



# RIVERSIDE

July, 2016

NEWSLETTER OF THE WELHAM OLD BOYS' SOCIETY

Dear Welhamites,

It has been our consistent effort to keep alive the strong sentiment of the alumni to remain in touch with our Alma mater in a manner that is familiar to them. I am extremely happy to inform you that this edition of Riverside has been prepared by an Editorial Board that comprises former Editors of the Oliphant - the school newsletter which we so fervently devoured during our days at Welham.

I take this opportunity to update you on the recent happenings on the administrative side of the WOBS. The current Executive Committee (EC) of the WOBS held its first meeting on 19th December, 2015 in Delhi to chart out a road map for the year ahead. The second meeting took place on 3rd April, 2016 at Chandigarh. Copies of the Minutes of both the meetings were sent to all the members to ensure transparency and also to engage them in the decision making process by inviting feedback and suggestions. We wish to inculcate a participatory relationship between the Executive Committee and all the members of the WOBS which is essential for making our Alumni Body creditable and trustworthy. From this year onwards, a Daily Report on tasks accomplished at the WOBS Secretariat is being mailed to all the EC Members and Active Former Presidents, the latter having been included as ex-officio members of the EC. Additionally, certain Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) have been brought into force to ensure that each EC member performs the tasks and responsibilities that have been specifically assigned.

You will be happy to know that we have received vital information under the Right to Information Act, 2005 relating to the record of the Society since its inception in 1983. Further, the registration of the WOBS has been extended for another five years w.e.f. March, 2016.

The WOBS Secretariat is finalizing the Register of Members and all those who are yet to update their records are requested to get in touch with the Secretarial Officer by sending an email at: [office@wobs.in](mailto:office@wobs.in)

I would also like to compliment all the members who assisted and participated in the recent programmes organized by the WOBS, namely, SUPW at Raphael and Prem Dham, Chandigarh Alumni Golf Invitational, screening of Rough Book and Induction of the Batch of 2016. I hope that in the coming events, we will find greater representation from all the batches. Needless to say, your continued participation in events, in whatever manner, reaffirms the faith imposed in the EC and encourages it to perform in an even better manner.

"From Strength to Strength"

*Rupinder Singh Thind*  
(302/ C, 1988)



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### Editorial Board

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**Welham Old Boys' Society**

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## RIVERSIDE

# OLD BOYS' CORNER

- Congratulations to **Pavitra Kumar Arora** (79/ K, 2004) on being appointed as Chairman of the Uttarakhand Chapter of Young Indians (part of the Confederation of Indian Industries).
- Congratulations to **Akshay Agarwal** (279/ J, 2007) on his marriage to Ankita Gupta on 5th March, 2016.
- Congratulations to **Sanidhya Sindhwani** (510/J, 1995) on his marriage to Pushpam Kashyap which took place on 7th December, 2015.
- Congratulations to **Abhinav Kir** (936/ C, 2002) on his marriage to Abhilasha Singh Bundela which took place on 16th April, 2016 at Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh).
- Congratulations to **Sushant Singh** (321/G, 2008) on his marriage to Sonal Singh which took place on 29th April, 2016 at Roorkee (Uttarakhand).



## RIVERSIDE

# INAUGURAL CHANDIGARH ALUMNI GOLF INVITATIONAL (CAGI)



*Hoardings of the participating schools*

The Inaugural Chandigarh Alumni Golf Invitational tournament was held on 4th March, 2016. Alumni of the leading boarding schools of India, namely the Doon School (Dehradun), Mayo College (Ajmer), Bishop Cotton (Shimla), Lawrence School (Sanawar) and Welham Boys' participated in the tournament. The motto of the tournament was "Together We Play". The echo of this Tournament was resonating on Facebook and the WhatsApp groups of the respective Alumni Associations. Many came to cheer their school-mates and be a part of the evening celebrations. Mayo College won the tournament with the Doon School emerging as the 1st Runners-up and Bishop Cotton School finishing as 2nd Runners-up.

From the ceremonial tee-off by Sujjan Singh (ace professional golfer) to the prize distribution ceremony graced by the famous golfer, Jeev Milkha Singh, the event was a memorable one with participants remembering the inter-school tournaments during the school days. Kudos to Rajbir Grewal and Parampreet Sandhu for their efforts in making the event a success.



*Uday Walia (175/ J, 1991) teeing off in style!*



*Team Welham at the Golf Hut*



# RIVERSIDE



Cheering squad: President and Treasurer of the WOBS



WOBS memento being presented to professional golfer, Mr. Sujjan Singh



WOBS office bearers with the Chief Guest for the Awards Ceremony - Mr. Jeev Milkha Singh



Posing with the trophy (awarded to Mayo College, Ajmer)



The event received adequate media attention



## RIVERSIDE

# INDUCTION CEREMONY FOR THE BATCH OF 2016

The WOBS has started an induction ceremony whereby the graduating batch will be welcomed formally in the WOBS fold. As part of this year's induction ceremony, each graduating student of the batch of 2016 was presented with a Welcome

Letter from the President of the WOBS along with a Golden Tie, Cap, Key-chain and a set of coasters. Further, every graduating student was allotted a membership number. The induction ceremony was held at the WOBS office where the students

were given a warm welcome by office bearers of the WOBS and other Old Boys residing in Dehardun. Students were inducted in groups as per the schedule of their board examinations.





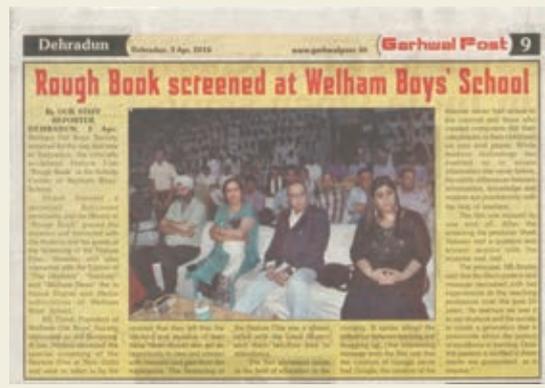
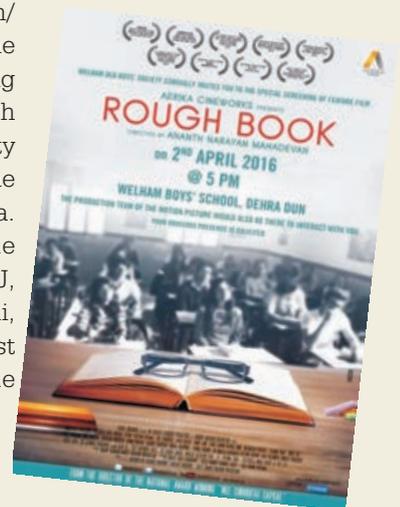
# RIVERSIDE

# SCREENING OF FEATURE FILM ROUGH BOOK



Mr Viveck Vaswani leading an informative discussion

The WOBS organized several activities on 2nd April, 2016 in Dehradun, commencing with the SUPW at Prem Dham in the morning, orientation/ induction ceremony for graduating students of the Batch of 2016 in the afternoon and culminating with the screening of the feature film - "Rough Book" for the students and staff at the Activity Centre. The film seeks to highlight certain lacunae existing in the current education system in India. Rohit Jaiswal(509/C, 1995) sponsored the screening of the film and Nikhil Kripalani (210/J, 1990) sponsored the travel for Mr Viveck Vaswani, the veteran actor who has produced the film. Post the screening, Mr. Vaswani addressed the gathering and interacted with the students.



The event was covered by the local media



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# SUPW AT PREM DHAM

Members of the WOBS based in Dehradun visited Prem Dham (an Old Age Home) as part of the second SUPW programme. They were accompanied by Mr. S.K. Bhatia, former teacher at Welham who also served as House Master of Krishna House during the 1980's. The Batch of 1990, represented by Mr. Anand Matta, presented the residents with 100 Kgs of wheat and rice along with some chocolates, cookies and cakes.

Seeing that most of the rooms lacked ceiling fans, the alumni present promptly procured the same and got them installed prior to the onset of summer. The WOBS also pledged to construct a common kitchen, the work for which was commenced soon thereafter. WOBS has resolved to visit Prem Dham on a more regular basis.

▼ *WOBS members with the management of Prem Dham*



▼ *A memento being presented on behalf of the WOBS*



▼ *Construction of the Kitchen building in full-swing*

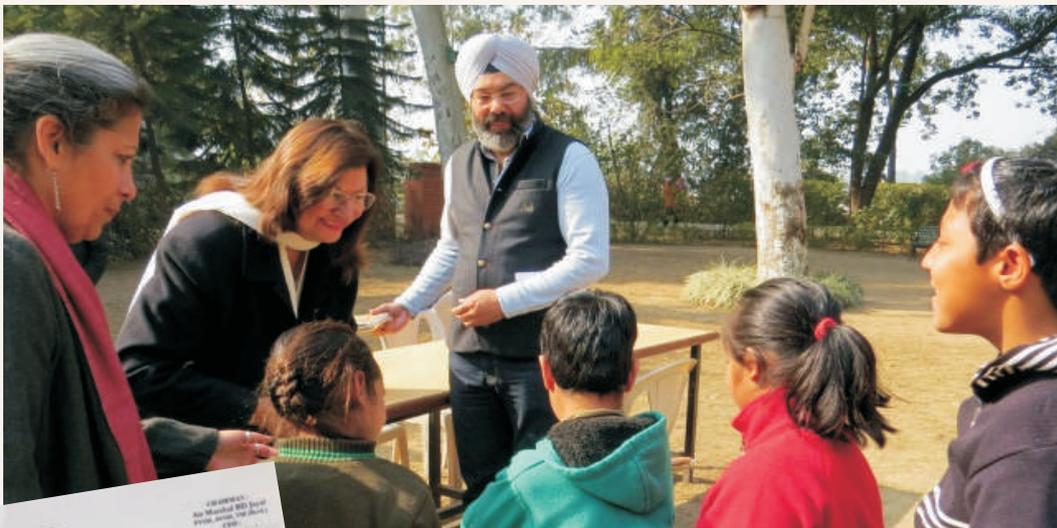




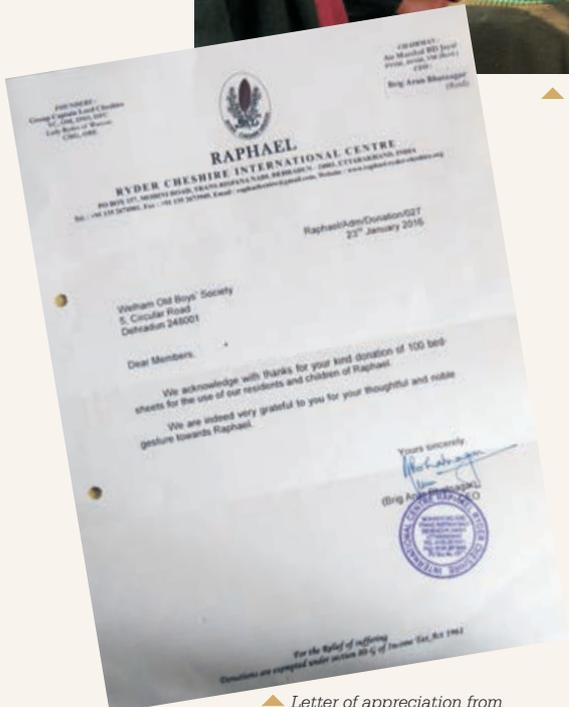
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# SUPW AT RAPHAEL HOME

The 1st WOBS community service activity for the year 2016 was held at Raphael Home, Dehradun, on 23rd January, 2016 where the WOBS donated 100 bed-sheets and pillow covers. Ms Harjit Lally, former teacher at Welham, was the Guest of Honour and was accompanied by the WOBS President and other Old Boys. Brigadier Arun Bhatnagar (Retd.) and Mrs. Priyo Lal, Director Special Education, Raphael Home, thanked the Society and presented an appreciation letter for the thoughtful and noble gesture shown towards Raphael Home.



▲ Ms Harjit Lally interacting with children at Raphael Home



▲ Letter of appreciation from the management at Raphael Home



▲ Media coverage of the event



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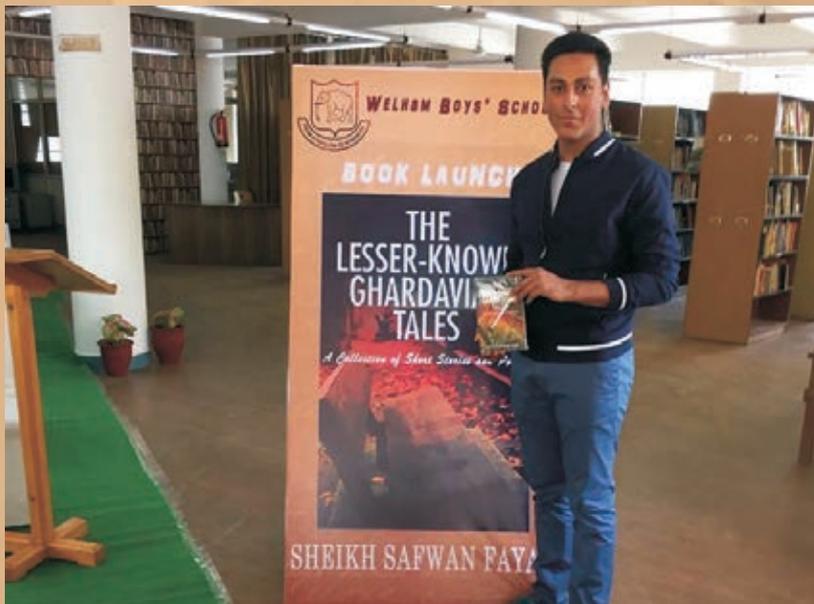
Mrs. Jyotsna Brar releasing Safwan's book

# THE AUTHOR AMIDST US

The "Lesser-Known Ghardavian Tales" is a collection of short stories and poems, written by Sheikh Safwan Fayaz (Batch of 2016) who was recently inducted into the WOBS. Safwan wrote this book during his final year at school and we all take pride in seeing this book in print.

The book was formally launched on 16th April, 2016 by Mrs. Jyotsna Brar, Principal, Welham Girls', in the presence of Ms. Gunmeet Bindra, Principal, Welham Boys' and Safwan's proud mother. The L.R.C. was appropriately chosen as the venue for the book launch. In his final year at school, Safwan was appointed as Editor-in-Chief of The Oliphant.

Way to go!



Sheikh Safwan Fayaz at his book launch



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# WOBS REUNION, KOLKATA, 24<sup>th</sup> JAN, 2016



It was time once again for the annual get together of the Kolkata Chapter. The weather was perfect for catching up with old friends and new, over drinks, lunch and merry making galore.

Like last year, we hosted the get together at our place. The first to arrive at the venue was Rupinder Singh Thind (President) accompanied by Mohit Saigal (Vice President). We were glad that Rupinder kept his promise of last year i.e. of attending every "Cal Meet" as long as we kept organizing one! They arrived in the afternoon with two huge bags full of memorabilia, all of which was sold out in the blink of an eye.

Ankush Salaria (batch of 1997) had planned his trip well in advance and came in a day early to spend some quality time with my family and I. Like always, our Calcutta boys were all fashionably late by two hours. But once the attendance was full, the party took off like there was no tomorrow. The live band was surely a hit.



Having a get-together at home has its advantages. The atmosphere is much relaxed. Everyone comes over with their wives and kids. Not only were the old boys having a rocking time, the children and the "Wives of Welhamites" (WOW) too were enjoying their own party. They were all amazed to see their husbands turn into completely different people when in the company of Welhamites - senior as well as junior.

The live band kept the party going but the real fun started once Raj Maheshwari (batch of 2004) decided to take the stage and croon love songs for Radhika - his better half. Fortunately, Raj and Radhika were celebrating their 1st wedding anniversary that day. The reunion stretched on for more than 7 hours

and ended with the mandatory group singing of "Humko man ki Shakti dena..." and "Yeh dosti..."!

It was a day well spent and all present had a wonderful time - Welham style. Hopefully, the above account of the recent get-together will encourage Welhamites residing in other cities to be part of the next Kolkata reunion where they can meet old friends as well as forge new friendships.

**Vivek Bansal** (637/C, 1997)  
**Harsh Bansal** (540/K, 1996)  
**Surya Todi** (584/C, 1996)



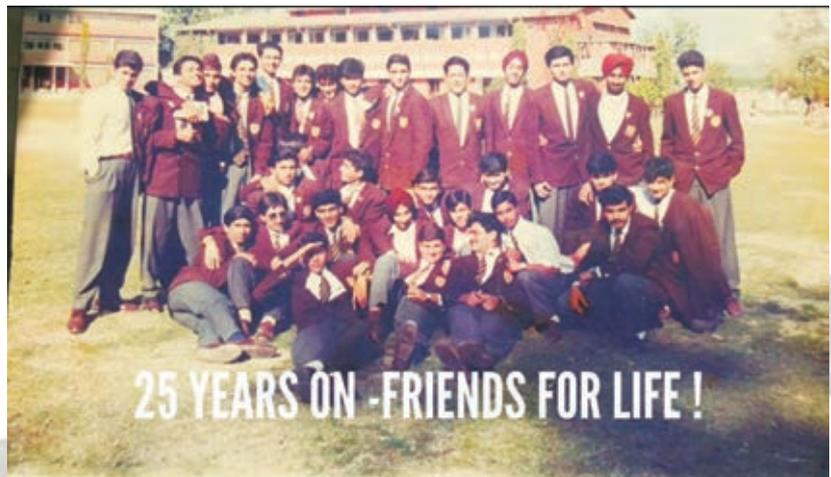


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# BATCH OF 1991

**With months away from the Founder's Day celebrations, the Batch of 1991 has already collected significant contributions, thanks to the enthusiastic efforts of their Batch representative, Gurjyot Singh. His patience and endless pursuit for ensuring donation has earned him a temporary nick-name - "Vasooli Bhai".**

Batch of 1991 has taken several initiatives this year such as an initial donation of 25 hockey sticks of international quality to the school (25 additional sticks have been procured in case any replacement becomes necessary). The hockey sticks were presented to the Principal, Ms. Gunmeet Bindra on 2nd April, 2016. The donation has been made in the fond memory of their friends, Marghoob Hussain and Dhananjay Bahadur Singh. Incidentally, the first tournament at which these hockey sticks were utilized was at the recently held Kandhari Memorial Hockey Tournament where the school emerged as the winner beating PPS Nabha in the Finals with a score of 2-0.



*Gurjyot presenting the hockey sticks to the school coach*



*School team posing with their new hockey sticks*



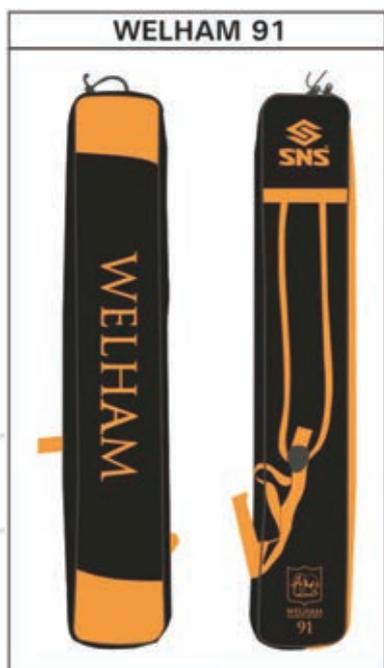
## RIVERSIDE

# CELEBRATING THEIR SILVER JUBILEE YEAR

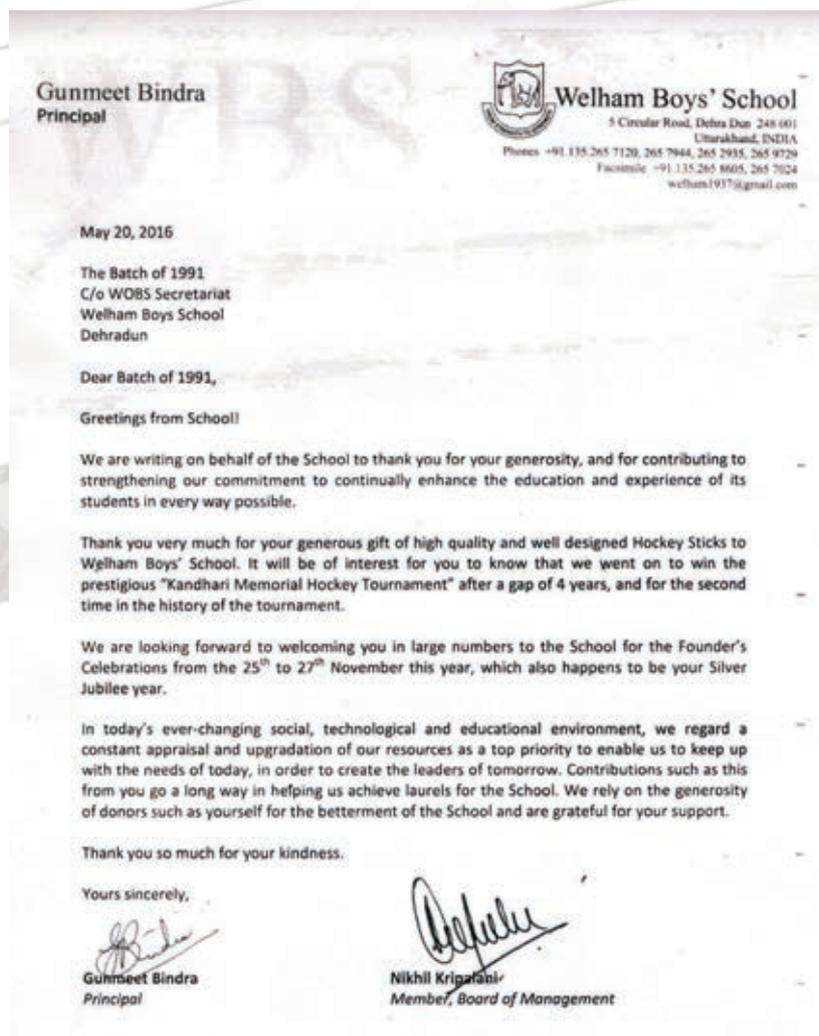
In addition to the above, Batch of 1991 also contributed towards the SUPW programme organized by the WOBS at Prem Dham.

As part of their Silver Jubilee Year, they are planning to host gala events during the Founder's Day celebrations such as the Annual WOBS Dinner as well as another celebratory dinner for all members of the WOBS.

The Batch of 2016 deserves applause for these commendable initiatives.



### Acknowledgement from the Principal and the Board of Management



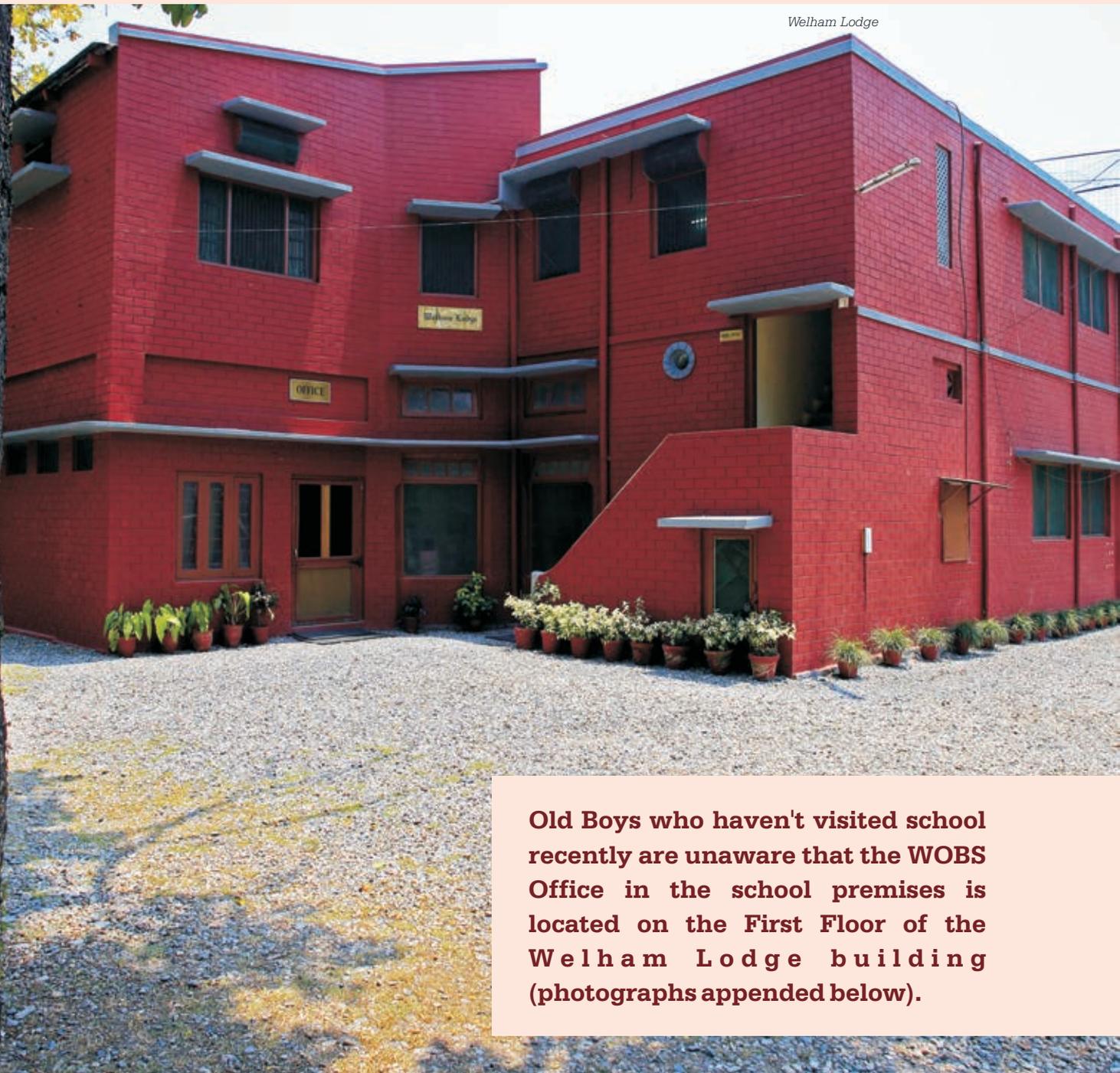
Graphic design of the hockey sticks gifted to school



## RIVERSIDE

# VISIT TO THE WOBS SECRETARIAT

*Welham Lodge*



**Old Boys who haven't visited school recently are unaware that the WOBS Office in the school premises is located on the First Floor of the Welham Lodge building (photographs appended below).**



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The Welham Lodge building was previously home to Krishna House. During the early years, Mr. S. Bhatia was its House Master and his wife, the House Matron. Initial impetus to basketball and badminton was provided by students of Krishna House owing to their close proximity to the basketball and

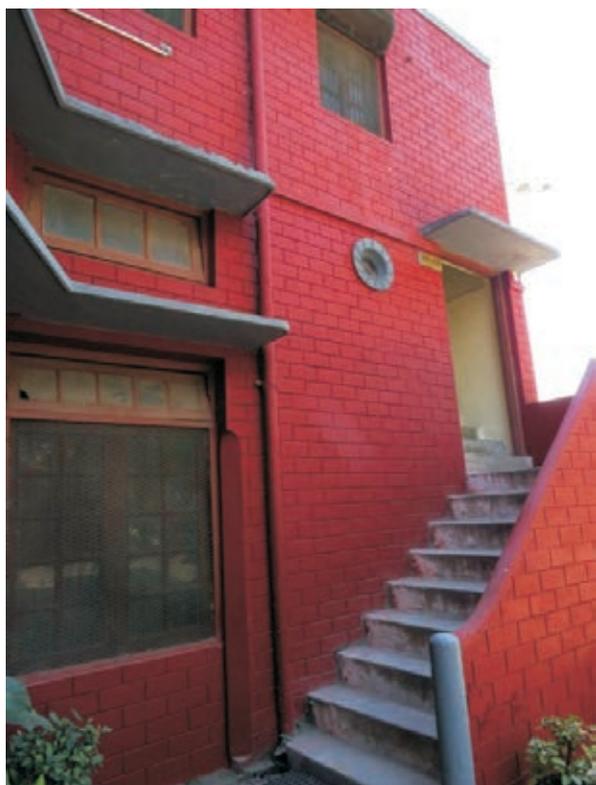
badminton courts in the adjacent field. Fun fact: prior to becoming Krishna House, the building was home to students of Class 12<sup>th</sup>.

The point man at the WOBS office is the Secretarial Officer, Mr. Siddharth Rakshit, who, apart from handing day to day office operations, facilitates the

entry and visit of Old Boys to the school. The society's records and memorabilia are also available at the office.

Old Boys interested in visiting the school to reminisce the good old days are requested to take note of the following steps:

1. Park your vehicle at the Welham Lodge Parking lot.
2. Meet the Secretarial Officer, Mr. Siddharth Rakshit. If Mr. Rakshit is unavailable, contact the other officers, namely, Mr. Krishan Lal or Mr. Satish Verma.
3. Wait for the entry-pass to be prepared. Give your relevant particulars for security purposes. In the meanwhile, enjoy a cup of tea/ coffee at the office and explore the memorabilia.
4. The entry-pass is necessary for entering the campus. Have a pleasant visit!



*Familiar stairs of Krishna House*



*WOBS Office Lobby*



*WOBS Secretariat*



## RIVERSIDE

# NEWLY APPOINTED BATCH REPRESENTATIVES

In order to enhance information dissemination and increase participation of all batches in the society's activities, the process was initiated to form a team of batch representatives (elected by members of the respective batches). Subsequently, a WhatsApp group was created so that latest information regarding events and decisions taken by the EC could be immediately shared with batch representatives and through them, with the entire society.

For facility of reference, photographs of the batch representatives are appended below:



*Mohit Oswal - 1982*



*Arun Khanna - 1984*



*Masroor Hussain - 1987*



*Anurag Chaddha - 1988*



*Manjul Sharma - 1989*



*Nikhil Kriplani - 1990*



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*Gurjyot Singh – 1991*



*Prashant Kochar – 1992*



*Anup Kumar - 1993*



*Ramanpreet Hora – 1993*



*Saurabh Narand – 1994*



*Sharad Poddar – 1995*



*Ankur Nigam – 1996*



*Vivek Bansal – 1997*



*Anubhav Gera – 1998*



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*Shariq Ansari 1999*



*Akshat Agarwal – 2000*



*Kunal Virmani – 2001*



*Saumya Khaitan – 2002*



*Aatir Ansari – 2003*



*Pavitra Arora – 2004*



*Dhairya Goel – 2005*



*Ajitesh Kir – 2007*



*Tushar Agarwal – 2008*



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*Aditya Vardhan Joshi - 2009*



*Praharsh Agarwal - 2010*



*Jatan Soni - 2011*



*Raghav Dahuja - 2012*



*Chetan Sharma - 2013*



*Keshav Agarwal - 2014*



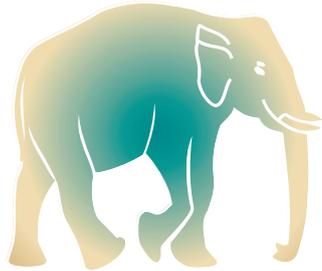
*Shubham Agarwal - 2015*



*Mir Ali - 2016*



## RIVERSIDE



# NEWS FROM SCHOOL

- Anuvab Pal, a standup comedian, screenwriter, playwright and a novelist, visited school on 14th February, 2016 for a performance.
- Renowned Indian photographer and photojournalist, Mr Raghu Rai, visited the school on 6th March, 2016 for a workshop.
- Mr. John Casey, Catering Supervisor at Welham, passed away on 21st February, 2016. Mr. Casey joined the school in 2009. May his soul rest in peace.

## RIVERSIDE FOCUS: MID-TERM BREAKS

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“Too often travel, instead of broadening the mind, merely lengthens the conversations.”

— Elizabeth Drew, American journalist.

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**In my limited experience of 23 years (that's how old I am) of living in India and abroad, I have come to realize one uniform characteristic about people: everyone loves to talk about travel. This preference cuts across cultures, geography, and age. Hardly anyone would not enjoy a travel story.**

Evidently, the utility of travel is different for everyone. At the cost of generalization, let me put forward some of the clichés I have come across.

Firstly, the Punjabi Auntie, who it appears, travels only to have something to brandish about at the Sainik Farms parties; not to forget the series of photos she will show you of her business class cabin. Next, the cool Marwari, who is trying very hard to break the Marwari stereotype of only talking about money and has travelled to exotic places in Europe. He secretly hopes that adding well travelled will enhance his matrimonial résumé. In addition, also worth a mention are those who visited Paris for three days and have posted three thousand photos of it on Facebook clicked by their latest iPhone and the tall annoying selfie stick!



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Whatever the case may be, everyone is entitled to her own version of travel. However, I find myself constantly questioning myself on the merits of traveling and whether it really enriches a person as all travel blogs point out.

Now that I look back at all my mid-term excursion experiences at Welham, I think I have found all my answers. Let me share some of my experiences in school. Mid-terms at Welham were a modest affair.

To start with, we never travelled outside Utrakhand. Kumoun and Garwahl were the preferred and perhaps the only destination. As a result, every Welhamite ended up finishing school with copious amounts of information about the most obscure villages in the region. Needless to say, that the breathtaking views and the tranquil landscape effortlessly dwarfed the popularity of the region in tourist books and blogs. I vividly remember waking up early in the morning to a spectacular view of the Himalayas on one of our pit stops to the Pindari glacier. The clouds had given way to sunshine and there was no sound save the intermittent chirping of the birds. It was a sight to behold; one which could capture all your senses and usher in a sea of imagination. I remember blankly staring at Himalayas, feeling abundantly lucky and strangely content. The midterm had taken me to untouched and unknown places much before these destinations were made fashionable by travel blogs and Facebook Memes.

The mode of travel was another typical feature of the Welham mid-term. We usually traveled by rickety buses loaned from local travel agencies. In some cases, we

traveled sleeper class and were picked up by the buses at the railway station. For many of us, it would be the first time in a sleeper class or a non air conditioned bus and was truly a humbling experience. If you were traveling by bus, the back seats were coveted. They were the furthest from the teacher who would inevitably sit right in front. It was there that you could find all the illegal tuck and the effective root of the Welham grapevine. In addition, it was also the place where the incessant leg pulling of the people sitting in front would start and never end! These lessons in humility did pay off. A few years later, allured by the cheap prices, I booked myself an overnight train journey from Munich to Budapest. When I reached Munich station, I was welcomed by a dilapidated Hungarian train which did more to highlight the failure of the Soviet era communism than anything else! Had it not been for the experience at Welham, I would have turned my back to an antagonistic Hungarian conductor and what ended up being a terrific week in Budapest!

Moving on, let me tell you about accommodation. In essence, the thumb rule was you can live in whatever you can carry which meant we predominantly lived in tents. In case the trek terrain was uncompromising, we were allowed the luxury of the state built guest houses. In reality, these so called guest houses were just actually huts with a toilet but without water! The attendants were the most helpful and would tell endearing stories about the village and the trek route in general. It was in one of these guest houses that I had the

wonderful opportunity of meeting the most alternative Swedish couple. They were in their twenties and had just finished university. They had come to travel to India and just could not get themselves on the plane back. As a result, they stayed back in a tiny village and helped it by installing solar panels and helping make the village self sufficient in terms of electricity. In the short conversation I had with them, I discovered what true charity really means: to give without any recognition or expectation to people who really are in need all other things notwithstanding!

I could go on endlessly on how experiences in midterm breaks enriched my life. I could tell you how it made us push our physical and mental limits scaling those mountains. I could tell you how I understood the importance of food when there was little to eat at high altitudes or simply how I truly understood the concept of supply and demand economics when the price of Maggi quadrupled as we trekked higher up. Not to forget the priceless memories we shared as a batch during these holidays.

In a nutshell, I realized that to really extract the utility of travel, you need not go to Europe or spend copious amounts of money. If you do it right, you can do by traveling around India and travel on a modest budget. As an American rock n roll artist rightly put it, "I have been to Paris and it ain't that pretty!"

**-Praharsh Agarwal**  
(469/ J, 2010)



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# HAR KI DUN

**God. How things have changed. I am currently sitting at a computer screen, shirtless. I dare to look down, at my failing and misshaped stomach, and I think: I will do something about this. Soon. Very soon. I must.**

It has been two years with that constant thought.

Let me tell you a little story about the ten minutes while I was leaving school forever. In the last two weeks or so, I had gone around school with a register issued from the stationary, and I had one goal: to have as many people write me a message in it. But wanting to give it that twist that I like to give to everything that has been done and overdone, I asked each of the people to fold the page with their message and staple it so I would not be able to read it immediately, and so that they could be fearlessly honest with their words.

I managed to get almost seventy-five percent of the register full.

In the last ten minutes of me leaving school for good, I was carrying that register in my hands, giving people quick goodbye's. I remember the thought in my head at the moment: there were too many. I mean, I was officially walking out of school without an obligation to return before 9 pm. While I spent a few precious seconds thinking about this, I asked a fellow friend (for the life of me, I cannot remember who) to hold my register for a second, so I could push my luggage out the gate.

Yes. That is the last memory I have of that register.

So how is this relevant? It is said that those who do not know their history are doomed to repeat it. Agreeable



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enough, except what if, those who do know their history, repeat it anyway? Well, that is me, summed up in two quick sentences.

Sometimes, sitting at a bar, or just at home, I would often tell all these people I have met after school about a particular night of my life. It's hard to forget it: I never want to.

"... I am sitting on a rock around the size of a car. It's flat on top. Comfortable place. It's dark, completely dark. But everything is lit. Some 800 meters to my front, is a huge mountain, and lots more to its left and right. 300 meters behind me, is another mountain, much closer, much higher. Same to my left, but to my right, there's a path that disappears into the distance. All the mountains are white: white as gold. I can hear the guys somewhere behind me, busy playing something I don't know. I am too busy to look back. Instead, I lean back, and look up at the sky. I swear, it could never be this clear. I can see every star, and I can see the moon, whole, shining upon this place like... I don't know what..."

As I thought it, I was writing all this at that very instant in a register that lay in my lap. I had been asked to be the person from my group to document the journey for an article later. I took the job rather too seriously: I was literally noting down everything. And that's 7 days of visual information collated into a few pages.

"Kohli, get down from there" I heard BR (Brahma Raina) call out from behind me. "Yes, Sir" I promptly replied, making a quick note that BR was the one who interrupted my flow. I got down, and ran to sir to stop him from going back into the small building we called our home.

"Sir, is it ok if I take the pictures you have been clicking to go along with my article on this trek?"

BR made one of his humorous expressions and pursed his lips, clearly in the mood to play around a little.

"The Welham Newz boy wants pictures from me!? How did this happen?!"

I smiled, playing along. "Please, sir!"

He nodded.

That place was Har Ki Dun. The most magical place I have ever been to. Yes, sure enough, as we got back to school and I clutched that register to my chest as I walked towards Bethany that night. I don't know where, or when, or how... I just know that the register just vanished into nothingness. So just a few days back when Praharsh casually asked me to write an article for the Old Boys' magazine on "mid-term breaks", all of this came fleeting back to me.

And we are back to right now. I am looking at my stomach. I am ashamed of it. In my head, I keep telling myself, it's alright. You're just 23. You will fix yourself and become sexy soon. Don't over think it. You and I will go to Har Ki Dun all over again, and climb those 56 kilometers. Then you will make a list of every other midterm destination the guys ever want to that were in the hills, away from civilization, and you will conquer them. You will do all this within 2 months and you will lose all your weight. And you will relive that time. You will experience beauty again.

I am, at this very moment, sitting in a small one-room-kitchen in Manish Nagar, Andheri West, Mumbai. There is noise from a house nearby, some construction work. My cat is somewhere in the other room: sitting quietly, as she so loves to. My roommate has gone to Pune for the weekend, so I feel alright walking around half-naked. I have just wrapped up some corporate videos and winded up my freelance jobs for the month. I still have a wedding film to edit, apart from a major thirty-minute documentary film. Then, next month, I already have two events lined up for coverage, including a wedding, apart from some fifteen edits that I have to finish before time runs out. A

few days ago, Kunal Seth had come down from Kanpur for a day. As I sat with him, I did not feel any pressures or worries all the insignificant things this life has been throwing at me. I just receded into the past, and I was in school all over again. I was skipping classes to finish the next Welham Newz. I was staying up till 1 am in the night, typing an article for the room next door while frantically using every minute to make sure the next Welham Newz would be the one. I remember the burning fire inside that used to drive me to do my absolute best. I remember the seeping energy inside me that refused to budge. I remember sleeping very little, working so much, feeling proud of myself... I remember being so happy that I didn't ever realize that this is exactly what being happy felt like. I used to run ahead with Gaurav Dwivedi and Narayan Dev Parasher during treks, keeping up with their athletic bodies, wanting to be amongst the best.

But right now, today, I don't know what to feel. I'm waking up late. I'm finishing my work to finish it. I am missing that passion that was somewhere inside me. I am so cold, I don't know where the fire is. I am so preoccupied with things that should not matter, and dismissive of the things that do. Even if my heart is breaking somewhere inside me, I don't know it. I barely feel these things now. I need to go back. I need to go back to that night. I want to sit on that rock again. In that year, on that day. I want to see every star, and I want to see the moon, whole, shining upon that place, like... like how I should.

And I want those god-damned registers back.

**-Jaskunwar Kohli**  
(542 / G, 2010)



## RIVERSIDE



# SAWADEEKAP !!! MID-TERM BREAK IN PHUKET Batch 1990

**They say one is an incident, two is a coincidence, and three is a pattern...Well, let me come back to that!**

The year 2015 marked 25 years of graduating from Welham for the batch of 1990. A landmark like the silver jubilee year just helps put things in perspective. One can reflect back and see how the school, the teachers and most importantly the friends have helped shape each other into what we are today.

Prague - 3 years ago was an incident. All of us had turned 40, which seemed like a legitimate reason for a "WOBS - Batch of 1990 reunion". Macau - the following year was a coincidence and finally, Phuket - earlier this year, confirmed a pattern.

The sun was setting over the horizon as my flight from Singapore landed in Phuket. The boys from Delhi had got into Phuket earlier that morning. After what seemed to be eternity, I finally got to the beautiful La Flora boutique hotel. The gang was already

in the swimming pool. The laughter was louder than the thunder and the drinks were following swiftly, as if to mock the persistent rain.

This looked like the making of the Ocean's 14 movie. The original cast of Ocean's 11 (Nikhil, Aman, Himanshu, Mohit, Prashant, Puneet, Akash, Amitabh, Amitava and Shantanu) were all there. Mohinder, Anand, Rajeev and Amit Ranjan had joined us

on their 1st post-school adventure with the boys. Not to be forgotten, Parth - the movie producer, could not make it to Phuket as I am sure he was working hard finalizing the script for his upcoming blockbuster.





## RIVERSIDE

We went from the pool to a lovely Thai dinner and finally Bar hopping, reminiscing and toasting in the name of those who could not make this trip due to other commitments.

The next day after a late breakfast and more juvenile jokes we headed out to a day of extreme adventure. We started out with an ATV ride across a jungle terrain. The ATV ride was followed by

a treacherous river obstacle course and finally plunging down on a tricky zipline. The mid term spirit helped us defy our age as we overcame our fears and physical limitations to complete the grueling challenges.

We spent the 3rd day out at sea on a private yacht with food, drink and music. The day's itinerary included diving, swimming, snorkeling,

kayaking and taking in the beautiful sights. We had our fair share of adventures too. While swimming in mid sea Mohinder was stung by a Jellyfish. The rest saw this as an opportunity to offer First Aid, which could be either vinegar or urine. I will allow you to draw your own conclusions on how this played out.



The final day was more age appropriate with much needed rest to our aching bones and muscles. It was spent at the exclusive Nikki Beach club. It was a day of relaxation and reflection. We talked about Ankush and Devrath, a loss that all of us are still coming to terms with. We talked about what we can do to give back to the school and several other things, both important and trivial. However most importantly we soaked in the joy of the purest of friendships.

Prague, Macau and Phuket. I don't know where this story will be written next. I however take comfort in knowing that we will meet again soon for our next mid-term break!

- Shantanu Srivastava  
(466/J, 1990)





## RIVERSIDE

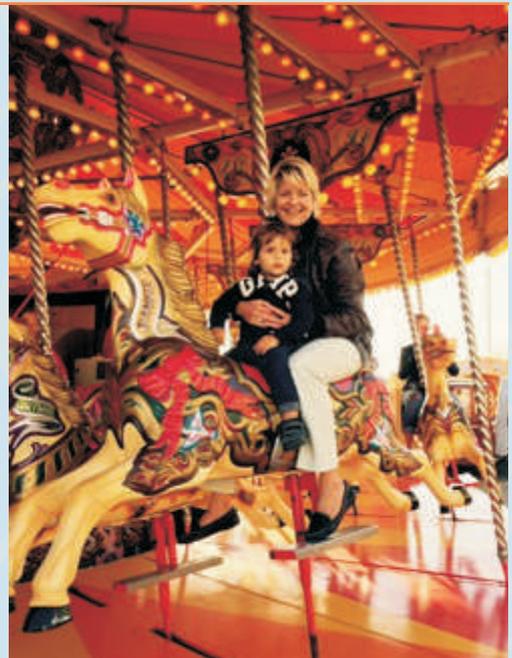
# AFTER WELHAM

Dear Friends my name now is Ray Charmak and was Ranjit Singh before my Mother remarried.



I joined Welham when I was 7 years old in Jan 1955 and I left Welham when I was age 10, in 1958, as my Father passed away, unfortunately I left school rather suddenly, not knowing the real reason and therefore never saying a proper good bye, because my Father was ill and he sadly passed away, my Mother being British returned with me to Brighton, England where we had a home she re married and my step Father Maurice, my mentor, adopted me, I took his name and I still live in Brighton Sussex.

I have thought many times of my days at Welham the security and comfort considering we were so young far from home. Prep school in England by comparison was awful! Some of you may remember me for 2 unusual happenings, the first was I complained to my parents on my first day at school (see picture in B&W of me and Mum and Dad), that there was no toilet paper only water, and being a young Indian gentleman I was not use to the basics. The other was me falling off the Dun special from Calcutta we use to walk on the outside ledge as there was no corridor on the trains In England I went to the Royal Masonic School, then Kingston University, and qualified in 1970 as a Chartered Certified accountant.





## RIVERSIDE

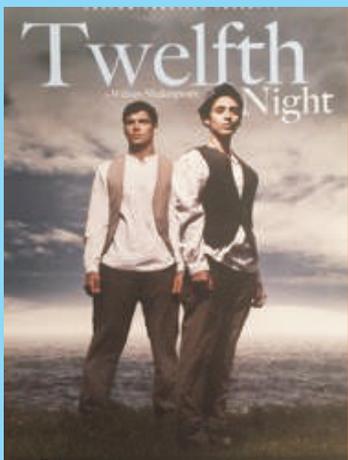


I was in practice in Brighton for 20 years then became a Management consultant and have been in Property development for the last 20 years.

Sailing has been a dream having sailed for 10 years in my with my wife Birgitte. We have been together for 13 years and sailed over 20,000 miles together on my S/Y " Out of India " an Oyster 53.

We now have a young son Rufus who is 2 years old he is a joyful blessing.

My first marriage was in 1970, (We divorced in 1993) and I have 4 adult children from my previous life. 3 sons and a daughter, all who I see pretty regularly, as they live in London, with the exception of Oliver who is left of the picture below, he lives in Perth Australia. To his right is Simon then Rebecca and then Rupert. Rebecca and Arthur got married last year. Rupert and Rebecca are actors.



A recent poster of their play together above left.

I am still working as a property developer, currently planning to build 79 new homes in Lewes Sussex, however I try to get my life in balance with lots of fun breaks with skiing, sailing and golf my handicap is 15. Overall I am happy to say my glass is always half full and never half empty.

Thanks to Welham Old Boy's network I have made contact with a number of old boy's and old friends, renewed. Below is a recent reunion with Deepak Dewan, at my yacht Club in London we joined Welham on the same day on the 30th January 1955.





## RIVERSIDE

# AFTERTHOUGHTS

It is my mind that wanders aloof,  
Seen the other side with my eyes.  
I have evidence but just no proof,  
The truth is that I am telling lies.  
How can I be myself when I am not,  
And not be myself when I would.  
You are the kind of afterthought,  
That would throw light if you could.  
As i roam free of all the care,  
Life is not black or white but grey.  
To be on the edge it is fair,  
I let myself go and my soul stay.  
So here I am on a different cloud,  
Swimming and sinking deep.  
I hear only silence and scream loud,  
The promises that I broke to keep.

You're the stillness of water I see  
Everything a ripple can be  
And the way you mesmerize me  
Feels like I'm drifting in eternity  
I'm like the chaos you've found  
To nowhere and just around  
On the sky elevated to the ground  
Where with you I just surround  
Us and we mean the same thing  
No matter what the future may bring  
The song of love you can sing  
And fly with me on to clouds on a wing

And I'm sleep waking thru days and wake waking thru nights  
My mind cannot distinguish between the wrongs and the rights  
I see the dark sky at noon and at late hours some fancy lights  
You've turned my life upside down and I'm immune to gravity  
In my mind's eye you're the only one that represents ecstasy  
I'm living in an altered form of fantasy that is called reality  
Let's hope our paths soon collide and we cross our ways  
The kind of first sight we get that forever and always stays  
In books they print and in subjects of wonder they study our case



## RIVERSIDE

It's past midnight and sleep is far away...  
I hold my mind but it just goes astray...  
The world is lonely and people asleep...  
I have my sanity to protect and keep...  
And then I speak out loud and clear...  
My voice feels like it's not even there...  
The night has me gripped and I'm awake...  
All the dreams I see might be only fake...  
No matter how hard I try to wait...  
Sunrise will be a few hours too late...  
This is my story almost every other night...  
I feel wronged by what seems so easily right...

Its 5 am and I'm wide awake  
Waiting for the morning sun  
I'd be slept for heaven's sake  
For I am the chosen one  
I will not sleep until I wake  
The dreams can hardly wait  
Its just the way I'd like to take  
Life in general just as of late  
The day is going to be just fine  
Just like it has so always been  
I will live life like it is truly mine  
Not like what death may seem

-Kanishk Kaushik  
(875/ G, 2001)



## RIVERSIDE

# SCENES FROM A SUBURBAN PARK

KN is the oldest among the regulars at the park  
An uninterrupted running habit  
Since the glory days of Independence  
He spent a lifetime running barefoot on the beach  
His daily communion with the elements  
Turned a reluctant endorser of running shoes  
When faced with the roughness of suburban streets

Done with reading the Germans and the Russians  
And an assortment of Philosophy  
(An uninterrupted reading habit)  
Since the glory days of university  
He eventually wound his way to the altar of Atheism

Now in his Nineties  
And having lived "longer than necessary"  
The running continues  
As does the reading  
(His bible is The Portable Atheist)  
Followed by two bottles of Pilsner  
A nightly ritual he picked up  
From his British clients  
In the early Sixties

His walking companion at the park is AT  
Secretary of the Maintenance Committee  
An officious air about him  
His family owns salt pans leased from the government  
A hundred years ago

Everything about him  
Regulated disciplined orderly  
Hair cut neat  
Clothes crisply ironed

The smell of his cologne permeates the park  
An olfactory trail of musk  
He showers before and after his daily walk

The salt must get into his blood  
A posse of overweight old ladies  
Spend an hour doing calisthenics in unison  
Paying more attention to the rhythms  
Of their garrulous chatter  
Than the motion of their bodies

AM is the self proclaimed instructor  
A diminutive Alpha  
Who guards her turf aggressively  
Against encroachment by young cross-fit enthusiasts  
She belts out instructions seated on a folding chair  
That she keeps secured under lock and key

Tweedledum and Tweedledee  
Have had a long standing bromance  
Since the whirlwind days of Partition  
This is revealed in snatches of conversation  
Lathered with thick Punjabi accents  
They amble along  
Big grins on their faces  
That enhances their Northern good looks  
Not faded with age

Walking is just an excuse  
To escape the monotony of their homes  
To laugh and snicker at a world  
Where nothing seems to have changed

The noisy group of geriatrics led by GM  
Have monopolised the corner benches  
For their early morning banter  
They take turns to smuggle in pots of chai  
And criticise everything in sight  
Especially their wives  
Who're busy doing calisthenics in unison  
At the far end



## RIVERSIDE

The retired policeman AK  
Who looks a tad young for his age  
Was a big number back in his day  
Arrives in his fancy car  
And perambulates with an entourage  
That befits a star

He seems polished and well read  
When he holds court in fluent English or Urdu  
Regales the audience with tales of his exploits  
And attracts greetings from the younger ladies  
Much to the envy of the noisy group of geriatrics  
And the amusement of Tweedledum and Tweedledee

MD is a once upon a time actor  
An almost famous has been  
His career seemed promising in the Nineties  
But gave way like a deflated balloon  
Filled with laughing gas  
(He must be used to harsh criticism by now)

He runs for upwards of an hour  
Signalling his arrival with rhythmic grunts  
His scrawny legs make you wonder  
How they had ever managed to carry  
The weight of his dreams

Many others come to the park  
The good looking trainer TK  
Who models part time  
His accent reveals a stint abroad  
A favourite with the pretty blonde JS  
Who is obsessed with her abdominal muscles  
And exceptional glutes

Together these good lookers  
Weave a powerful sexual magic  
That radiates from their bodies  
And spreads like wildfire across the park

At the centre of it all  
Stands a solitary Gazebo  
An oasis of tranquility in this oasis of green  
Where a silent couple practice Power Yoga  
On new age Yoga mats  
Made with PVC  
Their favourite Asana  
Is the Downward Dog

But every evening  
(An interrupted sleeping habit in excessive old age)  
As KN runs along the jogging track  
Built with concrete paver blocks  
He wonders about the forces at play  
That keep this park and all that it contains  
From tipping over and falling into the Void  
A fine thought to contemplate  
Over the two bottles of Pilsner tonight

(Written in Mumbai)  
- Sidharth Singh  
(740/ G, 1998)



## RIVERSIDE

# FROM THE CLOSET

**Some Old Boys belonging to the era when Welham was a preparatory school have reached out to the WOBS Secretariat and have sent some rare photographs from their school days...**



Yajurvindra Singh Bilkha

Yajurvindra belongs to the royal family of Bilkha from the Junagadh district of Saurashtra (Gujarat). He began his school education at Welham before proceeding to the Rajkumar College, Rajkot. Yajurvindra represented both Saurashtra and Maharashtra at the Ranji Trophy. He went on represent India in Test-cricket and became the joint-holder of two world records in his Test debut against England in Bangalore, 1977. In the first inning, he took five catches to equal the record set by Australia's Vic Richardson against South Africa in 1935-36. In the second inning, he took two more catches to equal the record of seven catches in a match held by Richardson's grandson, Greg Chappell. Chappell took seven catches against England in 1974-75.

Yajurvindra sent the following email to Siddharth Rakshit (Secretarial Officer, WOBS) along with a photograph of his house football team at Welham.

*"10<sup>th</sup> May, 2016*

*Siddharth,*

*Yes the admission card copy was nostalgic. The secretary typically made an error as regards my name. Not bad to get the roll number right. I did send you my details and on the 6th May 2016, you have confirmed receiving it.*

*The Nawab of Pataudi and I must be the only Welhamites to*

*play Test cricket for India. I hold the record for the maximum catches in a Test innings and till recently in the match. Therefore, to find a football photograph was quite interesting.*

*Truly nostalgic!*

*Cheers*

*Yajurvindra"*

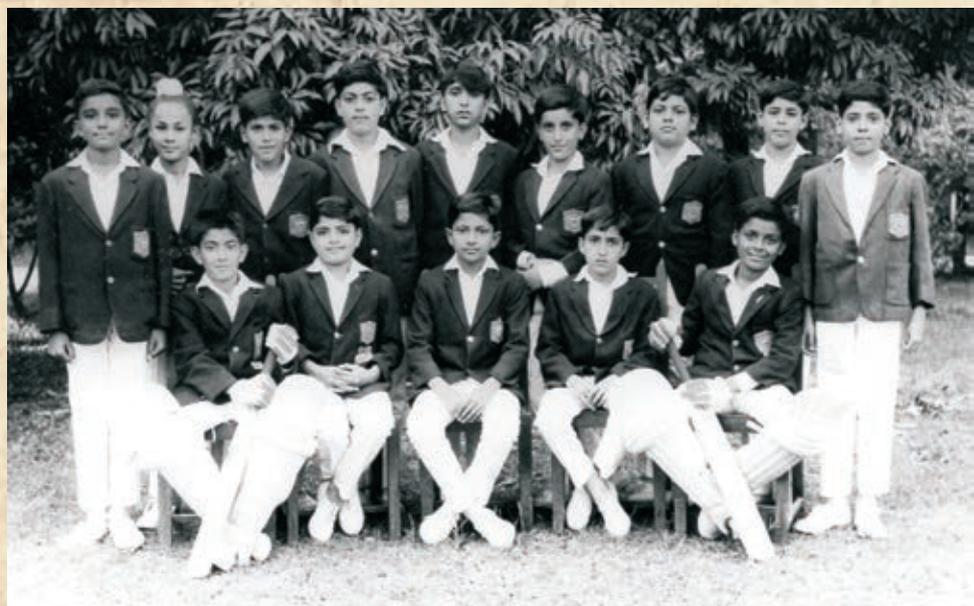
Photo by Y. S. Bilkha



House Football Team, 1960

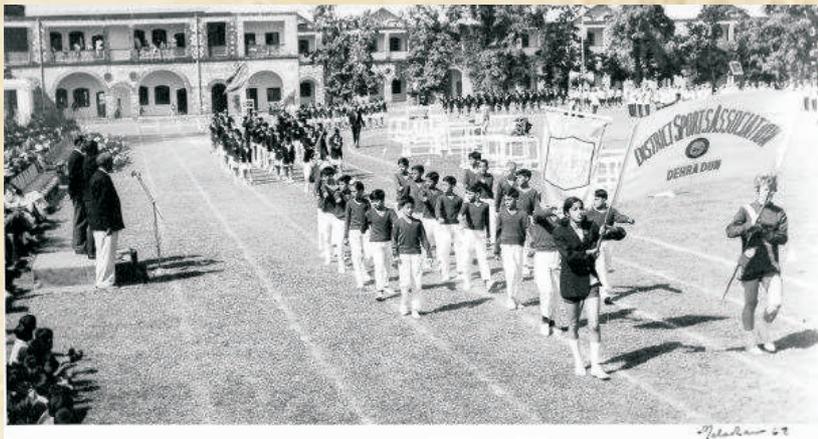
Welham Cricket Team which won against Lawrence School (Sanawar), Cambrian Hall (Dehradun) and many others. In the Photograph: Sanjeev Kassal, Rajiv Meddireta, Indushekhar Singh, Anraj Singh, Atul S Bahadur, Vipin Malhotra, Moin Quereshi, Pradip and Iqbal Hussain among others.

### Photographs sent by Anil Mehra, who studied at Welham during the 1960's...





## RIVERSIDE



*District Sports Meet, 1969*

**Ranjan Bakshi**, also a student at Welham in the 1960's, sent the following email to the WOBS office.

“One can very well be a part of the WOBS at the same time as being a dedicated Dosco, Mayoite, Old Sanawarian or an Old Paulite like me. There is no conflict of interest.

Every journey needs a first step, a small step. Welham Preparatory School was the beginning of a great journey which may have ended up at Doon/ Sanawar/ Mayo/ since all these options were available in 1962. In my case, I moved towards the East and graduated from St. Paul's School in Darjeeling. Some of us from the earlier vintage are fortunate to be eligible for membership of the WOBS as well as of the Dosco/ Sanawarian/ Mayoite associations. Tip toe if you must but take that step!

Younger Welhamites may not have this dual old boy network privilege. A former Senior Master from my second alma mater i.e. St. Paul's School in Darjeeling, joined Welham as Principal and up-scaled it from a preparatory school (till class 6) to a full-fledged school (till class 12). Welhamites from our vintage must take the first baby steps towards their first alma mater since our little feet at Welham have left big footprints in our hearts.

The picture below captures my first little step as a 5 year old at Welham”



*Enacting the “Crimson Coconut” at the Peacock Stage, 1965 with Koko Kermani*



## RIVERSIDE

# FROM THE DESK OF BATCH REP' OF 1990 (SILVER JUBILEE BATCH OF 2015)



March Past

**The objective of this piece is to provide a factual account of the things that we achieved in that important year for us, celebrating the 25 years of graduating from Welham. It would not be fair to move forward without giving a little background of where we stand as a group – “The Batch of 1990”.**

### BACKGROUND

As most of you of that vintage would know that at least 15-17 of us have continued to be close to each other since we graduated. We have grown up together; some of us have gotten married and had children. We have

taken numerous holidays together along with our families and most importantly have been an integral part of each other's lives. Our children are good friends and it is truly rewarding to see that what started as a simple friendship in school will now live on in the next generation as well!

Over the years there had been many who had lost touch who have now reconnected with the group to expand the Magic Circle. 2015 was especially an important year as we made a lot of effort to reconnect with friends as a build up to the Silver Jubilee Celebrations during the Founder's Day, 2015. It was really nice to catch up with some of our batch mates who we had not met in years.

As a Batch, the journey so far has also been riddled with unexpected grief. Devvrat Kichi passed away a few years back and is survived by his wife and daughter. It was special to have both of them with us for the entire duration of

the Founder's Day Celebration. We also lost Ankush Bansal in an accident on our way back from Dehradun (after the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations) on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2012. The days that followed the tragedy were probably the most difficult time for our group, filled with despair and introspection. It was during this time that the WOBS 90 Foundation (a society registered under Section 12AA on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2013 with an 80G exemption) was instituted with the intention of giving out Scholarships/ Awards/ Bursaries to students at Welham. We have a corpus of over Rs. 30 lacs and are committed to keep funding this initiative.

### THE YEAR 2015 (OUR SILVER JUBILEE YEAR)

We started the year with our Annual All-Boys Mid-Term break to Phuket (we have made similar trips to Prague and Macau in the previous 2 years). You can read about this trip in an article written by Shantanu published in the current issue of Riverside.

We then formed a committee, which included Shantanu Srivastava, Prashant Gupta, Mohit Saigal, Aman Mehra, Himanshu Aggarwal, Parth Arora and myself to think and plan for the year ahead. It was the whole year of planning and substantial effort put in by the committee members that resulted in the way the final celebrations actually shaped up. It goes without saying that the ultimate credit for the success is owed to the trust and support that we got from the entire batch. We finally had a count of over 30 batch mates and 45 in total including spouses and children for the Founder's Events. Most of our batch mates attended the Founder's Day celebrations. But some, despite their best efforts, could not make it. There will be many more celebrations like this and we will be back in larger numbers of which I am quite sure of.

- Most of us stayed at Lemon Tree, which almost looked like a luxurious Dorm with a “Common Room” too. We started the 3 days with the “Boys evening” at Shaheen Bagh on 26<sup>th</sup> November, an informal event to get warmed-up



## RIVERSIDE

- The next day was scheduled as the Sport's Day celebrations where we marched upfront in the WOBS contingent adoring our specially made apparel. This was followed by a quick snack break at "My Shop", reliving old times. This was followed by the WOBS Dinner and the after-party.
- The WOBS dinner was where, with the co-operation of the entire WOBS team, we were able to enhance the experience by organizing an interesting all-women music Band – "Latina Americana". We also took the opportunity of playing out a slide show of some of our old pictures over the years.
- This was followed by an after party at Mohin Road, for which we owe a big thanks to Lokesh Vashisht for letting us use the venue.
- On 28<sup>th</sup> November, we had a heartwarming lunch hosted by the Principal, Ms. Gunmeet Bindra at her cottage where each of us was presented with a memento. It was amazing to be amidst some of the teachers from our times. We organized a small token of appreciation, which was handed over to each of them when they were leaving.
- At this ceremony, we announced a contribution of Rs. 10 lacs to initiate a "Scholarship & Bursary Endowment Fund". This is a permanent fund set up by the school where a portion of the annual income will be used to provide Scholarships and Bursaries to deserving students under the existing guidelines. We hope that this fund will continue to grow through contribution of other batches and stakeholders in the coming years. We hope that with a large corpus, it will help in providing financial aid in the form of scholarships and bursaries to present and future Welhamites.
- We also announced an Annual Scholarship in memory of Ankush Bansal & Devvrat Khichi of Rs. 1 lac for a period of 3 years to be awarded

to a student of Class 11 for Outstanding Academic Excellence.

- We finished the celebrations at Dehradun by having a dinner event at Abhimanyu Cricket Academy which was well attended by our batch mates, other Old Boys and many former and current faculty members.
- We ended the year's celebrations with a week-long get away at Goa where almost 40 of us including our families spent a week together from 26<sup>th</sup> December, 2015 to 2<sup>nd</sup> January, 2016.

To each of us, those were memorable 3 days spent at school which made us seem that we were children again. We hope that in the coming years we will be back in larger numbers and are able to do more for Welham, which most of us consider home. We received a lot of co-operation from the entire team at the WOBS office headed by Siddharth and a special mention must be made to Lokesh Vashisht, Rupinder Thind, Prashant Kochhar and Gurjot Singh who supported us at all times. We also got a lot of support from the Principal's Office and of course, Ms. Bindra herself, who welcomed us to school with open arms.

The celebration would not have been as glamorous had it not been for Himanshu, Aman, Parth and Mohit. The apparel would not have been super cool had it not been for Aman. The cards, banners, clothes and everything else would have never looked as good had it not been for Mohit. Shantanu wrote some wonderful pieces of communication, articles, speeches and spoke from the heart. Himanshu and Parth made a really nice AV. Prashant put the gifts for teachers together and made a wonderful calendar, which still rests on my mantle and reminds me of the good times we shared. The entire celebrations would not have ended on such a positive note had it not been for all our batch mates who trusted us with everything. It all just came together beautifully in those 3 days!

We have gone back with a lot of amazing memories and truly hope that every batch that follows from here on



*Celebrating at Goa in Dec-2015*



*Silver Jubilee Lunch at the Principals Cottage*



*Silver Jubilee Lunch at the Cottage*



*WOBS Dinner at School*

has more fun than we had and does more for the school than we did.

**Nikhil Kripalani**  
(210/ J, 1990)



## RIVERSIDE



1 2



3 4



5 6



**1** Atulya Singh, batch of 1993, presenting a high-end hockey stick to Principal, Ms. Gunmeet Bindra.

**2** Members of the WOBS at Prem Dham - an Old-Age Home situated in Dehradun. This was the second SUPW programme for the year 2015-16.

**3 & 4** Students of the batch of 2016 being welcomed into the WOBS fold at the first-ever formal Induction Ceremony organised at the WOBS Secretariat.

**5 & 6** Members of the WOBS at Raphael Home, Dehradun. This was the first SUPW programme for the year 2015-16. Ms. Harjit Lally, Former teacher at Welham, graced the occasion as the Guest of Honour.

**7** Alumni golfers of Mayo College, Ajmer lifting the winner's trophy at the Chandigarh Alumni Golf Invitational Tournament, 2016.



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