

# Around the Sundial

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Development Director

Sometimes, in this year of upheaval around the globe, it feels like what we do at Woodstock is at best marginally important in the grand scheme of things. Providing a good education to a mere 450 children doesn't seem particularly earth-shattering.

Over the past month, the alumni office has been editing alumni news from those in classes 1932 through 2002. The volume of news we have received this year is incredible - almost 40% more than last year. Whether this is due to the convenience of e-mail or the hard work of WOSA and class secretaries, editing is a 'labor of love' for us. The jottings remind us of what incredible people Woodstock alumni are, young and old. Their stories and achievements are evidence that, for the last 150 years, Woodstock has indeed provided an "education for a world of difference". We can be assured that nurturing those in our care does help to transform the world.

**JANUARY** — The empty campus echoed with sounds of construction as renovation of the old Music Cells building began. When workers opened up the walls, they found that the entire structure needed major reinforcement, while the top floor walls were so weak that they had to be completely rebuilt! We were excited to receive building

permission from the government for the new Hanifl Center on the site of Ashton Court. This was one of the first such approvals granted in Mussoorie in years due to a building moratorium in the area.

As staff and students prepared to return from their much-deserved break, instability in Afghanistan, Nepal and along the India/Pakistan border reminded us all of the preciousness of life and fragility of peace.

**FEBRUARY** — Staff returned early to an intensive week of training on Blackbaud, our new school management system. We also welcomed Dr. Anne Chapman as the first Winterline Scholar-in-Residence. She spent 2 weeks giving professional input on learning styles and effective teaching methods. The community welcomed Brian Dunn, Class of '89, as the new Chaplain, whose ability to foster dialogue is greatly appreciated.

Staff worked hard on a comedy entitled "Romeo and Ethel the Pirate's Daughter", performed in Parker Hall to the amusement of enthusiastic audiences.

We received permission to renovate Midlands after almost 3 years of effort, and permission to build the gym seemed imminent.

**MARCH** — Classes spent a long weekend in local mountains and villages studying the region close-up. This was in lieu of Activity Week, which had been cancelled in Oct 2001 due to instability following September 11. The senior girls' soccer team went to Delhi, and cricket season 'hotted up'.

The school's purchase of Mt. Hermon Estate added a huge residence and 19 acres of wooded khud, including Fairy Glen and Mt. Hermon Flats, to the campus. Repairs began to prepare for occupancy by 25 senior girls in July 2002 during the Midlands renovation.

The Board voted to proceed with the Sesquicentennial campaign (since renamed 'Woodstock 150'), an ambitious fundraising effort

focused around the 150th anniversary in 2004.

**APRIL** — Spring brought basketball busyness, including tours to Patiala and Delhi, several tournaments in Dehra Dun, and our 2nd Win Mumby Tournament with 18 boys' and girls' teams participating. Elementary Sports Day, field hockey and cricket practice kept Hanson Field busy. A wide range of musical performances, from recitals to Indian music and dance, concerts to an outdoor jazz evening, livened up the school. More informally, the NHS organized a benefit rock concert that raised Rs. 7,000 for a local elementary school. The drama department also staged the Oscar Wilde play, 'The Importance of Being Earnest'.

**MAY** — This year, students in advanced courses took the Advanced Placement test in that subject in place of a final exam in that course. As a result, 77 students took a record 229 tests in 16 subjects, 74% scoring a 3 or better. These exams are increasingly recognized in admissions to universities outside of the U.S.

Warm weather attracts visitors to Mussoorie in May, including a good turnout at the Mela 2002: FantAsia, which lit up the Quad late into the evening. The Class of '92 held a 10th reunion at the school, and by late May the campus was flooded by alumni and parents. This graduating class was remarkable in many ways: of the 74 graduates, 22 were the youngest of families with multiple Woodstock grads, 16 had older siblings in the Class of 2000, and 6 were children of Woodstock alumni!

**JUNE** — The Class of 2002 looked forward to Graduation even as many governments urged their foreign nationals to leave India in anticipation of an Indo-Pak war. We monitored the news closely but Going Down Day and Graduation proceeded as scheduled. Some parents did cancel plans to attend Graduation and some seniors faced difficulty in getting visas to study abroad. Baccalaureate morning brought tragedy home as we woke to news of the death of Daniel



Mr. Bob Alter presenting "Water for Pabolee" in Hindi to village leaders

Bhutia, who had just completed 9th grade. The Bhutias manage Rokeby in Landour, where a large funeral was held following Baccalaureate. Graduation followed with keynote speaker T.Z. Chu '52 and though the mood was more somber than usual, it was with full hearts that we said goodbye to the Class of 2002.

Six exchange students left to the US under the PAX program. If this trial year is successful, the school will open up the program to other schools in India.

**JULY** — Soon after Going Down Day, renovation of Midlands began in earnest. As well as being reconfigured, it will now meet seismic safety standards, its infrastructure overhauled, and the tower, pulled down in 1997 due to earthquake damage, will be restored. Most significantly, the dorm will be broken into three houses of 30-40 girls each, greatly improving quality of care. With the same goal in mind, elementary students were welcomed to a remodeled Edgemoor dorm at the start of school. The year opened with slightly reduced student numbers as regional instability affected recruitment outside India.

**AUGUST** — The monsoon season is time for cross country, soccer, and badminton. Low rainfall meant fewer leeches, making hiking more pleasant than usual. John Lewis, former staff and liaison for Carey Baptist School in Melbourne, Aust, returned to renew the connection between the schools, which exchange two students each fall semester.

The school joined the Wynberg Allen community in mourning the tragic death of Ankur McFarland, who had joined the Woodstock IT dept in July.

**SEPTEMBER** — Lessons learned on Activity Week hikes, service experiences, and field trips provided a wealth of material that was presented during assemblies throughout the rest of the semester. Highlights included the senior boys' soccer team tour to Bhutan and a visit with the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala.

The old music cells were transformed into offices with large windows that bring sunlight into the three floors housing reception, admissions, business, and other public functions of the school. A less noticeable accomplishment was the buried piping carrying fiber optic cable to the main dorms that now connect dorm computers to the

school-wide network.

**OCTOBER** — Negotiating rebar (sarias) and precarious drops, a large crowd of staff, press, representatives from local NGO's, the Board and special guestspeaker, Rev. Bob Alter, joined Paul and Suzanne Turner Hanifl '63 at the groundbreaking of the Hanifl Center. Board meetings followed, at which a set of Standards was finalized that will guide planning for and assessment of school advancement. *Lives Entwined*, a collection of essays by 43 alumni on the impact of their Woodstock education on their lives, was released to much acclaim.

Dr. Chapman, Winterline Scholar-in-Residence, returned to continue her work with the faculty.

**NOVEMBER** — November saw more book releases: the Hindi version of Bob Alter's *Water for Pabolee*, translated by Saroj Kapadia and published by the Alumni Dept., and *Rudyard Kipling: The Complete Verse* researched in the school library, published by Natraj. "I Never Saw Another Butterfly", a play about children in a camp during the Holocaust, involved a cast from elementary through high school. The 2nd anniversary of Uttaranchal statehood passed peacefully. The music department worked hard to prepare for



*An after school performance of the Jazz Band*

Royal School of Music Board exams, three concerts, Christmas performances, and an advanced student recital. After many years, Woodstock fielded a tennis team, playing well against Doon School. Construction of a new Health Center in the old business area, made possible by the Class of '49, disrupted the tranquility of the Tea Garden. Towards the end of the semester, we welcomed the executive committee of Winterline Foundation for their annual general meeting.

**DECEMBER** — As days shortened and the air grew crisp, students returned home to spend time with family. The community came out to say goodbye to Jim and Betsy Lehman, long-time staff, parents, and friends, who have retired to the Woodstock community in Wooster. Many look forward to 2003 with a sense of hope for a less tumultuous year!



*Unveiling the plaque at the Hanifl Groundbreaking (l-r): Paul Hanifl, Architect Neeraj Manchanda & Suzanne Turner Hanifl '63*