In Memory Of...

On behalf of the School community, the Weekly mourns the passing away of Dr Hari Datt Bhatt ‘Shailesh’, who passed away on September 19, 2011. Dr Mohan Joshi writes a tribute.

Late Dr Hari Datt Bhatt ‘Shailesh,’ joined The Doon School in 1953 in the Hindi and Indian Languages Department. He taught Hindi and Sanskrit upto 1984, after which he sought voluntary retirement. I joined the School in January 1979, and at that time he was the Housemaster of Foot House and the Head of Department of Hindi and Indian Languages.

Dr Bhatt served the School for 33 years and in these years he contributed to many spheres of the school’s life. He was a part of various Doon School mountaineering expeditions like the one to Jaonli, and trekked to almost every destination in the Garhwal and Kumaon hills. Not only was he a great presence in the classroom, he was very active on the sports field as well, his favourite games being hockey and football. He contributed a lot to the School’s community and social service programme under the banner of the ‘Dehat Sabha’, later called ‘Village Development’. He successfully ran the Panchayat Ghar for the children of our support staff, and the Tunwala School for underprivileged children for many years.

Our Hindi Department gained strength and respect because of Dr Bhatt’s sincere endeavours, sheer hard work and transparent methods of operation. He selected Hindi and Sanskrit teachers very carefully and helped all freshers to become effective and caring teachers. Along with Hindi, he saw to it that other Indian languages like Bangla, Punjabi and Urdu were also taught at The Doon School.

As Housemaster of two boarding houses, Kashmir and Foot, he will be remembered as a very caring and affectionate person. His doors were always open for students and teachers. I never saw or heard Dr Bhatt angry or raising his voice at anybody. He was a very simple, down to earth person with great self respect, ever ready to assist anybody who sought his help. Many people from the hills and from neighbouring local areas used to come to his residence almost regularly to seek his advice in getting jobs. Nobody went back disappointed. I was also amongst one of those whom he helped, and I am thankful to Sir for this.

Apart from being a sincere and affectionate teacher, Dr Bhatt was a litterateur par excellence. He successfully tried his hand at almost every form of literature. He penned almost a hundred books in Hindi, English, Sanskrit and Garhwali. He is one of the few writers who wrote short stories and novels based on the mountains and mountain life. His story, ‘Snow and Snow’ was aired by BBC for three days in a row on a New Year in the early ‘90s. He wrote short stories, novels, drama and poetry with equal dexterity. His book on the Garhwali language is considered to be the most authentic one on the subject. It might have well been the first time an erudite book was written on the subject. He received many awards for his writings from the Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand governments, and he was felicitated a number of times by various institutions. Last June he was bestowed with the Dr. Shivanand Nautiyal Memorial Award for his literary achievements.

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Dr Bhatt was highly respected by people from all walks of life. He had friends and well wishers across political parties, as was evident when people from across parties like the Congress, BJP, CPI, and CPM came to offer their condolences after his sad demise.

At this hour of sorrow, on behalf of the entire Doon School community, we pray to the Almighty God to give strength to Mrs. Bhatt, Himanshu, Malvika, Himani, Katyayan, Pranjal and all other family members to bear this loss. Dr H D Bhatt ‘Shailesh’ will always remain in our memories. May his soul rest in peace.
We welcome Michael Van Zyl from Bridgehouse School, South Africa. He is staying in Tata House and attending S form IB classes. We wish him a fruitful and memorable stay.

HINDI DEBATING

The following are the results of the Inter-House Hindi Debates, 2011:
1st: Jaipur
2nd: Tata
3rd: Oberoi
4th: Hyderabad
5th: Kashmir

Best Speaker in the Final Round: Varun Gupta
Best Speaker Overall: Ritesh Shinde

Congratulations!

TALK

Rohan Tibrewalla, alumnus interviewer of University of Pennsylvania, gave a talk on Tuesday, September 20.

IH MUSIC

The following are the results of the Inter-House Music Competition, 2011:

Solo Piano
1st: Oberoi
2nd: Kashmir
3rd: Hyderabad
4th: Tata
5th: Jaipur

Drums Solo
1st: Hyderabad
2nd: Kashmir
3rd: Tata
4th: Oberoi
5th: Jaipur

Tabla
1st: Tata
2nd: Hyderabad
3rd: Oberoi
4th: Kashmir
5th: Jaipur

Hindustani Classical Vocal
1st: Jaipur
2nd: Hyderabad
3rd: Tata
4th: Kashmir
5th: Oberoi

Hindustani Instrumental
1st: Oberoi
2nd: Jaipur
3rd: Tata
4th: Kashmir
5th: Hyderabad

Drums Solo
1st: Hyderabad
2nd: Kashmir
3rd: Tata
4th: Oberoi
5th: Jaipur

Tabla
1st: Tata
2nd: Hyderabad
3rd: Oberoi
4th: Kashmir
5th: Jaipur

Hindustani Classical Vocal
1st: Jaipur
2nd: Hyderabad
3rd: Tata
4th: Oberoi
5th: Kashmir

Popular Band
1st: Jaipur
2nd: Hyderabad
3rd: Tata
4th: Oberoi
5th: Kashmir

House Positions
1st: Tata
2nd: Jaipur
3rd: Hyderabad
4th: Oberoi
5th: Kashmir
6th: Oberoi

Dance
1st: Tata
2nd: Jaipur
3rd: Kashmir
4th: Oberoi
5th: Hyderabad

Well done, all!

Unquotable Quotes

I am not bother.
NTC, extremely caring.
You think I knowing what is happened?
Harsh Singhania, circumstantial knowledge.
You must not mistake in the paper.
Shubham Agarwal criticizes errors.
Light on the fan.
Shubham Agarwal, one more?
N ewton invented the apple.
Udbhav Agarwal rewrites history.
He communism! I communism! We all communism!
Kunal Kanodia, what?!
W inning the Silver

Shashvat Dhandhania talks about School’s ranking according to the ‘Education World’ survey

As per results of the survey on school rankings conducted by the ‘Education World’, the School has now been placed second amongst other residential schools, tied with Mayo College Girls’ School, Ajmer, losing its number one spot to Rishi Valley School. In my opinion, any rankings reduce schools to being part of a stock market, though, we must pay heed to the results.

The School community was disappointed, both masters and students alike. We must understand that these ranks matter, if not to us, then to those who aspire to be a part of this community; even though they are essentially materialistic judgments. We cannot afford to disregard these materialist judgments or to boycott them, especially when we agreed with the rankings in the past when we were placed first. This would also then pass other judgments on the School, which would be unnecessary. In my opinion, instead of blaming anyone for these ranks, we must face them and look at the areas in which we can improve. There were fourteen parameters for this survey; the three parameters in which we were recognized were: community service, quality of alumni/students, and infrastructure. I would like to comment on two categories in which we have not fared well: sports and extra-curricular activities.

According to the survey, Doon’s rank has dropped in the sports and co-curricular categories. However, this is due to the transition phase we find ourselves in. At the moment, there is increasing attention towards career planning and academics; sports is probably the price we have to pay.”

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Pursuing any sport or co-curricular activity requires time and when boys are a part of too many activities, it is impossible for them to excel. have discussed earlier. When priorities change, one always needs to reschedule and then come back on track.

Lastly, considering that we are Doscos, it should not take time for us to regain the top spot.

Money

Aditya Bhattacharya

I saw you in the hands of another,
Glorious and tempting, a sign of true prosperity.
Your sight made me restless until
I tore you away in a fit of insanity.

You were my love, my passion,
I craved to see more of you every day.
Day and night I thought of you,
And kept you alienated from the world.

One fateful day, you became oblivious
To my presence, which angered me much.
I tried to make you succumb to my will
When you snapped back and strangled me.
The MPH wore a festive look with garlands of marigold, greenery and the traditional lit lamp transforming its usual utilitarian appearance into something truly appropriate for the event: the concluding part of the Inter-House Music Competition. The pianists were the first to take the stage. I think there is a special bell reserved for performers, one where trembling hands, knocking knees and giant butterflies in the stomach reign supreme. I had all these to manage when, as the evening’s first performer, I played my pieces (the evocative Song of Spain by Isaac Albeniz and the Baroque Sonata in F by Telemann). However, there also comes a point in a performance when the music takes over, and the sheer joy of communicating it to an audience makes the whole experience really worthwhile. The piano section featured a wide variety of styles and composers. Yash Mall’s brilliant rendition of Mozart’s popular A la Turca, followed by the equally dazzling jazz Private Duet with its catchy syncopation and glissandos was a performance worthy of a concert platform.

Our young musicians, like Krishna Lohiya and Saumil Agarwal too gave fine performances. Yuvraj Nathani of H House showed exceptional musicality and technical facility in his composition. Vigya Singh of K House matched his skilful playing technique and original beats. Yash Mall’s brilliant performance was by Pranoy Bohara, with the greater challenge of attempting ‘Vilambit Khayal’ on the Rupak Taal, something that earned him the appreciation of the judges.

Rhythm then took the stage in the form of the Tabla Solos. We saw some promising junior talent this year. Parth Vohra and Devesh Sharma of H House played a thrilling Kayada and Aditya Gupta and Vrindam Nagpal of O House built up the taal through ‘peshkara’ most effectively. Kartikeya Pandey’s clarity of expression and good execution of syllables with a cracking ‘thiai’ at the end kept the audience spell-bound.

And finally, as is traditional, the House choirs filed onto stage. This year, the compositions of the poet-saint Kabirdas were featured. The mystic, yearning compositions in the earthy yet poetic dialects of Avadhvi and Brijbhasha, had required a great deal of practice. The results were satisfying, and the lyrics were enhanced by a splendid instrumental accompaniment on harmoniums, tabla, dholak and even octapad. These five compositions of Kabir all deal with the universal nature of the Divine, a most appropriate theme. Each House had a distinguishing feature in its performance: the fine trebles of H House, the harmonisations of T House, the high melodic register of O House, the scintillating rhythms of K House and the melodic precision of J House. The paraphrasing of the songs in Hindi by MHF, eloquently delivered by Uma Shankar Goswami, added greatly to the unique flavour of this section.

And then, the much-anticipated results! But, as PCH said in her concluding speech, for the participants, the only element of competition was with themselves, in honing their skills and bettering their own performance. Each performer had succeeded in this and each deserved applause. Does it matter who won? I don’t think so. What mattered was that the community came together to make and listen to music, creating, in the process, some enduring memories.

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