

The Gift of Education

A Newsletter of the

FRIENDS OF LADY DOAK COLLEGE
Madurai, India

Number 6: May, 2008



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Message from the Editor

This is the 2008 edition of our *Gift of Education* Newsletter, providing you with news of what is happening on the campus of Lady Doak.

For those of you who are new to the Newsletter, let me say that the Friends of Lady Doak College is an organization concerned with the education of women in India, a nation where only a small minority has access to higher education, and even fewer women are given this opportunity. Lady Doak College provides women of all classes a premier education that prepares them for life as citizens of the world's largest democracy and equips them for constructive contributions both at home and in the workplace. It is a pleasure for me to be associated with this important institution, and I hope it is for you, too.

If you received this Newsletter by post, please send us your email address at ladydoakcollege@oberlin.net and be sure to add ladydoakcollege@oberlin.net to your list of allowed senders and contacts to ensure that future mailings you receive from the College aren't mistakenly blocked by antispaam software.

Jim Helm, editor

Message from the Principal

Dear Friends,

We have just come to a close of a highly challenging yet very fruitful academic year. I wish to brief you on the latest developments of the College.

Our Diamond Jubilee year celebrations continue. The Tamil Dept. organized Tamil Ilakhia Vizha with Pattimandrum by Prof. Solomon Pappiah and a dance drama Bethlehem Kuravanji by the Music College. The English Department enacted the play The Importance of Being Ernest. It was a superb performance. The department of Tamil had their Centre for Research

inaugurated setting up an Endowment in the name of G.U. Pope and Dr. Rani Jhansi Bai. The Department of Physics is also recognized as a research center.

There were three major National Seminars in Jan. 08: (i) Higher Education for Holistic Development amidst Contemporary Challenges organized by the college with the support of the University Grants Commission (UGC), (ii) Environmental History supported by UBCHEA and (iii) Literary Theories also sponsored by UGC. All three seminars were well attended and found very useful.

College Convocation was held on 22nd Feb. Dr. Shashi Rai, a member of UGC was the Chief Guest and 980 students of 2006-07 batch received their degrees.

The performance of our students in team games and athletics has been exemplary. They bagged all the University trophies and have represented the University in every team at the National level. One of our NCC cadets by name B. Lakshmi Priya marched in the prestigious Republic Day Parade on Jan 26th.

Our Diamond Jubilee celebration will have a grand finale in July with some distinguished VIPs, releasing a souvenir, a book on College Autonomy, inauguration of the Diamond Jubilee Campus (15 km away from Madurai), and of a PG & Research Hostel on campus with modern facilities. You are most welcome to join the celebration if you can. Please keep watching our college website for further information.

One last news is the launching of additional degree programmes in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Open University under a new scheme called Partnership under Convergence Scheme. This we hope will add value to those who have already registered for a course in the College and also open up avenues for the working and unemployed people of all age group from the community.

As we march forward into the post-diamond jubilee era, it would be much appreciated if you could share with us what you envision for the college.

With Best Wishes,

Dr. Nirmala Jeyaraj, Principal & Secretary

News from the Campus

Several new degree courses have been introduced: : M.Phil Chemistry, M.Phil English, M.Sc. Computer Science, M.A. Social Work, B.A. Psychology and Sociology, and B.Sc. Physical Education & Sports Science; diploma in Entrepreneurship Development, diploma in GIS, and a certificate course in Counseling. The Departments of Tamil and Physics have become recognized research centers, and Dr. Beulah Rajkumar has been authorized to guide Ph.D. students in Physics. Four faculty have received their Ph.D.: Jayamathy Frank (History), Hepsi Meganathan (Physical Education), Briget Mary (Physics), and Lily Balasingh (History). Forty-six papers were published by the faculty in National and International Journals.

The College has awarded 298 scholarships to this year's students, the Government 943 and the University 32. Eighteen endowments were received for scholarships or prizes. In accordance with the National Agenda to enhance access to Higher Education particularly from the socio-economically marginalized group, the College invites more endowments for scholarships, so that we can continue to open our gates to the needy and realize the vision of our founder.

After a five-day workshop on Folk Arts in which Social Science students were trained in four traditional folk dances of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, the students formed "Unarvugal" ("feelings" in Tamil), a theatre team which performs folk art forms for social change.

Alumnae Day, 2008. Over 400 LDC alumnae and their families gathered on February 23 to help celebrate the College's Diamond Jubilee and to reminisce about their memorable days at the College. Former Principal Shanti Manuel gave a stirring address, and the day was rounded out with a kolam contest, an illustrated talk on campus development, and a sumptuous meal.



Dr. Beulah Mithra addressing the alumnae. Retired faculty, staff, and early alumnae were recognized by the Principal with the award of a special commemorative Diamond Jubilee medallion.



Principal presenting College medallions to retired faculty

Science for Sanitation. The Centre for Environmental Studies organized an environmental awareness parade. Bearing placards, students were joined by Madurai sanitation workers as they marched from the campus through the neighborhood. They then set up tables with information promoting recycling, careful use of pesticides, water conservation and harvesting, etc.



Friends of Lady Doak College

In January a group of 20 US Friends of Lady Doak visited the College while on a 16-day trip to India. During ten days on campus, the group heard lectures on Indian culture from the faculty, went to historic sites, and visited Social Service agencies in and around the city to learn more about needs in India and how they are being addressed. Two days each were also spent in Chennai, Kerala, and Kanyakumari, and most of the group went on to Delhi. Participants were especially appreciative of the hospitality and insights provided by the College staff.



Friends of Lady Doak College at the Van Allen Guest House

Ann Jensen, a member of the Steering Committee of the Friends of Lady Doak College, has passed away. She had intended to join the group that visited the College, but illness and her untimely death prevented her. She was an active participant in fund-raising for the College Endowment, organizing several "Holiday Walks" that involved visits to homes in Oberlin decorated for the Christmas Holidays. She is much missed.

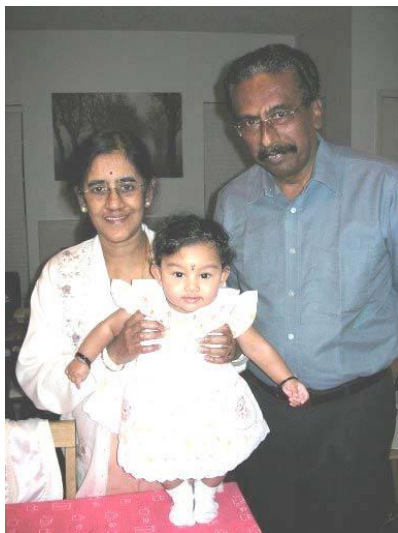
Alumnae Notes

Sivasundari Bose (PU 1964, English 1966-68): After publishing the novel 'Golden Stag', I have released a translation work of a hundred Kurunthogai poems from Tamil literature. It is titled "Tamil Sangam poetry--Love Lyrics".

Right now I am in Houston, USA, having enrolled in a short term course in Creative Writing at Rice University--to sharpen my skills, I hope. Will be back in Trichy soon, where I live with my husband Thangaraj Bose [see photo].

Was Alumnae Day a great success? Did anyone from the 64-68 batch attend? Maybe Miss Shanthi Manuel and Miss Michael had come too. Please convey my regards to Mrs. Anna Abraham.

I am proud of my Alma Mater and love to be in contact. Thank you. Regards, Siva <bosefly@yahoo.co.in>



Siva & Thangaraj Bose with granddaughter Anika.

Fatima Raziya (PU 1966, English 1967-69): First of all let me say I am sorry for not responding to your mails and giving a gap in correspondence. The reason is not all that happy. My late hubby's younger brother passed away after a short illness, and I had been running around helping that family in every possible way. It has been hectic and sad.

Let me thank you with all my heart for our college newsletter. It would be no exaggeration if I say it took me back to an ever fresh memoir of my college days. When I joined in PU, Ms. Gnanadickham was the Principal, and then Ms. Shanti Manuel took over. I'm still an ardent admirer of hers! I understand Ms. Nirmala Jeyaraj is the Principal now. If I guess right she was my senior. Please convey my regards and love to her.

I got married to Farook, an auditor, in 1971. In Aug 2003 we came back after attending a wedding (I was still decked in fineries and pattu saree), and Farook passed away after just 15 minutes of struggle—a massive heart attack. I'm still not out of that shock. I'm blessed with a wonderful son who is an engineer, working in the IT field and doing well. He is married and has a 2 year+ cute daughter (see photo). They live in Torrance.

It would be surprising that I still have energy to work. I work in style, as an Event Manager. My major clients are corporates, big and small. I am a free lancer, and that gives me ample scope for time. In other words, if I accept an assignment, I get busy and work for 36 hours a day, and if I don't have work, I just cool off. My ever-challenging event every year got over just a couple of weeks back. It was the Leather Fashion Show for the Leather Industry of the Indian Government.

I live in the US, in Los Angeles, but right now am in Chennai. I will be here till July end, because there are a couple of important weddings to attend.

Well, that'll be all for now. Regards, Raziya Farook
<razifa45@hotmail.com>



Raziya, daughter-in-law Rameeza, granddaughter Raina

Jazlin Ebenezer (Chemistry 1968-71) has been promoted to Full Professor at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. She had received a second BA in Education in 1977 and an MA in Education in 1981, both from Western

Washington University in the US. The University of British Columbia, Canada, awarded her a PhD in Science Education in 1991.

Dr. Jazlin has a strong reputation because of her scholarly work, which seeks to improve education at all levels and has focused on the teaching and learning of chemistry and the integration of technology into instruction. She has included Lady Doak College in her work by endowing a fund which provides financial support for multidisciplinary faculty Research on Women Learning Science.



Jazlin <aj9570@wayne.edu>

Phebe Daniel (English 1975-78): After graduating from Lady Doak, I worked as a French Lecturer from 1981 to 1983 at Lady Doak itself. I left Madurai in 1984 for Chandigarh and then later on to Delhi. But now I have been in Birmingham in the UK since 1998.

I would be interested in getting in touch with my classmates, teachers and colleagues.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks, Phebe <thedanielshome@yahoo.co.uk>

R. Sheela (English 1977-80, MPhil 1980-82): Thank you so much for contacting me regarding the Alumnae function. It gives me great pleasure to be in touch. Those five years were the golden days of my life. Unforgettable and most enjoyable days. Now as a "Home Executive" I take care of my two children. My husband is an Industrialist.

I am doing my M.Phil and have passed the examinations, but I still have to complete my Thesis. I will surely forward your message to all my friends.

Thank you. Do keep mailing. Sheela Sekar

<sheelaseker@sify.com>

Krithika Swaminathan (Zoology 1987-90): Hi. My college days were "The Wonder Years" of my life. I was foot loose and fancy free. I had no troubles and had a blast studying and enjoying life in LDC. I've made friendships which have lasted till now and am still in touch with most of my teachers. My teachers were friends, philosophers and a guide for me and still are. I currently reside in USA and am a proud mother of 3 kids. I have a 3 year old daughter Kahini and one year old twin boys Rohan and Pravan. Life is hectic and busy. I remember my college days with nostalgia. Those were the happiest days of my life...

Krithika <krithika1969@yahoo.com>



Giri & Krithika with Rohan, Pravan, and Kahini

Nilofer Yasmin Mohamed (Zoology 1987-90): I live in London now with my other half and my two children, Haroon (7) and Suhail (2). The days I spent in LDC are the happiest days in my life. I still remember my Professors and Lecturers: Mrs. Rawlin, Ms. Hannah Sukochana, our present principal, Dr. N. Jeyaraj, the most beautiful Ms. Sandhya Kiran, Mrs. Isobel Samuel and Mrs. Pamela Mohandas, Mrs. Manorama, Mrs. Rachel from Botany dept. I tell you all as the best examples of teachers anyone could ever have. Hopefully one day my kids get to meet you. If any of you or your kids ever visit London please do look me up. May peace be upon us all. Take care. Nilofer
<nilofer.mohamed@yahoo.co.in>

Vidhya Srinivasan (Mathematics 1989-92) is now in the web design business in the New York City area.
<vidhyaonline@comcast.net>

J. Vasanthi (Commerce 1994-97): Loving Greetings to you. I worked in the Women's Studies Center at LDC and also in General Library as Assistant for one year (1999-2000). By getting the golden experience from LDC, I got a job in ICFAI National College, Chennai, as Library Information Officer. Now in addition to the BCom, I have a Certificate in Library Information Science, Bachelor of Library Information Science, Master of Library Information

Science, Master of Commerce (specialisation in Banking & Insurance Management) and an M.Phil in Commerce.

I got married to Mr. Wisdom Samraj and blessed with one female child going to the 2nd Standard. My husband is working as an Administrative Officer. We settled in Chennai.

I haven't received the first five issues of the newsletter. Kindly send them to me. I am having a good relation with LDC till today; whenever I come to Madurai mostly I will visit LDC. Thanks to our Lord Almighty for the blessings. Thank you, Vasanthi <wvasanthi@gmail.com>.



Vasanthi

Anitha Malaiyarasan (Computer App 1997-2000): Dear friends, I am more than happy to be a part of LDC alumnae. I live in Bangalore, with my husband Vetri and son Avanish who is 3 years old. I have been associated with Information Technology after my post-graduation. I work for a company called "Arowana Consulting Ltd" as a Senior Techno Functional Consultant. My alma maters include Oracle and Fidelity Investments. I would love to be in touch with you all. Wishing you all the very best in life!! Love, Anitha <ani_lisa@rediffmail.com>

Raffee Viola (Botany 1998 – 2001): I got married in Jan 2005. God has blessed my married life with a daughter, J.Juanita Prim Rose, 2 years old. Currently I am working in Sugarcane Breeding Institute (ICAR), Coimbatore. Also I am doing my Ph.D in Molecular Cytogenetics here.

<rafeeviola@rediffmail.com>

Sangeetha Kandavel (Commerce 2000-03): Hi Guys, this is Sangeetha the most wanted and naughtiest alumna of LDC. Well I was a free bird enjoying the fruits of college life and one day time came where I had to leave the nest and fly away. Life was a roller coaster ride after that—lots of ups and downs, good times, bad times, it was a mixed series.

I'm working as a Business reporter with Deccan Chronicle newspaper in Chennai. Still single and always ready to mingle with my beloved Doakians. I also wanted to let you guys know that I have a community in Orkut especially for Doakians; do join the community. Love and sunshine.

Cheers, Sangeetha

<sangeetha_kandavel1983@yahoo.co.in>



Sangeetha

Sheeba Jebalin Nelson Gurupatham (ITM 2000-03, MS IT 2003-05): I was the topper in the college in MS (IT) with 94% of total aggregate and received Madurai Kamaraj University recognition for the same. I joined HCL Technologies, Chennai, in November 2005 and am still with the same company, designated as a Lead Engineer. Recently I have been awarded the O2 Award for Consistent Outstanding Performance through 2005, 2006 & 2007 and the Gold Line award for the best performance from the Plant Automation business unit.

Sheeba

<sheebajebalinn@hcl.in>



Virgin

Virgin Prabha Gomez (ITM 2000-03): Hello everyone, I am glad to introduce myself as an alumna of our esteemed college Lady Doak. I am married and settled in Puducherry. I worked as a Project Manager with SPi Technologies handling all in and out of the preparation of all major encyclopedias of Springer Publishers, the world's second largest and oldest publishers.

My heart leaps in joy whenever I think of the days spent in LDC. I was doubly privileged in hanging around in our campus all day and night, since I was in Sir James Doak Hall, our second home. The guidance and care of our beloved principal, Dr. Nirmala, and also that of our beloved faculties has led us to the heights in our life. I can confidently say that all that LDC has taught me has helped me in my professional and personal life. I really enjoyed being the part of our college choir led by Mrs. Christianna

and Ms. Lily Ernst. Our hostel life has taught me tolerance and adjusting nature by which I am living happily in a joint family of 8 members, where I am the only child to my parents. The list goes on if I start to list them here.

<virgingomez@rediffmail.com>

Vishali Vijay (English 2000-03): Hello friends and respected staff, it's me, Vishali, from the great English Dept batch. After my UG I did my diploma home-science course in Chennai at Kothari Academy. Right now I'm here in US. Got married to my lovely man named Vijay during May 11th of 2006. Vijay is a chemical engineer working for "Lafarge", a French international cement company, as process and quality engineer. I'm living a very happy fruitful life, and enjoying each and every moment, though missing my parents and home town. I'm here just as a good home maker.

I'm always proud to be a DOAKIAN. LDC is where my life was so precious in all the ways, like owning good friends, good lecturers, leadership quality, hostel life, club activities, competitions, learning variety courses, field trips, etc.....Really, really missing my college days which I can't get back; I just locked all my unforgettable memories into my heart and threw the key away. Now I just want to convey a few words; please do read it!!! Life keeps on changing, and so am I.

I miss my friends, I truly do,

I just wish my one dream can come true:

To see all of them together

and hope it stays that way forever.

That can't happen now since everyone's gone,
They've all gone their own ways and forgotten
our bond.

But I wish our bond could have stayed true,
maybe we would've all been here now together,
together forever.



Vijay & Shali <shalivijay@gmail.com>

Anis Fathima (English 2001-04, MA English 2004-06): I finished my M.Phil in MKU and currently am working as an executive secretary in Abu Dhabi, U.A.E. Anis <anisfathima26@yahoo.co.in>

A.D. Diana (Zoology 2001-04): I am now at New Delhi, working as a research associate at The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). Whenever I go to Tamil Nadu I will go to LDC and want to meet all my mentors. [7/18/07]

My Heart is beating fast. Wanted to let you know: wedding bells are soon going to ring for me with Mr. D. Rajkumar Gavaskar. So join us and rain us with blessings. Friends, give me your contact addresses, and phone number to catch you. [11/5/07]

A.D.Diana Rajakumari <dianaad83@yahoo.co.in>

S. Gifta Lorraine (Zoology 2001-04): From 2004-06 I did my masters from Karpagam Arts and Science College, Coimbatore, and since 2006 Aug I am working at the Dept of Plant Breeding and Genetics as a Junior Research Fellow on the characterization of coffee germplasm, focused on molecular marker studies, evolutionary, gene introgression etc. Regards, Gifta Lorraine <'giftalorraine@sify.com>

J. Akila (BBA 2003-06): After graduating from LDC, I did a Master of Business Administration at Fatima College. I started my career as Business Development Executive in Madurai, where I worked for nearly 8 months. At present I'm working as HR executive in ACI-India, Chennai. Now I thought of plan to switch over to a better job in Chennai itself. I really feel happy to participate in this Lady Doak Alumnae <Newsletter>. I am really thankful to my college and staffs that gave us all encouragement and the way they mould them to survive in the work environment. I'm trying to pursue my career further in studies. Akila

<Akilaraj11@gmail.com>



Akila

R. Sinthiya (Commerce 2004-07) is now doing her Master of Social Work in Trichy. <r_sinthiya@yahoo.co.in>

V. Unnamalai (Commerce 2004-07) is in the MBA program at Thiagarajar School of Management, Madurai. She asked us to email her the previous newsletters. <unna_talldoll@yahoo.co.in>

Vijayalakshmi Soundararajan (Chemistry 2004-07) is now doing her Masters in Social Work at American College. <viji_18Sep@yahoo.com>

Shansi Fellows Reports

Deborah Smith (1989-91): I'm enjoying raising Annika and Matthew, my twins who are now 8 years old. We live in West Hartford, Connecticut, and I keep busy with my job in fundraising research, our house, a sweet new dog, and life as a single mom. I'm looking forward to attending my Oberlin Reunion and the Shansi Centennial celebration <at Oberlin.> in May. Kindest regards to everyone." Deb <ammd99@hotmail.com>

Hyun-Jung Kim (1996-97): After my Shansi fellowship in Madurai, I eventually went to Cornell Law School <in the US>. I worked with law firms in New York City, Chicago and Hong Kong, clerked at the South African Constitutional Court in between my years at these firms, and am now settled in Johannesburg with my husband. I recently joined the Legal Resources Centre, an independent, non-profit public interest law clinic in Johannesburg and am otherwise adjusting to life in yet another country, a beautiful and complex one at that. I still keep in touch with beloved Madurai friends, Udhaya, Geetha and Savi, and will always remember my days in Madurai with gratitude. If you want to contact me, I'm at hjk101@hotmail.com

Our Donors

The Lady Doak College Endowment Fund is managed through the Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), which is one of several groups that support Lady Doak. As usual, we like to thank those generous friends who have contributed to the Endowment Fund over the past year:

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Thank You!

