



Alumni Xpress

The Newsletter of the
A ssociation of Medical A lumni

Christian Medical College & Hospital
Ludhiana (Punjab) INDIA



VOLUME III No. 2

JULY 2007

From the Editor's Desk...

We have done it again! This year also our Alma Mater was amongst the top 15 Medical Colleges of the country as per the 'India Today' survey and amongst the top 20 in the 'Outlook' survey. The college is perceived as a premier institution but the factual rating is declining. The time is not for congratulatory complacency but to act so as to match the perceptions and also to strive for greater achievements and higher rankings. As we all share the glory of being up there, we also must take on the responsibility of making our Alma Mater an even better institution!

The new batch of students has joined the medical college. This is the time one is reminded of their own life at a medical college and the experiences of the first few days/weeks. Whether good or bad, the days of 'Ragging' are almost over now. This phase of a fresher's life has undergone many changes in its name from 'Ragging' to 'Orientation' to 'Interaction' to whatever they call it now! While there is no doubt that the violence, nasty behavior and all the other things which make a fresher feel like the lowest level of humanity should be banned, but the friendly 'breaking the ice' interaction is required. And that's the tightrope walk. The evils and devils of Ragging should be banished and instead there should be fun and warmth and friendship.

Each one of us have had our own experiences of this phase of our life. It would be interesting to hear about those days and incidents. In the present issue of the newsletter, we have Dr. Kochar penning his experiences.

We hope to have many more similar responses from the alumni.

Editorial board



Flashback

Though I have some wonderful memories of CMC that create a nostalgic feeling, there are other memories that cheer me up after a rough day at work. I would like to share some of those memories with you, hoping that they will do the same for you.

Our stay at CMC started when we were tucked in Physiology lecture hall and asked to wait for **Dr Mookerjee**. Within a minute, a visibly upset and agitated Dr Mookerjee entered the lecture hall shouting at the top of his voice that something reached 280 today. With our brains numb from overnight ragging and constant taunts of the rickshaw wallahs on our shaved heads as we walked from Ross hostel to the college campus, we could not decipher what had reached 280 today, and why was Dr Mookerjee so upset about it? Only after we came back to our hostel, our almighty seniors explained to us that it was Dr Mookerjee's blood sugar that had reached 280 and he was upset that his yoga did not work!

In the hostel, we also met our beloved warden, **Dr Bhattacharya**. Though he was an excellent teacher and friendly warden, I think he had stayed a bachelor for too long. When he finally got married, he did not realize that a newly married girl has to slow down her walking to adjust to her new high heel sandals, to make her walk look more stylish. The husband is supposed to slow down to keep pace with her! So by the time Mrs Bhattacharya would be just out of the Ross hostel, Dr Bhattacharya would already be near the College campus. While an average newly wed girl spends her first year of married life training her husband to remember her birthday and their wedding anniversary, and stop being a mama's boy, Mrs Bhattacharya spent her's training Dr Bhattacharya to slow down and walk by her side!

During second Prof, we met a superb teacher, **Dr Khanna**. Khanna Ji used a hearing aid and would turn it off and pretend not to hear anything when his staff complained

about things that needed to be improved. However, if in the same sentence, the person said something that he liked, he would have no problem responding!

One of our hearing-impaired classmates learnt this trick. So in exams, when the examiner asked him a question he didn't know, he pretended not to have heard the question. The examiner would usually ask him another question. This worked very well till he stretched his luck a little too far and tried it with Khanna ji himself. Needless to say Dr. Khanna knew exactly what he was up to and ticked him off severely!

In the final Prof, we met our SPM teacher (**Chacha Chugh**). One day Chacha ji loaded our whole class in a bus and hauled us to a village to show us how to kill stray dogs for the prevention of rabies. Not only were the villagers surprised to see fifty boys and girls trying to find a dog to kill, I think even the dogs became suspicious.....they refused to eat our sugar coated strychnine!

The villagers commented that the *girls* (bibiyans) didn't seem like they were out to kill dogs. We boys were not included in this statement, must have been....our not so innocent looks?

There was abundance of originality ('Anokhapan') in our classmates. One of our friends would take so much time to put on *his* make-up that it was not unusual for us to plan to go for the six o' clock movie and end up seeing the nine o' clock show. Well, he certainly trained us well for our married life. We are probably the only husbands who do not shout "Honey, if we do not go now, we are once again going to be the last ones to reach the party"!

Then we had the strangest ('anokha of anokhas') classmate of ours. He would walk with such an acute tilt to his pelvis that we called him **Teda Ram**. He rode a bicycle, every part of which made a noise except the bell. One day an unsuspecting freshman took his bike for a ride. Within few minutes, he came back with his turban tucked under his armpit and the bike in two pieces! Finally, Teda Ram got married to a non-Punjabi girl. You see the reputation of his 'Halloween-mask' face was so widespread that he had to go out of state to find a girl. The only way he could have got married was by using the old trick of impersonation:

"Ladka dekhne aai, to kisi ko dikha diya,
Ghodi ka time hua, to ghodi par usko baitha diya"!

I would like to thank everyone for making my stay pleasurable at CMC !

Dr Parveen Khosla

Batch of '76

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A tribute to Dr. Betty Cowan

I joined Christian Medical College & Hospital, Ludhiana over four decades ago in 1962. Dr. Betty Cowan was the Professor of Medicine and the Director of the Community Health Project. We had occasions to serve in the villages in rural Narangwal and Lalton Kalan in Community Ophthalmology under the leadership of late professor emeritus Dr. Victor C. Rambo and Professor and Head, Simon Franken.

Dr. Cowan took keen interest in the health problems of the rural people and used to narrate her observations. Sometimes they were witty, making us burst into laughter.

Once in 1965 in Lalton Kalan she stated, "The villagers ingest a little bit of buffalo dung daily in their chapattis; of course, cooked well on fire". We looked at each other in surprise. Seeing this, she explained, pointing out to the village women busy in their nearby dwellings preparing buffalo-dung cakes for fuel, dipping their hands into dung. Following that, they washed their hands in a hurry and started kneading the dough for making chapattis at home. Dr. Cowan examined their finger nails, demonstrating the traces of dung still sticking. Thus, she inspired us to be keen observers as doctors.

Dr. Cowan often directed skits and I participated in her skit, "The Dwellers of Lalkothi" in 1970, and remember her skill in directing us.

She was particular about punctuality. In the late seventies, I went to the Principal's office to consult her. I reached five minutes before the scheduled appointment. She looked at the clock and said, "You are before time, would you please wait!".

In the nineties, she took great interest in creating an Archive for CMCH Ludhiana. A large collection of photographs was the main material to display. I felt that there should be some writings too. There was no computer facility those days. I suggested to her that I would like to calligraphically write some of the passages from various books on CMC Ludhiana, namely: 'My Work is for a King' by Diane Woosley, 'Mandate for Mercy' and 'House of Many Windows' both by Rev Charles Reynolds. I had the freedom to select the passages of my choice, and when I took the finished work to her I was a bit hesitant regarding her approval. I still remember the smile on her face as the passages I chose were to her liking. Later, Dr. Cowan used to visit the Archives to see the visitors book.

The Archives are of great value, newcomers joining as students and staff members must know about the institution and its hundred years of existence. History gives us guidance. It helps us unify and consolidate our personal

goals with the institutional goals. It helps the staff and students to know why we are here, and what is expected of us.

I retired in December 1999. During my farewell party in the CMCH cafeteria I mentioned in the presence of Dr. Betty Cowan, that "I have not seen the founder Dr. Edith Mary Brown (only visited her grave in Srinagar, Kashmir) but I have seen her in Dr. Betty Cowan, in her dedication and love for serving the ailing humanity in India".

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Founder's Day, 2007

50 Years Reunion, Batch of 1957

It was a heartwarming Golden jubilee reunion for the batch of 1957! Thirteen of them returned to their Alma mater, to relive the past and catch up on each other's lives.

On 23rd of March 2007, they had a class get together at Dr. Gill's farm near Ludhiana. Dr. Inder Mohan Bali ("I M Bali") from U.K. had prepared an interesting and innovative CD of his batch mates, a compilation of old photographs and anecdotes. It was a wonderful walk down memory lane for all of them with shouts of oyes & joys!

25 Years Reunion, Batch of 1976

Brimming over with enthusiasm and some great ideas, the Batch of 1976 was represented by 21 members all set to celebrate their Silver Jubilee year in their profession! A great get together was organized at a 'secret rendezvous' by Dr. SS Bakshi on the evening of 23rd March.

On Founder's day (24th of March), after Chapel service, everyone got together for breakfast near the Hospital Auditorium and past 10:00 AM, the CME began. Dr. Gopal S. Krishnan (USA) spoke on "Fragility fractures". Dr. Inder Mohan Bali (U.K.) spoke on "Learning, training & teaching anaesthesia : Northern India to Northern Ireland". The scientific session included talks by Dr. Avindra Nath (USA) on "Neuro-endocrine manifestations of HIV" and Dr. Rakesh Lal (New Delhi) on "Substance abuse in women". The open forum featured nostalgic memories as representatives spoke about their life and times in CMC, Ludhiana. The presentation of souvenirs followed this session with more reminiscences.....

This was followed by lunch in the Faculty Club lawns. Everyone delighted in the array of stalls with mouth watering items, like Pao bhaji, Aloo poori, Masala dosa, Mutton biryani, hot gajar ka halwa and kulfi. The ambience was of an Indian food fair! The day ended with a banquet at Hotel Maharaja Regency. There were songs of youth & the future, dancing and a lot of fun with everyone joining in, all in high spirits!! The voice of Dr Chitra Saxena (Batch of 76) - known as the Lata Mangeshkar of her batch, worked its magic with requests for encores.....

We would like to thank each one from these batches for their presence and making the reunion a joyful experience. Especially Dr. Swarn Mangat (Batch of 57) and Dr. IMS Puri, Dr. Parambir Sandhu, & Dr. S S Bakshi (All from the Batch of 76) for coordinating their respective batches reunion. Thanks are also due to Dr. N Kishore (Batch 76) for 'electronizing' his batch!

We hope to have you all, over soon, with the batches of 1958 and 1977 at their reunion next year, and till then Hasta Manana!

Till we meet again....

Those present from both batches were:

Batch 1957

Swarn Kaur Mangat, Gopal S Krishnan, Devinder Kaur Dhama Pujji, Meena Chhabil Dass Jhamb Bajaj, Sushma Kathuria Grover, Hirday Jyoti Datta Chhibber, Diljit T Chawla, Chand Kakra Jetley, Narinder Kaur, Subhashini Nanda, Ravinder Jetley, Inder Mohan Bali, & Inderjit Singh Gill.

Batch 1976

Adarsh Khurana, Ajay Lal, Alexander Easow, Anita Arya, Anjana Deborah Samuel, Arun Kumar Agarwal, Arvind Pal Singh Gambhir, Avindra Nath, Chitra Saxena, Deepak Rastogi, Elizabeth Alexander John, Harbhag Singh, Harjit Singh, Harshit Kumar, Inder Mohan Singh Puri, Meenu Verma Mittal, Monsy Thomas Mathai, Naval Kishore, Niti Thakur, Parambir Sandhu, Rakesh Lal, Sandeep Singh Bakshi, Swarnjit Singh & Manjit Singh.

OBITUARY

Rev Dr. Charles Reynolds, OBE DD

Rev Dr. Charles Reynolds, Formerly Executive Director of CMC Ludhiana USA Board, and International Alumni Co-ordinator of the north American Alumni Association of CMC Ludhiana, passed away on 30th August 2007 in the USA. Our thoughts and condolences are with his family and friends.....







My Life in CMC

C.M.C was not new to me when I joined it in 1955. My sister Gursharan was already in the pioneer batch. I had come to see her a few times.

Ragging was nagging the minds of each one of us. When we joined, the 1954 batch was still on summer vacation and the 1953 batch had already rejoined. They were staying in 'Harvey Hostel' some distance away. One night all the pioneer batch boys descended on our hostel (old O.P.D. building of the new hospital) and assured us that they wanted nothing but routine introduction. We were herded into one room. Turn by turn each one of us was called to another room and subjected to a stiff dose of ragging in all its forms and dimensions. I was one of their preferred targets. But one boy of our batch, Dharam Dev Adlakha put all the seniors on their toes. When his turn came, almost last, he started crying that his wallet containing Rs. 1500 has been pinched by a senior while he was removing his clothes. Needless to say he laughed his way back to his room. The main hospital building was under construction and a big pit with mud was around. As a last lap, each one of us, in birthday suit, was bodily lifted by two seniors and thrown in the puddle. After having taken a bath, we were served with refreshments and all the seniors affectionately hugged each one of us and all our anger and embarrassment evaporated. The atmosphere was very homely. Each student knew every other student personally and so did our teachers.

Once Bhagwant, a year junior to me, was going up the stairs of the hospital, lost in his own thoughts. Dr. Brash, the illustrious daughter of Dr. J.C. Brash, the world's greatest anatomist of his times & Head of the department of Medicine, was coming down the same stairs at that moment. Bhagwant bumped into her. He was profusely apologetic. Both continued to move ahead. After a split second Dr. Brash called Bhagwant and asked him to see her in her room the next evening. Poor Bhagwant must not have slept the whole night. Next evening Dr. Brash asked him the reason for his absent mindedness and ultimately he had to tell Dr. Brash about his strained relations with his girl friend, also his class mate. Next day Dr. Brash listened to her side of the problem and finally saw to it that they patched up.

Hostel life was hilarious. The new hospital building was under construction and we used to take short cuts through it to reach our college. It was deserted and dark at night. Once a few of us decided to play a prank. Nirmal Mann, now settled in America and a world famous Gastroenterologist who sometimes visits Christian Medical College for guest lectures, was the target. He along with a couple of his friends decided to go for a late night cinema show. We sent one among us to accompany them so that, after the show ended, they take the pre-determined route through the dark and deserted building under construction.

In the meantime we installed a skull on a platform just at the corner of a turning so that it was not visible till one reached that point. At the approximate time we waited for them. When they were near we put a small lighted torch in the skull and hid our selves. Nirmal was at the head of the party and the moment he took the turn he was face to face with the light emitting 'Ghost!' Nirmal was too close to the devil to run away. Reflexively, he hit the skull with his fist and it fell down and we came out of the hiding and had a good laugh. It was the talk at the college for many days, 'Nirmal had vanquished a ghost'. Nirmal is a winner indeed, he was made a Master of The American College of Physicians in 2006. This is a rare honour, even for American physicians!

Another episode makes me laugh even up to this day. When we were in IIIrd year, a batch of 7 students, 4 boys and 3 girls were on duty in surgery OPD. Surgery OPD was adjoining the present blood bank. One of us was asked to examine and take the history of an old villager who was having prostate hypertrophy. The case was to be presented to Dr. O.P. Taneja, assistant professor under Dr. F.C. Eggleston. Dr. Taneja tried to persuade the patient to allow the students for digital examination. After some hesitation he agreed to be examined by male students only. He was put in left lateral position facing the wall. Each one of us was asked to examine him digitally after putting on gloves. After the male students had examined him, Dr. Taneja pointed to a girl student to put on gloves. The moment the girl student tried to insert the fingers, the patient jumped from the examination table and shouted 'Ah ungal bibi di hai' (This is a lady's finger) !! Peals of laughter followed.

Teachers were very informal and always called us by our first names. Dr. LN Rao, our Dean was seen every where with her smiling face. In 1983, when I accompanied my daughter for her admission to CMC, Dr Rao saw me sitting outside. She came out and said "Inderjit hope you are not here in connection with the admission of your child" I replied in the affirmative, "Oh I feel so ancient when children of my students come to study medicine". May her soul rest in peace.

Recently, I accompanied my wife to CDC for her dental problems. We were so impressed with the quality of the treatment. Sitting in one corner I imagined the good old days I spent in the various preclinical departments and how the building has been mutilated since then. It was perhaps the love for my college which made me utter those harsh words at that moment. Now I am more than seventy years old and enjoying my old age with our grandchildren. I retired as Civil Surgeon cum Deputy Director from Punjab State Health Services. Whatever I am, I owe to my Alma Mater. If I am to be a doctor in my next life, I pray to God Almighty to give me a chance, once again, to be a student of the great institution called C.M.C. Ludhiana.

Dr. Inderjit Singh Kochar

Batch'55

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Nephrology Services in CMC

Treatment of renal failure was started for the first time in North India in the Christian Medical College. Peritoneal dialysis was used for the treatment of suspected acute renal failure in the mid 1960s. This was done in the surgery department and was pioneered by Dr. Forrest Eggleston. Interestingly, since there was no experience available locally the first few procedures were done on dogs. Some time in the late 1960s Dr. Wanner from Switzerland, joined the department of Internal Medicine and started doing peritoneal dialysis for acute renal failure. Around this time, Dr. K L Dhar also joined the department of Medicine. He had worked in CMC Vellore with Dr. Koshy and Dr. K V Johnny and had gained experience in the diagnosis and management of renal disease. He started the renal service and performed the first percutaneous kidney biopsy in this institution. In 1971 a three bed Renal Unit for peritoneal dialysis was started in the Medicine department along with a consultation service. However, sadly in the late 1970s this program could not be sustained because of shortage of nurses and the Renal Unit was closed down.

In late 1986, Dr A V Choudhrie joined CMC as Director. Under his visionary and able leadership, several specialties were opened. Soon after he joined, plans were made to have a modern and independent Nephrology unit with facilities for hemodialysis and later for renal transplantation. In January 1987 Dr. K L Dhar was sent to CMC Vellore for one month to study the various aspects of setting up a hemodialysis facility in CMC, At the same time a handsome grant of Rs. 7, 50,000 was received from the American Presbyterian Church.

In January 1988, an independent Nephrology Unit was created with Dr. K L Dhar and Dr. Beverly Booth as consultants and with two residents on rotation from Internal Medicine. Initially only consultation and dialysis services were offered; later a separate OPD was also started. Dr. Basant Pawar returned from CMC Vellore in April 1990, after completing his DM training in Nephrology.

Construction of the unit began in the old ward 10, in January 1988. On September 8, 1988, the ultramodern unit was formally inaugurated by Professor K S Chugh. Two dialysis machines were received from Rotary International through the efforts of Mr. Sudershan Aggarwal, the then Secretary General of the Rajya Sabha.

Dr. C K Jacob, Professor of Nephrology, from CMC Vellore along with Mr. Edith came to offer technical support



and supervised the first few dialyses. They also trained the technicians and nurses.



Later, Mr. Rajinder Gupta of Trident Industries donated another machine; more machines were later bought by the institution. In 1992 a reverse osmosis machine was bought. This was the first time advanced water treatment systems were used in North India. The unit also procured gas sterilizers, cardiac monitors/defibrillators and ventilators. The entire ward 7 was given to the unit, where a 12 bed in patient service was started. A 2 bed renal transplant unit was also created. Separate areas for dialysis were opened for patients with hepatitis B and C infection. The first living renal transplantation was done in 1991. In 1999, the unit was upgraded and all the old machines were replaced with the very latest B.Braun DIALOG dialysis machines. CMC was the first institution in the entire country to incorporate this technology.

Other doctors were also sent for training, and these included Dr. Kamal Sud, Dr. Basil Rajan Issacs and Dr. Sajiv Cherian. They have since left the institution.

The unit works in close cooperation with Urology, Radiology, Biochemistry, Microbiology and Pathology.

So far over 70, 000 dialysis procedures, and 160 renal transplants have been performed. Hopefully we will be able to continue to provide pioneering services in this field.

The vision of the Nephrology Department is given below.

“It is the vision of the department to identify in all aspects with the mission statement of the institution. This is done by providing quality and comprehensive nephrology and dialysis services in a modern, patient friendly environment, by physician, nurses and technical staff working together in the name of Jesus Christ, by being compassionate and transparent and offering services that are based on the best available medical information. We strive to make treatment affordable and to be able to provide this to all categories of patients. By doing so we would like those who train with us to be able to translate our experience elsewhere.”

Dr. Basant Pawar

Batch'73

Prof.& Head

Dept.of Nephrology

Christian Medical College, Ludhiana.

Mb:- 09814430038

Excellence in Teaching

One of the hallmarks of our institution is the quality of teaching but sadly we did not have any recognition for teachers doing their job so well. The Batch of 76, in a generous and historic gesture have come forward to help us in instituting an Excellence in Teaching award for the medical teachers. This will be the first award being started to recognize teachers who are putting in their efforts to produce quality medical graduates. The modalities and the logistics of the award have been worked out in consultation with the Batch of 76. For this purpose the batch has started a fund, the interest of which will be utilized annually towards the expense of the award.

We hope and look forward to more such efforts from future reunion batches.

A big Thanks to the Batch of 76 !!

Dr. Jugesh Chhatwal

President

Association of Medical Alumni

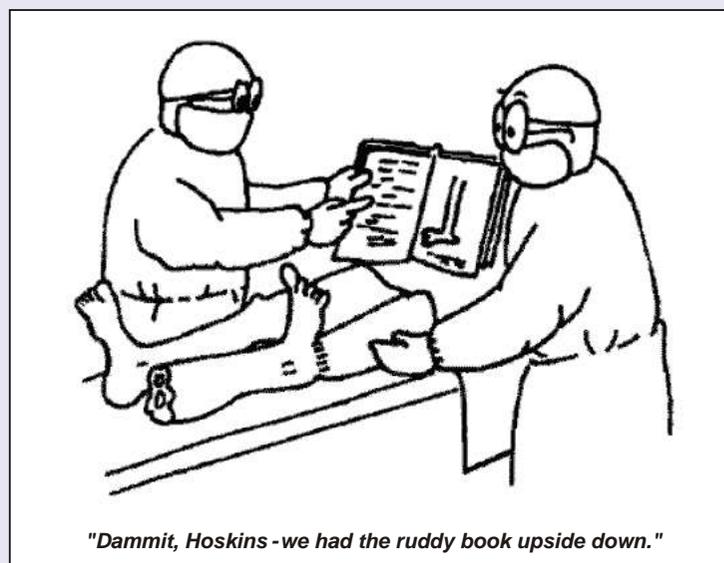
CMC, Ludhiana

A WISH LIST

The reunion batches over the past years have expressed their desire to do something for the institution especially students. Often with the time constraints of the meeting here, it is not possible to have discussions and think up ideas. We decided to prepare a sort of wish list for some of the possible areas of need which we will keep updating periodically. The batches are free to pick up these ideas,

exchange, modify and do whatever they can. The discussion can happen prior to the reunion so as to have a plan ready to announce. We hope this will help in giving a direction to those who would like to help the institution.

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| I. Recreation area for each of the Hostels | Rs. 2 lac for each hostel |
| II. Water coolers for hostels | 1 lac for each hostel |
| III Power Back up facility for mess | 1 lac for each hostel |
| IV Library (Air conditioning/ New books/ journal subscriptions/ e-library expenses) | Any amount |



Announcement

Reunion for the batches of 1958 and 1977 will be held at Christian Medical College, Ludhiana on Founder's Day, March 24, 2008. We invite the alumni of both these batches to confirm their participation and to share contact information with us regarding their batchmates. Please plan your schedule in advance so that you can attend this once in a lifetime occasion.

Please note a change in Contact Nos. :

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Just a Thought :

Honest work has a way of putting our talents to good use, food on the table, and peace of mind.

Editorial Board :

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Dr Naveen Kakkar

Dr Gagandeep Kwatra

Dr Dhruv Ghosh