



Established in 1936
The Doon School
WEEKLY



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‘Capital’ Concert

Priya Chaturvedi reviews the concert by the Capital City Minstrels, who performed in the Rose Bowl on Saturday, February 20



The Rose Bowl generates its own magic. What other possible venue, then, could there be for the launching of the DS-75 celebrations? And in what better manner (I confess my prejudice here) than with an evening of music? The concert by the Capital City Minstrels was the culmination of months of planning; as the Headmaster said in his Message on the occasion, “the complex logistics of bringing a large choir and their accompanists from Delhi” needed a great deal of spadework which involved many members of the community. It began with a tentative dialogue between myself and Old Boy and CCM member Suman Dubey almost a year ago, but gained momentum with astonishing speed. CCM coordinator Gita Bhatia visited the school, approved – predictably – wholeheartedly of the venue and its acoustics which are so well-suited to choral music. Once the Headmaster, PBR and GSS gave the go-ahead, and the DSOBS very generously offered to sponsor the show, that’s just what we did. During the winter break, I met the CCM’s charismatic conductor, Gabriella Boda-Rechner, and discussed the harmonization of our very own *Lab Pe...* as a fitting finale to the programme, and then we were in 2010: the Platinum Jubilee year. The concert date had been fixed in August 2009, so, though preparations for the show were hectic, they weren’t chaotic. With the Governor of Uttarakhand, Srimati Margaret Alva having consented to be Chief Guest, the Rose Bowl was all set to work its magic, weather permitting, which it did. CCM accommodated in their ranks The Doon School choir, who after two weeks of practice were in good and confident voice. The orchestra had rehearsed the National Anthem, with School Music Captain Shatrunjai Rai Dewan using a stopwatch instead of a baton (for the mandatory 53 seconds to be perfected), and, on a surprisingly balmy evening, DS-75 was on its way. An elegant brochure, a little work of art in itself, was designed by Abhilaksh Lalwani to mark the occasion.

The CCM sing in four-part harmony, for soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices. Their polyphonic style needs minimal accompaniment, but whatever there was, was brilliantly rendered by percussionist Suchet Malhotra and his array of instruments from across the world and pianist Andrey Demidenko. Flaring tapers lit the stage as the choristers came on, singing as they did. The CCM are known for being a pioneer of chambers choirs, dedicated to promoting international music, as our School Captain said in his welcome address. Its eclectic repertoire of Western classical, Indian and World music has an echo in the mix of its members who are of different ages, nationalities and backgrounds. The evening’s concert reflected both in full measure.

From 19th century German composer Anton Bruckner’s *Locus Iste*, with its profound bass solo sung by Steve Kerchoff, to an interesting rhythmic arrangement of *Raghu Pati Raghav Raja Ram*, the predominant mood was of deep spirituality. The Marathi bhajan *Nama Nama Maria* and the often-performed *Qui Tollis* by Haydn sparkled with contrapuntal intricacy. Neeraj Devraj’s tenor solo in the spiritual *He Never Failed Me Yet*, was haunting in its blues-style use of pitch-bending. The *Ethno-Mass for Peace* with percussive effects from the ocean drum which simulated the sound of waves, brought out the vibrant tone-colour of the choir, and ended with the rousing and sonorous *Yakanaka*. Here, as indeed throughout the concert, inspired conducting from Gabriella Boda-Rechner brought transparency to the music, with every strand clear and well-balanced, and yet the whole having that inner cohesion that polyphonic music requires.

That very golden-oldie, *Can’t Help Falling in Love With You*, came next, and featured the School choir singing the tenor part. Touching in its simplicity, the song’s seamless harmonies wove the melodic lines well. A most effective version of *Lab Pe Aati Hai Dua*, where the audience was cordially invited to join in, the vote of thanks by the Headmaster, applause that demanded an encore, brought this very special occasion to its close. The choir left the stage as it had come on to it: singing, leaving their conductor to take a final bow.

RECENT VISITORS

The **Capital City Minstrels**, a Delhi-based choir, performed in the Rose Bowl on Saturday, February 20. The concert launched the DS-75 celebrations in School.

Suchet Malhotra, a Delhi-based percussionist conducted a workshop on world percussions instruments on February 18 and 19. A report runs in the next issue.

APPOINTMENTS

The following are some appointments for the forthcoming year:

School Tennis Captain: Kanav Mehra

Boy-in-Charge, Child Education SUPW: Tanuj Kumar

Secretary, Mess Committee: Shekhar Bishnoi
We wish them a fruitful tenure.

AWARDS

Srinivas Swami has received the '**Dronacharya Award for Outstanding Work**' in the '**Save the Earth**' programme, given by the Indian Centre for Wildlife and Environmental Studies in the South Asia Region.

Aditya Sukhia, Ranjai Singh Sodhi and Rishi Sood have been awarded the **Scholar's Blazer**.
Congratulations!

NEW STA

The **Doon School Stock Exchange**, a new STA, has been instituted. The Masters-in-Charge are MIA and DES.

TRINITY TOPPER

Sriyash Kishorepuria has been ranked first nationally in the **Grade 8 Trinity Guildhall Examinations** for Piano. This is the second year running he has accomplished this. He will be performing in the 'Trinity Toppers' concert to be held in April in New Delhi. Congratulations!

 **ATTENTION CARTOONISTS!**

There will be a book commemorating **Doon School Cartoons** for DS-75 which will feature cartoons published in the past as well as current contributions. All interested Old Boys and present students of the School may contact Shivam Katyal at 363@doonschool.com for more details.

Opinion oll

Your role model/idol is: a) a sports star; b) a movie star; c) a political figure?

A		55%
B		33%
C		12%

(308 members of the community were polled)

Next Week's Question: Do you think Holi celebrations in School should be more lively?

INTER-HOUSE RESULTS

The following are the positions of the **Academic Cup** for the year 2009:

1st: Hyderabad

2nd: Oberoi

3rd: Jaipur

4th: Tata

5th: Kashmir

The following are the results of the **Preliminary Round** of the **Senior Inter-House English Debates 2010:**

Hyderabad vs Jaipur

Best Speaker: Shashank Peshawaria

Most Promising Speaker: Rohan Shriram

Winner: Hyderabad House

Oberoi vs Kashmir

Best Speaker: Vivek Santayana

Most Promising Speaker: Shoumitra Srivastava

Winner: Kashmir

Well done!

The following are the results of the various **Inter-House Cricket** matches played recently:

House XI

Tata vs Hyderabad

Tata: 167 all out

Hyderabad: 169 for 6

Jaipur vs Oberoi

Jaipur: 124 all out

Oberoi: 121 all out

Kashmir vs Jaipur

Kashmir: 76 all out

Jaipur: 80 for 1

Hyderabad vs Oberoi

Hyderabad: 165 for 7

Oberoi: 160 for 5

Well played!

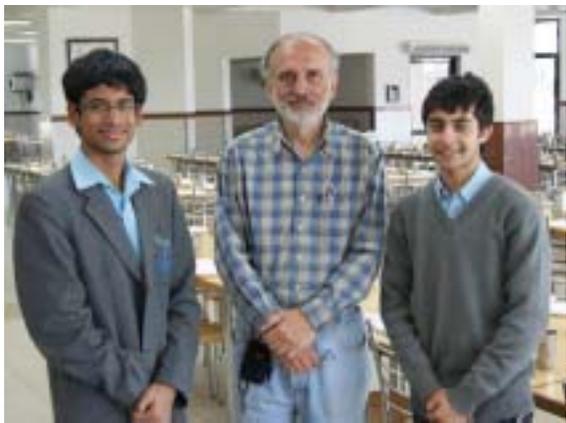
doontoon *Madhav Dutt*



Only 28 days hath February...

Up Close with a *Minstrel*

The Doon School Weekly's interview with **Suman Dubey**, (ex-67 J '58), who performed with the Capital City Minstrels



The Doon School Weekly (DSW): How does it feel to be back in School? What do you feel about the many changes you see?

Suman Dubey (SDY): I'm not a regular visitor. I last came here in 2008, on my batch's 50th jubilee. I used to visit School frequently when my son was here, in the '80s. While there are new buildings around the campus, for me, an essential part of School has remained almost exactly the same. It feels great to be back here, where a great part of my life began. One thing I must say is that I am impressed by the standard of work done by boys, be it on the sports' field or music or anything. As for the many changes I see, I guess the School

must keep up with the times. We must change according to the need of the day. The IB, for example, was the way forward in this time of globalization as it is recognized internationally. My son had to go to England to do the IB. While we must hold on to some of our traditions, we must respond to the changing necessities of the boys.

DSW: Was it your passion for music that brought the group to School?

SDY: Music has been my passion since I was in School. I remember Gurdial Singh, who was a Geography teacher when I was in School. He eventually became a Housemaster and then Deputy Headmaster, but he was my Geography teacher. One day, he said, "We're not going to study Geography today. Instead, we'll listen to some music." He took us to his house, the one on the side of the Main Field, and played Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* and Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*. That was my introduction to Western classical music. After that, one thing followed the other and I joined this choir. I've been singing with them for twelve years. We have performed mostly in Delhi. Performing in a school is relatively new to us. But honestly, it wasn't I who brought the group here.

DSW: How significant is the concert to the start of DS-75?

SDY: It is a great privilege for us. DS-75 is a major event. While we are the first performance of the year, there will be a huge number of other events over the course of the year, which will eventually culminate at Founder's.

DSW: Do you feel these jubilees are exaggerated celebrations?

SDY: It is a competitive world. People are more mobile. Branding has become important. Many schools sell themselves. The brand of Doon is important. We have to project ourselves and spread the message to people outside. But then again, it should be done with subtlety. If it is something superficial, just to raise money, for instance, then you can ask questions. But otherwise, it's a good thing. We have to tell people what we stand for and that we have values, traditions, history and alumni whom we are proud of. We haven't just come here yesterday. Anniversaries are good events to remember these things. It's a good idea, provided it is done with integrity, subtlety and honesty to the values of the School.

DSW: Is there a hype around being a Dosco or an Old Boy?

SDY: Honestly, it's all our doing. We are all proud of our alumni. It's true, everyone in every class may not be bright. But, when I came here in 2008, I heard Chris Patton's speech, and I have made many others read it. It said that because you have the resources and the access to such education, you will do well and you will contribute to society. But you will not be successful if you don't remember those who do not have such privileges. You must see their success as part of your own. I don't mean this in just social service projects, but in how you relate to the world. If this pride is in such a regard, then it's a good thing. Otherwise, it doesn't impress me.

DSW: Was it in your schooldays that you developed a passion for music and writing?

SDY: Well, for writing, I'd say no, although I had written three articles on my midterms. They were included in the *Chandbagh* magazine and also the anthology *For Hills to Climb*. One of them was on my trip to Nanda Devi in 1961, one on the Everest expedition of 1962 (both of which were first printed in the *Weekly*) and a third (that was published in the *Indian Express*) on my midterm to Leo Purgyol. As for music, yes, and the same goes for mountain climbing. I was in Welham Boys' before I joined Doon, and I played the sitar there. That's where it began. Of course, my interest in Western classical music would come a long time after I left School.

DSW: Do you think the influence on the boys of exemplary teachers has reduced?

SDY: I had mentioned Gurdial Singh. Well, he was the biggest influence, but he wasn't the only one. I was in boarding schools since I was six. I'm a long-time boarder and I have seen a number of teachers, such as Mr Holdsworth, Mr Martyn, SC Roy and Charlie Kandhari (who joined sometime during my stay in School). All of them influenced me collectively. And I also remember Mr Deshpande, who was the music teacher then. He was another influence. But what I feel is that it is a mistaken perception. The hero-worship we have grown up with, when we talk of our teachers in those days, will eventually be the case with boys today too.

| Interview |

Harrow to Doon

The Doon School Weekly interviewed the new gap year teacher on campus, **Vikram Matthai**

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): Tell us something about your background.

Vikram Matthai (VMT): I was born and brought up in London, and did my schooling from Harrow. My father, grandfather and many of my uncles attended The Doon School. My father, Arjun Matthai (ex-86 H'67) was, in fact, the Editor-in-Chief of the *Weekly* at one point.

DSW: What major differences do you notice between India and the UK?

VMT: The economic and social inequality is vast in India, especially when comparing The Doon School campus and the immediate surrounding areas. However, it is apparent that the new generation is far more hard working and determined to improve their lives and reduce such a socio-economic divide. The work ethics here are much better, and these things pertain to most of Asia. A glimpse of the same is seen in Doon.

DSW: What are your views on the Indian educational system?

VMT: From what I can see, there is too much rote-learning. In School, the emphasis needs to be laid on developing interest in the students and on free-thinking. One strong point here is that a student studies many more subjects than in the UK. That way, a student understands topics clearly and can relate to them. Specialization should be left for university.

DSW: In that case, do you think the IB is the way forward?

VMT: I feel the IB is a more helpful system for students themselves. This is mainly because the IB is a more suitable system which requires application instead of only memorizing facts. It is not what you learn; it is about how you can use what you learn.

DSW: What similarities and differences do you notice between Harrow and Doon?

VMT: Harrow's campus is similar – there are old classrooms and similar meal-time formalities. In Harrow, everything is spaced out, whereas all facilities are close by in Doon. Both the schools have a competitive yet friendly environment, but I feel there is more emphasis on sports and extra-curricular activities and less on academics in both institutions. Extracurricular activities such as sports, music and drama are necessary to form a well-developed person, but it is important that academics take priority, especially in the senior years. As both are boarding schools, their students are determined, are tough, and, most importantly, know how to manage their time. Also, in Doon, the atmosphere is far more relaxed. Harrow was too formal – we had to wear hats and neat ties. However, boys studying in Harrow and Doon would be quite similar – they will both become leaders of the future.

DSW: How do you feel about Doon, so far?

VMT: Teaching here at the Doon has been a great experience and cultural exposure. I much enjoy teaching geography to the bright young boys in B and C forms, as well as getting involved in many sporting pursuits. There is a warm and relaxed atmosphere created by both the masters and the boys here which is wonderful.

| Report |

Project Adventure

Manik Garg recounts his experience at RSIS Kenya over the winter break

On the morning of December 9, after a seventeen-hour-long journey, Angad Bawa and I finally arrived at our destination, the Starehe Boys' School in Nairobi. It is a charitable institution that has been involved with the Round Square for almost as long as it has functioned. By the end of the first day, the entire group had assembled, consisting of representatives from schools in India, Australia, Thailand, Canada, Germany and South Africa. Before leaving for the project site, we acquainted ourselves with each other through some 'icebreaking' games. Our project leader was Pierina Ridler, who was an invaluable asset, having been involved with projects in Kenya for the past seventeen years. On our third day, we went to the Ibissil Girls' School, which owes its expansion and development largely to the Round Square. On our arrival, we were divided into groups comprising Ibissil girls, Starehe boys and an assortment of students from the other schools.

During the ten days of the project we were to build a library. For assistance, we had with us four *fundis* or craftsmen and Peter Ndungu (the Round Square head of Starehe Boys'). Every day of the project was an adventure in itself and a report can be written on each one. To put it in a nutshell, on the first day, there was just a concrete foundation and on the tenth, there stood a building, complete with lintels, window gaps and columns. During our working days, we laid down waterproofing material, mixed cement and diligently carried loads of bricks and buckets of water. The project over, we headed towards the Masai Mara, the world's biggest game reserve. Before reaching the Mara, we stayed the night at a resort with an authentic tribal ambience, where we had a much-awaited swim and got our first view of African wildlife. We saw giraffes, ostriches, water hogs (known locally as *pumba*), and a variety of birds. On the next day we reached the Mara. Here we felt as if we were in a *National Geographic* documentary! We saw crocodiles, cheetahs, buffaloes, elephants, Thompson's gazelles, wildebeests, hippos and prides of lions. This was one of the best parts of the trip as we were staying in a cozy lodge and eating delicious food. Every day, we would meet different people of the Masai community and hear their stories of life in the 'bush'.

We also visited a *manyatta*, or village, where we bought lots of souvenirs. We also administered deworming medicines to the children. As an exciting finale to our trip, we saw a 'kill' taking place: we were awe-struck at the sight of the four lions feeding on a buffalo. The next day, we enjoyed our drive back to Nairobi, taking immense pleasure in the breathtaking views of the Great Rift Valley of Africa. On our last day in Kenya, Angad and I said our goodbyes and boarded the plane, feeling content at a job well done and friends well made.

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| Viewpoint |

Year Thirteen

Vivek Santayana on the inclusion of the IB Sc-Leavers in the School's functioning as a form above the Sc

The opening of Inter-House competitions to the Sc-Leavers has attracted a great deal of controversy. The prevailing notion is that, 'traditionally', the Sc-Leavers, come February, are relegated to the fringes of our community. Their exclusion was thought to be in their academic interest, as they would only have a month before their Board examinations. The School takes very seriously its responsibility for its students' academic performance. The introduction of the IB has complicated this. The IB Sc-Leavers have their examinations in May, so they end up staying for an entire term. They even have structured classes over the course of February and March. Unfortunately, the grounds on which Sc-Leavers have been excluded from School activities do not apply as appropriate to the IB students, who comprise a significant minority. If they have an academic routine and they may use School facilities, why can't we accept them as part of the community and as a 'Year Thirteen'?

Adding an additional year above the highest form is something that has already happened, with the addition of the 'Sc form' when the School changed affiliations from the Senior Cambridge to the ICSE. The entire 'E form' was also dropped. These changes in the structure of the School's hierarchy were obviously difficult, and they must have come about after a great deal of deliberation and forced acceptance. Considering the changes that have happened, 'Year Thirteen' is possible. The real complication is that only a part of the batch will become 'Year Thirteen', and hence be involved in the School and its activities. Already, IB students have participated in a couple of School events. Our former School Captain sang with the choir in the Capital City Minstrels' concert and one 'Year Thirteen'-er (the *Weekly's* ex-Editor-in-Chief) represented the School at HMUN.

Most obviously, the change will have to happen first in nomenclature. Labelling them 'Leavers' excludes them from the community, and, if I may quote one of them, it feels like they are "terminally ill, waiting to be euthanised". This change in nomenclature should reflect how we receive them. We shouldn't consider them mere occupants till the end of May, but part of the School community. After nomenclature, we must integrate them into our School system fully. They should be required to follow dress codes and uniform, attend Assembly and meals along with the rest of the School (and, dare I say, be present punctually). Rules should apply as stringently to them as they do to the rest of the community.

The resultant hierarchical changes, of course, require

detailed review. The 'Year Thirteen'-ers would leave at the end of May. The ISC batch will only stay for half that time. While the Y13-ers may be a tier above the Scs, they will not have any official position of authority. How this will go down with the new Sc form is a daunting thought. There already have been cases of conflict involving Sc-Leavers and other members of the community. Furthermore, the already-complex relationship between the Sc-Ls and the Sc form will be further tangled: will the community consider the 'Year Thirteen' another strata and a complete part of School or will they remain an Sc-L form that is included into the School system for the sake of administrative convenience and curriculum transaction?

More difficult still is the discrimination caused between the IB and the ISC students of the same batch. Will the IB students rise a year above the ISC students? Their being part of the School system may integrate them into the School community, but the equality imposed on the ISC and IB students till their Sc form would paradoxically bring the IB boys back to the level of being the ones who are singled out again. The idea of equal opportunity to students of both systems is also defeated: the boys in 'Year Thirteen' will have another chance at competing in and winning a number of competitions.

It is difficult to run two contrasting systems simultaneously, especially in a school which follows a separate curriculum in addition to its Board prescriptions. The school I had been to on exchange offered both the IB and the German programme. For those that enrolled in the latter, the school offered eleven grades, and the twelfth and thirteenth were offered at the college. The IBDP candidates, on the other hand, took the pre-IB programme that had ten grades, and then went directly to the college for the two years of the IBDP. Essentially, the tenth grade pre-IB students skipped an entire year as compared to those in the German system. This wasn't an issue there, as the community there wasn't hierarchical. But such anomalies do exist; there's no denying them. Similar discrepancies within the hierarchy are the most difficult problems to address. While the administrative issues can be dealt with in a matter of months, it will take years for us to deal with a drastic change in the nature of hierarchy. Inevitably, we will have to accept the issues and redress the imbalances at hand. We make too big a compromise on the part of the IB students for the benefit of the ISC majority. I believe we must rethink the system to arrive at a solution that is to the satisfaction of both parties.

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