



Established in 1936

The Doon School WEEKLY

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes." -Arthur Foot

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A Swansong

The Doon School Weekly bids farewell to Mr Johnson Joseph Wilson. *On this occasion his friends, students and colleagues share their thoughts on his time spent here*

Mr. Johnson is a talented, passionate musician and an exceptional teacher. His love, compassion, and care for his students and the support he provides to them in their musical journey and in their lives is evident in his gentle and sensitive approach towards the young minds. His inquisitive nature to explore more about different genres of music and continuous endeavour to update himself in the teaching and learning process makes him a lifelong learner. His methodical, lively classroom atmosphere and the sense of equality he creates in it is very special. He is always ready to share his knowledge with students and this creates a beautiful bond. Besides music, Sir and I have common interests in art, cooking, exploring different cuisines, and gardening, which we have cherished together. I thank him for everything he has done for the Music department and for the all the wonderful musical memories I have with him. I wish him all the very best for his successful career and musical journey ahead.

- PRY



JJW Sir has one of the biggest hearts, and has always been a pillar of support for not only me, but for the my entire Form. Sir joined School when we entered C Form, but he only became our tutor when we moved into B Form. The unique thing about our relationship with Sir is that he went on his first Mid-Terns with our form. Sir is known for his treats and I remember that he used to serve his tutorial group freshly made pancakes, which made the rest of our form jealous and led us to ask our Tutors to give us pancakes as well. Sir only became my Tutor towards the end of my A Form, but I already had quite a strong relationship with him because we were both South Indians, which gave us common ground to have conversations. I'm sure that Sir will do well wherever he goes and I wish him all the best for the future.

- Ahan Jayakumar

An amazing musician and teacher, JJW Sir has always been there for me, whether it was in the Music School or outside. Sir joined School roughly around the same time I had joined School as a little D Former and he has guided me through ever since. From the Founder's music production practices till six in the morning to the stressful nights before a music exam when we would all rush to the Music School to practice till sunrise, Sir has always been there to guide not only me but all us Dosco musicians. I thank Sir for everything he has done for Music at School and for me and I wish him all the very best for his future!

-Tarun Doss

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Headmaster's Speech

Dr Jagpreet Singh | *Headmaster's Founder's Day address*

The School invited the boys back for the spring and autumn terms. In April this year, we had to abruptly switch back to virtual mode as the second wave unfolded with dramatic speed; in this autumn term, we are hopefully journeying towards normalcy – of course, with our fingers crossed and with a prayer on our lips!

In these unusual times, the masters, the administration team, the Housemasters and Dames, the CDH staff and the School Medical team need to be commended for the roles they have played in ensuring optimal care and smooth logistics.

Despite the extremely short notice that was given, details and protocols were meticulously followed, which allowed our boys to travel, and remain safe. We are assuming that Covid-19 will be here for a little while longer and are accordingly prepping our systems and the boys and girls to adjust to a new normal.

Our journey towards becoming an institution of academic excellence, while maintaining the focus on all-round holistic development, continues to gain momentum and for this, the teaching and support staff can claim a fair bit of the credit. The Masters set aside vacation time to work with the students of Sc and A forms through the December-January winter study camps. Each student received personalized learning opportunities and worked closely with teachers, and the outcomes are visible:

The IGCSE batch had 84 students who opted for a total of 685 certificates. 79% of the certificates were in the range of A to A. and 98% of the certificates were in the range of A* to C.

*A total of 57 students took the ISC examination this year and scored a batch average of 89.7%. 54% students secured a Grade 1 (90% and above).

*In IB, all the 33 students who appeared got their diploma with an average grade of 38, out of a maximum permissible grade of 45. While we had students who secured the maximum permissible grade, nearly 40% scored between 40 & 45, and nearly 73% scored above 36 grade points.

In the last two years, if there is one sector in India that can be singled out for dramatic change and transformation, it is the education sector. If the pandemic reeled in the future of digital learning, the New Education Policy will redefine and reframe pedagogy and skill building in the next few years.

At Doon, we are lucky in some ways that most of the templates suggested in the NEP are already being practised here; of course, we too will have to undergo our share of evolution in a rapidly changing world

that will require reskilling and unlearning on our part as educators. Yet the 2020s will also be an exciting time for our students, who will be spoilt for choices, options and opportunities.

The Doon School is regularly counselling its students to ensure they are aware of the various directions their life can move in. We are also in conversations with top universities and colleges to ensure a smoother passage for higher studies in India and overseas.

Our career counselling department continues to work actively with the admission offices in India and abroad. Despite the pandemic, it was possible to set up pathways for our students. Thanks to the strong and continuing support from the DSOBS, students were able to take part in virtual fairs; a number of talks were also held to prepare senior boys for university admissions. The efforts seem to have paid off, and most members of the class of 2021 were able to secure admission in reputed institutions in India and abroad.

Extracurricular activities and social service programs are an integral part of the Doon School mode of learning and full credit must go to my colleagues in the teaching staff for sustaining momentum throughout the year; a special shout out to those who helped conduct the community service sessions and those in charge of SUPWs, and the various clubs, societies and publications.

To help our students grow, we have many opportunities like MUNs, debates, Inter and Intraschool competitions as well as District, State and National competitions. I would like to encourage our students to participate in them actively; this will not only help them build their portfolios but also to enhance the balances in their life experience banks.

Many students are already well on this path. As the year progressed, our students virtually participated in Kamla Jeevan debates, the Chuckerbutty Memorial debates, YEC, Global Tigers Day, the Spanish Day, the German Day and of course the Hindi Diwas to name just a few. Round Square and DSMUN were also executed flawlessly amidst a record number of participants.

Doscos also won the Aaj Tak debates organized by the Vasant Valley School and the recently concluded JTM Gibson memorial debates organized by the Mayo College Ajmer. The Doon School also won the prestigious International Space Settlement Development competition for the first time.

This being the 75th year of India's Independence,

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Most may know JJW Sir to be the Master who taught in the “last room” in the Music School. However, over his time in School, he has left a deep impact on many. From increasing the number of piano/Western vocal students in School exponentially, to relatably lamenting his workload, he has always been a supportive figure in the Music School. The amount of effort he put in everyday, from providing notations for every instrument used in the Assembly songs to the Founder’s productions he was involved in, did not go unnoticed. Apart from the many classes I have had with him, we always had an ideal Master-Student relationship. May it be the walks to O-House after class or the late night conversations that let me bunk Toye in A Form, he will always be the person responsible for making me passionately pursue music. The best part is that almost 10-15% of Doscocs can say the same. I wish him the very best for his future endeavours.

- Aradhya Jain

READER’S CHECKLIST

What the members of the School community have been reading this week.

Aryavardhan Agarwal: *The Psychology of Money* by Morgan Housel

Ahan Jayakumar: *Steal this Book* by Abbie Hoffman

Avi Bansode: *Fault in our Stars* by John Green

Akshat Goel: *Many Lives Many Masters* by Brian Weiss

Riddhim Agarwal: *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini.

Around the World in 80 Words

The United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) was held in Glasgow over this week. Following Diwali Celebrations, air quality levels in the Delhi-NCR region rose to hazardous levels, despite the ban on firecrackers. For the first time in history, Egypt swore in 100 female court judges. There was a severe food shortage in North Korea, whose leader compared the situation to the infamous famine of the 1990s. Barbados elected its first president, officially removing Queen Elizabeth as its head of state.

THE WHO?

Who is Bill Kahan Kapri?

Nabhij Singal: A Mathematician

Artham Gupta: A Director

Parv Agarwal: A Writer

Bill Kapri, more commonly known as **Kodak Black** is an **American rapper**. He gained his fame through the single “No Flockin”, and is also known for songs such as “Zeze” and “Tunnel Vision”.

“

If we trace the history of any nation into the past, we come at last to a period of myths and traditions which eventually fade away into impenetrable darkness

—
Bal Gangadhar Tilak



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our inter-school film festival had 'Freedom' as its theme; the festival featured a wonderful address by Mr. Naseeruddin Shah while our former Headmaster, Dr. Kanti Bajpai spoke about the 'Idea of India'.

The future will increasingly belong not just to youth who relate to the real world, but also those who are good decision makers. So, at one level, while we are investing time, resources and energy on increasing the exposure levels of our boys and girls, we are also trying to improve their ability to take decisions.

DoscOs are regularly a part of the decision-making at School; we've now raised the bar a notch in the last few years. During our admission interview round, our council members sat down with the selection committee during the interview phase of the new admissions. In this manner, they had a say in deciding which students would want to be called DoscOs; who would be a part of their community and who would be contributing to the growth and development of their School.

During the pandemic we started a highly successful online fitness programme for the entire school, involving physical literacy, knowledge related to rules and regulations of various sports, yoga, breathing exercises etc to develop speed, endurance, strength, flexibility and agility. Masters and students prepared small videos to make the learning more effective. The Doon School also became an active member of the Fit India programme and participated in all the events organised by them.

Nine students participated in the state shooting championship and three of them qualified for the nationals. We started regular training sessions of hockey, cricket, football, tennis, TT, basketball and badminton as soon as DoscOs started returning to School, while also sustaining interest in specific sports in the digital world. Tennis enthusiasts started a series of tennis podcasts while members of the sports fraternity initiated an online 'Master Class' where players and coaches of international repute spoke to our students.

We wish to thank all those who supported the Doon School this year. Your support is especially important at a time like this and has helped us tide over a difficult period.

First, I would like to thank the DSOBS and members of the IPSS who made some of the largest collective donation to the Scholarship Fund.

We also thank Mr Franz-W. Aumund whose charitable foundation in Germany will fully fund the entire education of two students.

We are also grateful to Mr C Ramakrishna who had bequeathed a handsome amount in his Will for the School; he will be remembered for his generosity, and

we will enshrine his legacy through a smart classroom that is being named after him.

For the renovation of the MPH, the gifts made by Mr Munjal and Mr Amit Sawhney have helped us advance the project despite the testing times. The Multi Purpose Hall is being repurposed to function like an auditorium, and we look forward to operationalising it soon.

We are grateful also to the Class of 2002 for supporting a smart classroom at the Main Building in memory of Nadir Babycon and Karanvir Chhabra.

Thanks are also due to the Guha Roy family and Class of 1999 for supporting the gazebo in memory of Mrinal Guharoy, near the pavilion.

The Class of 2004 has supported the gazebo near the CDH in memory of Saket Kashyap and Animesh Savarna.

I would also like to thank Gaurav and Elizabeth Seth, who currently support the School through the Cricket Scholarship. They have now come forward to support the All Weather cricket nets that have been commissioned near Basketball courts, behind K & H House.

We thank you all for your gifts for the development of the school and the campus.

Ladies and gentlemen, at the Doon School, we help the students develop their souls and inner voices while ensuring their growth.

If our boys and girls can move on in life even after being locked up in their homes for months together, it is because of the values, relationships and friendships built at Doon. During the worst weeks and months, our students have stayed in touch virtually and constantly, reminiscing the good times, and acting as each other's support system. This spirit of camaraderie is something we as educators and stakeholders should cherish and take great pride in, because it is something few other schools have been able to offer over the last 18 months.

We all know it is the dream of many parents in India to send their boys to The Doon School and yet I am asked this more often than once, what makes Doon School different from the other schools?

In the relatively short period that I have been here, I have learnt there are three things set a Dosco apart from his or her counterparts in other institutions.

The first is the bonds of friendships—these are usually life long, and stronger than what I have seen in most other schools.

The second is a sense of belonging with the School; this attachment is also lifelong in most cases.

The third is a deep desire in every Dosco to support and be part of one's community, wherever he or she is. DoscOs are members of an 'aristocracy of

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service’—a tenet laid down by this School’s founding fathers.

This aristocracy of service was put to test during the worst months of the pandemic, when a severe oxygen crisis gripped the entire country.

I am happy to report that Doon School boys, along with the Alumni community, stood up to be counted in the darkest hours. Our boys, across states and cities were actively involved in arranging oxygen cylinders, and in supporting their communities in different ways.

No clarion call was issued; no coaxing was required; our boys volunteered selflessly, and this commitment didn’t surprise any of us as service is a way of life for every Dosco.

Today Doon School students have made their mark as entrepreneurs, changemakers, doctors, engineers, business heads, philanthropists and not to forget, educationists. While in School, hidden qualities are identified by masters and coaches; this allows our students to flower and flourish—in the spheres of their choice without pressure; we appreciate, understand and respect the truth that eventual success need not necessarily always originate in the classroom or the sports field, it could emanate from the drama club or the woodwork room or anywhere else.

I earlier mentioned three reasons why the Doon School stands out. Let me add a fourth reason: this institution offers a uniquely calm environment that

frees the mind.

Dehradun today is a far cry from the Dehradun of even the early 2000s; sparrows have mostly abandoned Dehradun, but continue to seek refuge in Chandbagh. The calm environment encourages our students to sit and reflect, introspect; perhaps this experience makes them calmer than purely city-bred peers; in the radical times era that we have entered, I firmly believe that developing this inner peace will prove to be the greatest asset that our children will ever possess.

I would like to end here by reading out a few selected lines from *Desiderata*, a poem by Max Ehrmann.

“Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant; they too have their story.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass.

Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here.

And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should, it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.”

School Captain’s Speech

Nairit Pattnaik | School Captain’s Founder’s Day address

Giving a speech always seems like a difficult task. Though in my eyes, the time that goes into writing one, is the greater challenge. There is always so much to talk about, but so little time to truly delve into.

Standing here within the circular boundaries of the Rose Bowl, within the sight of my fellow DoscOs seated along with my beloved Masters feels like a gamble that played out in my favour. As a majority of you are aware, for the past year-and-a-half most of us have been living our lives in Doon, online. Having the opportunity to stand here and deliver my speech itself feels like a victory. And this... this is my victory speech.

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, respected Chief Guest, Members of the Board of Governors, Headmaster, Masters, Parents, Old Boys and of course my very dear DoscOs.

My journey with the Doon School started long before I entered the gates as a Dosco. I had visited School on numerous occasions as my brother too was a part of this institution, and trust me when I say this,

every time I entered through the gates, I believed I had entered a utopic land... one which I needed to be a part of. After struggling for five continuous years of visiting this School but continuously getting stuck in the guest seating section, I had eventually made my way into the herd of boys in grey blazers, grey trousers and the simple striped ties.

It so happened that my first 19 days in School overlapped with my brother’s last 19, while he was a Sc-L and I was a new C Former. Shadowed by his name and success in this institution, I set out to start my own journey... and also add another five years worth of travel spending to my parents’ expenditure.

You see, several of us seated here have been in a situation such as mine, where some family member has studied at this great institution, hence a majority of your time before entering through the gates as a Dosco is mostly spent hearing about how great life at Doon is. But that image of School usually lasts until the first extra PT your Form is given, in which we

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have all showered curses and newly learnt *gaalis* on the members of our families who had praised Doon endlessly.

Now I do not blame the young D Former for his frustration and zero compliance in the first few months, because I myself have questioned my decision in my initial months about the difference between Doon and any other school, but as I stand here today and deliver my speech, though I might not be the best debater, I can clearly say this is a debate I can always win and prove that this School is truly unlike any other.

You see, The Doon School is a unique institution, yes I know you have heard several School Captains before me say this very line. But in my eyes it is only one thing that makes this place special and everything else is a product of this. For me it is only here where you will find a Master-Student relationship so filled with depth, emotion, connect and passion. Several School Captains before me have stood where I stand and have mentioned the importance of this relationship. However, I would truly like to delve into this because I believe that this bond is the holy grail of this institution. Everything else that we as a school have been praised for, in and out of the classroom, is just a mere fraction of what this relationship has resulted in.

Exactly a week ago I was released from my quarantine house... perhaps better described as my quarantine room. In some way, being restricted to a single room while there lies a 75-acre-campus of beauty, didn't really help my mind function in the best ways it could have. This resulted in me struggling with a considerable phase of writer's block for the entirety of my quarantine while trying to write this speech. After I was finally out, I decided to make my way to my favourite place on this campus — the Rose Bowl.

On my way to the Rose Bowl last Saturday night, I bumped into Mr. Shrey Nagalia, better known as SNA. As I touched his feet, in my mind I was expecting our interaction to be a very brief one, as he is not a Master I come across everyday in my school life: he wasn't my teacher through the years, he wasn't in anyway linked to me, but to my surprise we ended up speaking for a duration which we both could not bother keeping track of, and this was probably my very first proper interaction with him. Here, what you see is a clear example of the typical Master-Student relationship in Doon.

We do not have to be too familiar with one another to be able to share the same love for this institution. Both SNA and I harbour similar feelings and admiration for School and in turn also have same mindset towards how School needs to improve.

And I daresay that if I were to be having this very conversation with any other Master, I would see the same love and emotion for this institution.

Towards the end of my conversation, SNA Sir eventually remembered he was a Housemaster and asked me "Where are you off to so late at night?"... yes, 30 minutes too late but this prompted me to be able to share my most beloved memory of my School journey with him. Incidentally he had played an integral role in this memory.

This goes back to my C Form, where I used to think I knew a lot of about CVs and college admissions after constantly eavesdropping on my brother's conversations with the little man in Bombay, and automatically assumed that if I am a part of the AV Squad I am already above everyone else in the college race. It's a different thing that the tables have turned now.

It was the best time of the year, Founder's time. The decorations coming in, the cold setting in, bright sun, beautiful clouds everywhere, and most importantly seeing Sc-s running after their housemasters to get their house colours done just in time.

As I said, it was Founder's time.

I was a part of the AV squad working in the Rose Bowl, for the English play that year: *The Play That Goes Wrong*. I had one job on the final day, and that was to point the spotlight at the main character, but in a broader sense I had a much bigger role than that. At least that was how I was made to feel. This is the magic here in Doon: the sense of belonging, no matter where you come from, how well-spoken you are, how much money you have or even whether you have or do not have any legacy in this institution, here you will always feel a sense of belonging.

School is for everyone, and the very moment you enter through the gates of Chandbagh, it is a fresh start, a new beginning. It is here where no one receives head starts or preferences, everyone is equal and everyone must work their way towards success and fame here at Doon.

Now coming back to my memory of the English play back in my C Form, you all must be wondering why after so many years in School I would want to mention that in such a special speech. Let me tell you why.

For me it was the late night practices until 4 AM, for me it was the sleight of hand of kind Seniors that resulted in those most desired rendezvous with butter chicken and *naan*, for me it was the late night strolls post-practice, and eventually deciding who would drop who first, so only one of us would have to keep chanting *Jai Mata Di* while crossing the Main Field all alone in pitch darkness (yes I do speak from

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experience), for me it was the ability to tell anyone who woke you up for breakfast the next day “I’m excused”. Finally, for me, it was something I had never felt before being so young, but it truly was a week which put my expectations of School way above what I had presumed.

You see, the present scenario in School is that the current D, C and B Forms have not had a similar gradual initiation and understanding of the way School functions, neither have their Seniors had the opportunity to pass on the traditions and the ethos of this School. I remember my junior forms where each year was a step towards maturing in this institution, under the guidance of those who at that time seemed like intimidating Seniors. The lessons I learnt by observing them have carried me to where I am today. To the current junior forms I would therefore say, keep an open mind and have faith in School’s systems. Do learn, grow and develop into the Dosco that both School and your parents can be proud of.

Now to my immediate Juniors, I’m talking about the A and S Forms, who have a great responsibility on their shoulders to carry forward the legacy that Doon is famous for, because the magic in School is one of a kind and the process of passing knowledge and experience needs to percolate down to the Junior batches through you. Be mindful that the best values and practices of School are what will help us get back on track to what we as an institution truly are.

Though I am yet only a student... the beauty of Chandbagh is that each one of us, young and old, is given the liberty to speak on matters that concern the welfare of School. In that respect, I would like to appeal to all new Masters who joined us in the past two years during the pandemic, and perhaps have not yet had the opportunity to fully assimilate and absorb the true spirit of Doon and what it means to serve here. Since my batch and I have only a few months left, we envy you your onward journey, and sincerely hope you will appreciate and value everything that the Doon experience offers, to eventually grow and add to the legacy of this great institution.

Now to my most beloved Masters who have been instrumental in shaping the character and reputation

of this School over so many dedicated years of service. It has disturbed me to learn of the departure of some of my favourite teachers, each of them stalwarts in their own right. But all I would like to say to you is thank you - thank you for not only your service inside the classrooms, but for everything. From being there when no one asked you, to taking initiative to help when it wasn’t your turn, and that is a Doon School Master. They function from what their heart feels, not from their fixed duties list. That is the very reason we call our teachers here in Doon Masters.

To all those Masters, I must say with all humility, please remember that School is known for its inclusiveness. It is here where all opinions matter and no one should ever fear to oppose. It is here where long-stretched conversations (and at times arguments) take place to eventually take a decision about something. Work to improve School together. We are Doon, we are one.

And now eventually I would like to come to my batch. I know it is saddening that our parents and dear ones couldn’t join us today for our final Founder’s, but the very fact that more than half the batch is seated here together, gives me satisfaction, happiness and hope that the coming times can surely be tackled. We as a batch have experienced Doon very closely and yes we are seeing changes and we are seeing a new normal, but all we can do in our remaining time in School is help make this new normal, a normal which future DoscOs and leaders can admire as much as we do.

Yes it is a fact of my life, that I will only get one Founder’s Day speech, and just standing here and delivering my thoughts, is a memory which I will truly never forget. I thank Doon for being the place which has transformed me to the person I am today, and I thank members of this School for making Doon the special place it is. I hope and pray that the coming batches have their Founder’s with a full Rose Bowl and with a fully decorated campus, but until then I wish everyone present here and also watching from whichever corner of this world you are present in, a very Happy Founder’s Day.

The views expressed in articles printed are their authors’ own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Weekly or its editorial policy.

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