothing was discussed till the first week of November.

A meeting was called by the Principal and the Society was informed that the Festival had been fixed for November 14 (Childrens Day). Mrs. Mahrukh Singh was very excited about the event and was confident that we could pull it off, despite the very short notice. We, on the other hand, were just plain nervous!

Two thousand one hundred students and nine days to get everything ready! That is how we saw the organizing of the Talent Festival 2007. A meeting with the Student's Council put us in the right mood. They all seemed so happy, so excited, so ready to get into their events that there was no way we would let this opportunity slip.

There was a gigantic task lying in front of us. Events had to be finalized, judges had to be invited, prizes had to be finalized and duties had to be assigned.

The Primary section decided not to have any competitive event for their children. They opted for a puppet show and class participation games for that day.

The Middle and Senior school got together to finalize 27 events ranging from English Creative Writing and Spin a Poem to Art and Craft events like Mask Making, Bottle Painting, Poster making, Rangoli, Flower arrangement and etc. There were competitions for Dress Designing, Salad making, Bulletin Express, art related Different Strokes, Dance and Music was also given equal importance.



Once the events were finalized, calls were made to our ex-students. Some said they were busy, some said they would call back but most of them were glad to be part of the show. A variety of things were given as prizes - books by interesting authors comprised the major chunk.

Mr. Anil Mangla from the batch of 1976 sponsored the gifts for Web Designing and Mrs. Charu Leekha from the same batch gave the gifts for the Dress Designing section. Then there was this huge effort from Mr. Gautam Dhawan (1991), who managed to rope in a person who makes mathematical toys and convinced him to do a whole event based on it. Gautam managed to get gifts like books, Educational CDs and mathematical games for the Primary Section as well.

The day of the event arrived and to our pleasant surprise, all the judges and volunteers were in their respective venues right on time. Old memories and new talent made every ex-student's contribution worthwhile. The sheer joy of being back in school was clearly evident on their faces. After a round of tea, results were declared and prizes distributed.

Every student of the Primary section was given a set of crayons and toffees and every student of the Middle and Senior school got a small packet of chips and a chocolate.

All left with a smile on their faces. We, the organizing committee, were thrilled on being congratulated for conducting the Festival so smoothly. The feedback so far has been very positive and of course, the alumni is quite pleased with its efforts!!