

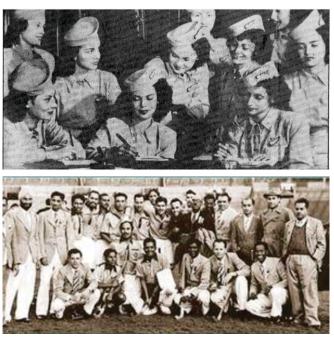
'AIs' of Calcutta

The Anglo-Indians, children of mixed marriages, were called the wheels, the cranks, the levers of the Empire building machinery. In the modernization of India they were the pioneers. The Anglo-Indians have a tradition of being punctilious in work, meticulous in appearance and gregarious and lively in food habits, speech and customs.

Anglo-Indians children of mixed marriages, loved and cherished, reared to speak the languages of the ruler and the ruled, their linguistic proficiency and swarthy complexions were utilized to advantage in war and peace, in trade and acquisition in the early days of the East India Company.

Their religion, dress, customs and eventually manners and more, identified them with the British. In turn they were accepted, them with the British. In turn they were accepted and rejected according to the political whims of the Directors in London.

There was no escape from Mendel's Law. The fair sibling climbed high on the ladder while his black brother had to remain on the periphery of the enchanted circle.



The Anglo-Indian is an original Calcutta. He is as old as the city itself. Job Charnock, the founder of Calcutta, was the father of three daughters by his Indian wife.

The early settlers left their womenfolk at home and so in the 17th and early 18th centuries, it was not uncommon for the Englishman to marry an Indian wife and adopt Indian ways. His children inherited his fortune and were sent home for education.

The name Anglo-Indian was coined to describe an India-returned Englishman. It was not until the early 20th century that the word came to denote the mixed or Eurasian population in India.

At its peak, the community in Calcutta is said to have numbered 50,000 far outnumbering the English

population in the settlement. In the 18th century, Britain was at war on many fronts in Europe and in the New World. England's country born children threw in their lot with their fatherland against warring Nawabs and Rajahs. They were an indispensable part of the British army.

After the mulatto uprising in San Domingo in Haiti, country born children were barred from returning to England for education and a few years later a ban was imposed on their appointments in civil, military and marine services. Indian society did not accept the firangi, and so Anglo-Indian history is fraught with many vicissitudes. Wealthy Eurasian indigo planters, zamindars and merchants bequeathed large endowments for the education of the weaker sections.

In the crash of 1833 and again during the slump a century later, many lost their fortunes and their jobs. It is to the community's credit that they realized the needs of the time and set up educational institutions to equip their children for other jobs.

In Calcutta, the British prepared boys for jobs as



uncovenanted hands in upper subordinate positions. With their political strength growing in Bengal the British saw the need to use the Eurasian as a gobetween.

The opening of the Suez Canal brought the Fishing Fleets to India and mixed marriages were now frowned upon. Their usefulness over and the Empire establish

the British pushed those very same country born who had defended the Union jack during the 1857 mutiny with untold valour, into privileged posts with no future. And so the Eurasian abandoned enterprises in favour of secure government service and this was a contributory cause of his economic decline.

The Anglo-Indian officer in the Railways-India, Custom, Police or Port Commissioners had a tradition of being punctilious in work and meticulous in appearance. In the modernization of India, the Anglo-Indian faced the perils of pioneering. He surveyed the unknown terrain, treacherous hills, malaria infested marshes and dangerous jungles. He supervised the laying of railway tracks, of planting telegraph poles, and of building housing colonies in way out areas. Rightly have Anglo-Indians been called the wheels the cranks, the levers of Empire building machinery.



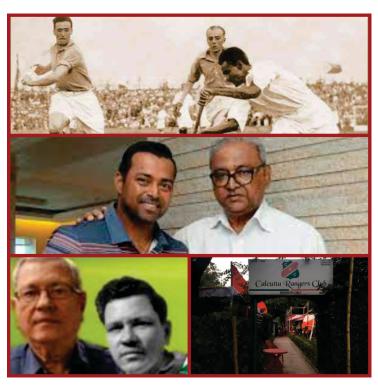
Generations of discipline born in the schoolroom and the sports field, bred an esprit de corps in the Anglo-Indian. Many a steam locomotive was manned by a father and son team. They took pride in the tip top condition of the engine and its split-second punctuality, so much so that one could set one's watch by the Indian Railways.

The Customs Officer with his colleague in the Port Commissioner's worked hard and played hard. Leslie Claudius and Pat Jansen were Olympic hockey players and retained the gold for India in the 1948 Games. Claudius was a member of India's generation of hockey that won Olympic gold in 1948, 1952 and 1956 and silver in 1960. He was the first hockey player to

have competed in four Olympics and also the first to earn a hundred international caps. He captained

the Indian team for the first team in 1959, with Dhyan Chand, often considered India's greatest hockey player ever as the coach, and led them to the second place finish at the 1960 Olympics in Rome

When Claudius walked into the smoking-room of the Bengal Club in 1990, heads turned in admiring recognition. An all-round sportsman, Claudius remembers fondly how he learnt to play football in his own backyard with the chokra boys. Quite by chance and at the instance of another hockey giant, **Dickie Carr** he became an Olympic hockey player. He is wistful about the changes in the sports world he knew so well. Nobody cares now he says, thinking of the spontaneous warmth of the pat on the back by a spectator for a game well played.



The pride of the Calcutta Police was its Anglo-Indian Sergeant contingent. These tall hefty lads were prominent on any parade or display astride their red Harley Davidson motorcycles. The story goes that the legendary Ronnie Moore ate his breakfast standing, off the mantelshelf in the Lal Bazaar mess so as not to crush his white satin jean uniform! Many a policeman has dined out on the Sergeant Evans story. The greenhorn sergeant on duty found a car wrongly parked on the main street outside the famous Firpo's restaurant and tea-room. Not satisfied with booking the offending chauffeur, he summoned the owner. Fairweather said the gentleman, I don't care if you are Fair weather or foul weather, reprimanded Evans. My orders stand. The next morning Mr. Fairweather, Commissioner of Police, congratulated and commended Sergeant Evans.

The academic qualifications required for the reserved posts were low, as a result of which few Anglo-Indians aspired to higher studies. Their ambition was stifled, though there have been and still are a few members of the community who rose to the rank of Deputy Commissioner of Police, Member Railway Board and Post Master General. Some have been successful in the legal and medical professions.

Monsignor Barber, a true Calcutta Anglo-Indian, sits back in his chair with a cigar in his room at the Sacred Heart Church in Dharamshala - the gift of a Portuguese lady, Dona Pascoag De Souza. He chuckles over the good old days of his boyhood with characteristic sense of humours. His father was Assistant Value in the quasi-government Calcutta Improvement Trust, frequently acting as Chief, but he knew that though he was worth his salt, he would never get the job. The situation changed radically after independence. Monsignor Barber tells of the Indian Defence Force (IDF) of the First World War. Jocularly nicknamed the "I don't fight" corps, the men were recruited entirely from the Anglo-Indian community under the British officer. He may have been only a lieutenant, but he thought he was a Major General! The Monsignor's Uncle Carmody who later rose high in the railways with seven others ran the German railway in Africa. When the boys returned home, they had to beg for jobs. In search of nostalgia, Father Horace Rosario S.J. proved a treasure trove of oral history which he recounted at length in the parlour of St. Xavier's College on Park Street. Living within themselves, the community developed certain characteristics manifested in the Church, the club and the Boarding School.

Sunday mornings, well dressed families - the women until two decades ago sporting hats, gloves and veils - make their way to their parish church on foot, in rickshaws, in cars and taxis. The majority of Anglo-Indians in Calcutta today are Catholics.

After Mass, they visit each other's homes and stay on for a lunch of kofta curry and yellow rice.

A gregarious, fun-loving, musical and convivial people, merriment with lots to eat and drink are a part of the Anglo-Indian life-style. Baptism, first holy communions with all due reverence are celebrated with one big bash at the Grail and Rangers Club. This is the bond that holds the community together, says Father Rosario.

The Railway Institute in the mofussil and the clubs in the cities were an important aspect of their culture. Unlike British clubs, these were never male preserves, but very much a family haunt. The Calcutta Rangers Club founded in 1896, is one of the premier Anglo-Indian Clubs in the country. In sports, the club has nurtured some of the finest hockey, football and basketball teams. The major events in the Club's social calendar are Housie Nites, and the Balls - Easter, May Queen, Independence Eve and New Year's Eve. In the days gone by, reminisces one old resident, live five piece bands would play for Rs.30/-a night. Young and old jived, jitterbugged and rock and rolled with gay abandon. In his time, Cedric Coutts sang Charmaine in his charming baritone. Those were the days Scotch whisky was eight annas (50p) a



peg. Endless plates of potato chips and bottles of tomato sauce were on the house. Apart from social activities, the Calcutta Rangers Sweep donated large sums to local charities.

Boarding schools were another adjunct that catered to the itinerant Anglo-Indians who sent their children to Darjeeling, Nainital, Hazaribagh and Asansol. Organized

games were compulsory. Children played all games and became all-rounder.

Boxing was a favourite sport and many were the fans of Kid D'Silva of Calcutta.

Because of the transferable nature of his job, the Anglo-Indian did not think of building his own home. On retirement, Calcutta was the home base for many. They rented houses, flats or rooms in Dharamtalla, Bow Bazaar, Ripon Street, Royd Street and the small lanes off Free School Street, once called Colinga which is still their stronghold. The building may be shabby and decrepit, but the home is always neat. Windows are curtained and sheets are aired regularly. Émigrés to Australia have taken this habit with them. The vase of flowers on the teapot was always freshly filled and the Mali (gardner) with his basket of blooms was as regular as the rotiwala (bread man). Plastic flowers are more practical today.

Warm and hospitable, the Anglo-Indian housewife kept an open house. No guest could leave without having had a **Boxwall's** curry puff or a slice of cake.

Each family has its favourite recipes for prawn curry, vindaloo, jhalfrazie and the all time favourite aloo chop (potato rissole) to which the individual bawarchi (chef) adds his particular flavour.

Christmas is the greatest day of the year. Preparations for 'Barrha Din' start months ahead with the bottling of kala-jamun (Indian blackberry) wine in summer. From October, the durzees (tailors) of Ripon Street and Madge Lane, the latter named after a well known Anglo-Indian family who owned the land on which stand the New Market and Globe Cinema, are busy cutting and stitching the latest fashions from Vogue magazine. Granny's 'amra' pickle and Aunty's chutney are sunned. Finally the baker arrives to take away the cake-mix rich with fruit and spice to bake into a dozen or more portions for family and friends.

Frank Anthony's mother sent him a dozen bottles of the Anglo-Indian special liquor and Milk Punch at Christmas every year until she died. It was not unusual for a railway family to come to Calcutta for their Christmas shopping on the sales of their year's collection of newspapers. They like so many others still make New Market their second home for the pre-Christmas weeks, buying presents, window shopping and munching on hot gram and Nizams kathi rolls which have followed the Anglo-Indian to Australia. Rosy cheeked children, home from their boarding schools in the hills were happy sucking sticks of red and white barley sugar. Parties at home inevitably ended with a sing-song of old-time favourites round the piano-Roll Out the Barrel, When Irish Eyes are Smiling sounding lustier as the evening wore on.

Like their food and some of their ways, Anglo-Indian speech is a synthesis of English and Hindustani. In an accent and lilt entirely his own the young Anglo-Indian teases, Fatty Fatty Bomba Lati, ate up all the ghee chapatty, Inty Minty Papa Tinty, Tan Toon, Tessa, count Anglo-Indian children playing ring games. But the dialect as it may be called was caught by **Bobby Kokka** in a 1960s Air India advertisement. She was a Dum Dum blonde. To her Calcutta was 'Cal,' Darjeeling was 'Darj' and men to her were something that only came at the end of her sentences-until she went Idle wild.

And it was the Anglo-Indian girl who first volunteered for the job of air hostess. She led the way for the emancipated woman outside the home. In Calcutta they were the first among women to take up careers. As teachers they are the back-bone of the English medium schools in the city. Many a Calcuttan fondly cherishes and owes a debt to this great institution - from Principal to Nursery Teacher. In nursing, it was the Anglo-Indian woman who lit the lamp. Some are remembered as dedicated Matrons of public hospitals. In the world of entertainment, the beautiful sloe-eyed girl, product of a happy mixture of East and West, was top of the pops. Calcutta claims Merle Oberon as her own Marie Wilson visited her city last year with a jazz group from Australia. The army of Patsys and Glorias kept the manually operated telephone lines in Calcutta alive and alert. The smart, efficient Anglo-Indian secretary was a most valuable asset in merchantile offices. Many, like Betty Catchick, Anne Lumsden and Jenny Paes carried this efficiency and dedication to work on to the playing field. Anne Lumsden was the only woman to win the Arjuna Award for her contribution to hockey. Jenny Paes, on the eve of her departure for Wimbledon to watch her son Leander, recalls her eventful career in basketball and her nine triumphant years as the ICI champion in the Office League matches. Her eldest daughter Jackie sometimes accompanied her and was the team mascot. Marie, her younger daughter followed in her mother's footsteps and last year won the most valuable player award in the Inter-Club tournament. She has taken up sports medicine like her father. Jenny Thompson nee Godfrey Writes from England, I often think about the interclub and inter office matches played on the Chowringhee Maidan. There was always such enthusiasm and excitement not only amongst the players but with all concerned, including the spectators. The experience and enjoyment I attained from these past years will never be forgotten.

In his Oxford University Press office, the West Bengal MLA Neill O'Brien thinks back to 1967 on the Eddie Hyde Memorial Quiz, the first quiz competition in Calcutta. From small beginnings in a Parish Hall, quizzing has now become an All India pastime. The O'Brien boys are all three champion quizzers but father remains the Master Quizzer and Quiz Master. Mother, Joyce O'Brien at her desk at the All India Anglo-Indian Association, is a hot-line to help for many an SOS.

With Indian independence in 1947, the Anglo-Indian community felt insecure and there was a who remained were accepted as an Indian community. Not all agree that the job situation has improved, but there are many more opportunities.



ΤΗΕ CALCUTTA mass exodus of those who wished to leave. Those SCHOOL OF MUSIC Estd. 1915

The Administrative and Defense Services hold Anglo-Indians in high positions.

Those who left Calcutta are fondly remembered, as is Johnny Mayer, the poor boy who half a century ago learnt to play the violin at the Calcutta School of Music from Philippe Sandre and played to dresssuited audiences at the Calcutta symphony orchestra concerts in the New Empire Theatre. A break at

DOESN'T WANT TO BE F. O. O. L. Anglo-Indian Asks For A Change Of Name CALCUTTA, April 1. Because his friends laugh at him whenever they see his initials, a young decided to Anglo-Indian here has apply for a legal alteration in his name. The youngman's name is: Frederic Oliver Oswald Little.—A.P.

the Royal Academy of Music was the beginning of a very successful musical career.

From England and America, from Australia and Canada they come to visit the city of their birth. The younger generations come in search of their roots. Letters remain a link. Remembering happy times, Pat Beatty, Eva Deefholt and Patty Lord, erstwhile basketball players now in Australia write, we still value the many friends we made.

They have reconciled themselves to the changed times. A "live for the day" philosophy is evident in the octogenarian members of the community.





Today is our 2201st.

Members attended last RWM: 14

Birthday Greetings : Dec 6th : PP Dr. Arabinda Ray

Agenda – 2201st RWM

A minute silence in mark of respect to PP Dr. Sumanta's mother DG Visit on December 13th, 2022 Annual Meeting on December 20th, 2022 6th Board Meeting on December 23rd, 2022. Host Rtn. Dr. Saibal Naha.



With deep sorrow the Dasgupta family wishes to inform you of the sad demise of my mother, Smt. Mira Dasgupta (aged 86). She has departed for her heavenly abode on December 5th, 2022 afternoon at BNR Hospital (South Eastern Railway) after a short period of illness. Let us all pray for 'sadgati' of her immortal soul. Thank you.

-PP Dr. Sumanta Dasgupta





Presidential Message

December 2022

While sitting with a group of Rotary leaders outside of Lusaka, Zambia, I ask a question: "How many of you have ever had malaria?" Every hand in the room goes up. They even begin to tell me about the first, second, or third time they experienced the disease, one of the main causes of death and sickness in many developing countries. They are fortunate. They have access to medical treatment and lifesaving medicines. For the people of rural Zambia, their story is very different.

On a wooden bench in a small village, I sit with Timothy and his young son Nathan. With a camera crew capturing our conversation, he tells me of the time Nathan showed signs of malaria. He brought the boy to the nearby home of a community health worker, where Nathan quickly received medicines that in all likelihood saved his life.



Calmly, Timothy tells me about his other son's bout with the disease a few years earlier. He had to race that son to a medical clinic more than 5 miles away. Riding a bike and carrying his child on his back, he tells me, he could feel his son's legs turn cold and then his little body go limp. As he finally entered the clinic, he screamed for help, but it was too late. The camera stops rolling, and we sit in silence. He begins to weep, and I hold him tightly. "I lost my son, I lost my son," he says.

This story is all too familiar for the families we meet over the next few days. And yet there is hope. Partners

for a Malaria-Free Zambia is Rotary's first Programs of Scale grant recipient, and it is saving lives. Across two provinces of Zambia, 2,500 volunteer health workers have been selected by their communities. They are trained to bring medical care closer to those who need it, and they are able to diagnose and treat malaria and other ailments. Rotary partnerships create lasting change.



India makes history at the Rotary Golf Championship in Marrakech

On the sunny and pristine green golf courses in Morocco, Indian golfers from the Rotary fraternity made history by winning the first-ever 'Nation Cup' at the 57th International Golfing Fellowship for Rotarians (IGFR) World Championship 2022, which drew to a close in the first week of November.



A mong celebrations and festivities, fine food and drink, and of course some serious golfing, 182 Rotarian golfers and partners from 22 nations met up in Marrakech, Morocco and enjoyed a week of fellowship, sunshine and golf. "I am especially pleased to have been able to welcome so many first time IGFR participants led by our friends in India and Estonia, to call out two countries who

attended with first timers in large numbers. I sincerely hope you all enjoyed the week, made new friends and plan to come back next time. And of course: spread the word and bring a friend," said IGFR president Andrea Oddi.

A lot of credit for the success of golfers from India, and the rest of South Asia — Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal — goes to PDG Parag Sheth from RID 3060, who had initiated the South Asian Fellowship of Golfing Rotarians in 2015–16. Both Sheth and his spouse Punam are keen and passionate golfers. "Today the Fellowship has a membership exceeding 460 members from South Asia and the SAFGR is affiliated with IGFR," he says.

Sheth himself won the runner-up prize in the handicapped category, while Indian golfers bagged many other prizes. Thrilled about "India making history at this prestigious golfing tournament of Rotary," says Sheth who has initiated the RI President World Cup last year when Shekhar Mehta was the RI President, and has been golfing with spouse Punam for more than 10 years. The couple lives in Bharuch, but they also have a home in Ahmedabad where every extended weekend, beginning Friday, they tee away at the Kensville Golf Resort. "We actually play golf four days a week," he grins.



The Rotarian who has been instrumental in organising numerous golf tournaments for the SAFGR as its founder chair, across the country and the world, says, "I will always be grateful to PRIDs Sushil Gupta and Yash Pal Das for the support and the encouragement they gave me for forming the SAFGR." The SAFGR has held golf tournaments in Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Chennai, Kochi, Delhi, Dhaka, Jamshedpur, Jaipur, Kathmandu, Kodaikanal and many other places. It has also held two editions of virtual tournaments in member countries



when over 567 and 782 golfers participated and raised funds for TRF.

Punam and Parag Sheth were enthusiastic participants when RI organised a fundraising golf event with golf legend Jack Nicklaus, Rotary's global ambassador for polio eradication, at the prestigious Bear's Club in Jupiter, Florida, US, in March 2019. At that single event, a total of \$5.25 million was raised. Sheth has been invited as a member of IGFR for a three-year term beginning Jan 2022.

Our Shared Values

lan HS Riseley, Foundation Trustee Chair

We all make hundreds if not thousands of decisions daily. Whenever I need to make an important decision, I remember the words of Roy Disney, who co-founded what became the Walt Disney Co.: "It's easy to make decisions when you know what your values are."

Each of us brings a set of personal values into our clubs. Rotary also unites by a set of core values — service, fellowship, diversity, integrity and leadership — that guide our decisions and galvanise us to take action and, by doing so, change the world.

Another value is inextricable to Rotary: our giving spirit. From the club members who volunteer their time for service projects to the Rotary leaders in the Arch Klumph Society who sustain our Foundation, Rotary members are among the most generous people I have ever met. Combining our personal generosity with the countless ways Rotary affords us to give back makes us a global force for good. In Rotary, we take it a step further. We also value good stewardship, planning and sustainability. Not only do we give, but in Rotary we also give smart. We know that building sustainability into our projects means their impact will be felt over the long term.

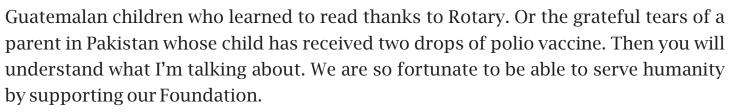


In short, through the Foundation, your gifts keep on giving. This is why donating to The Rotary Foundation is one of the most intelligent decisions you can make. You know that your gift will align with those values you hold dear and that it will be administered by your fellow Rotarians, who share those values. It is quite an understatement to say that in giving to Rotary, we also receive. As someone who has been privileged to visit hundreds of Foundation projects around the world, I can tell you that the gift we get in return is

priceless.

I hope you, too, will be as lucky as I have been, to see the look of amazement on the face of a person at an eye clinic in Chennai, India, who now sees clearly. The proud smiles of





During this season of giving, I thank you for your generosity to The Rotary Foundation and for all the ways you give to our great organisation. Juliet and I extend our warmest holiday greetings to you all.

Minutes of the 2200th RWM held on November 29th, 2022 at BNR Officers' Club, Garden Reach

- 1. President Abinash called the RWM to order and requested to rise for the National Anthem.
- 2. Due to unavailability members for the Club's President post for the year 2023-24 an Emergency Board Meeting was called for.
- 3. Rtn. Shweta Bose Barua consented to lead the club for the Rotary year 2023-24. PP Dr. Arabinda Ray proposed her name for the post.
- 4. Upon discussion the Club decided to organise Awareness Camps on Thalassaemia, Cervical Cancer & Oral and Dental Hygiene in different schools in the vicinity areas of our club.
- 5. PP Mousumi has coordinated with the Teacher Coordinator of St. Thomas's Girls School, Khidderpore for organising a Cervical Cancer Awareness Camp.
- 6. PP Mousumi also suggested organising a complete CPR Training for students at Bijoygarh College to be coordinate by PP Dr. Arabinda Ray.
- 7. Club Secretary, Rtn. Debasis conducted Club business.
- 8. Minutes of the last RWM were confirmed. President terminated the meeting.



WE MEET EVERY TUESDAY AT 7.30 P.M. AT B. N. R. OFFICERS' CLUB. GARDEN REACH, KOLKATA - 700 043 CONTACT : PP TANU ROY • Mobile : + 91 9831 72 88 80 / roytanu@hotmail.com

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