

*The
Goa Sudharop
Seniors e-book*

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FOREWORD

Goa Sudharop Community Development Inc., a USA-based non-profit, volunteer NGO working for the betterment of Goa and Goans worldwide since 2000, celebrated 2006 as the YEAR OF THE SENIOR. One effort was to honor Goan seniors by publishing a Seniors e-book for which Goa Sudharop invited essays or poems from Goans on any of the following topics:

1. "Reminiscences of my Goan Youth".
2. "Giving back to Goa and Goans".
3. "Tribute to Goan Seniors".
4. Other topics related to Seniors.

In accordance with these themes, Goa Sudharop received a number of essays from Goans based around the globe. Seniors were able to share their knowledge about their Goan youth spent in any part of the world for the "Reminiscences of my Goan Youth" topic. "Giving back to Goa and Goans" also received several entries, as did "Tribute to Goan Seniors".

Since this is an ongoing effort, the e-book will be updated periodically. You may send an essay on one topic or all topics. Feel free to write about a family member (living or deceased) if you wish. If possible, do engage your children and grandchildren in writing your essay in a cross-generational experience. Please continue to send your entries to Valerie Rodrigues at valerie3@rediffmail.com

Please mention your name and complete postal address (your postal address will not be published). Your entry should be of approximately 500-750 words (and no more than 750 words). Goa Sudharop reserves complete rights of publication. The Goa Sudharop Board's decision with respect to publication is final.

This effort would not have been possible without the efforts of Valerie Rodrigues, a free-lance writer currently based in Goa. Goa Sudharop is forever indebted to her work in editing the e-book and the countless volunteer hours she spent to gather and format the essays.

To learn more about Goa Sudharop, please visit www.goasudharop.org. Thank you for your support.

George Pinto Filomena Giese
Co-founders

Goa Sudharop
World G.O.A.N. network

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EDITOR'S NOTE

When I was requested by George Pinto of Goa Sudharop to edit the Seniors e-book, I agreed to do so mainly because I knew first-hand of the good work that Goa Sudharop has been doing for Goa and Goans, and I was happy to be able to do my little bit too. But what began as an exercise in editing soon turned into something quite different. As I began to read through the contributions that poured in, I found myself almost carried away as it were, on a magic carpet made up of the reminiscences of (and tributes paid to) our very own Goan seniors. And in the end, I felt that what I had done was insignificant in comparison to what I gained through this experience.

I have tried to keep whatever editing I have done to the bare minimum. I do know that this may have resulted in a few inconsistencies, but I have done this deliberately, so as to retain the flavour of what the contributors wished to convey and to maintain each individual style of writing.

I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to two of my friends who, though reluctant to have their names put here, have so willingly helped with the editing and with the spellings of the words in Konkani.

I would also like to thank each and every one of our contributors who took the time and trouble to pen down his/her thoughts and send in an entry. I am sure that many of our readers will come across familiar names, perhaps even those of relatives and friends, within these pages. I hope too that these efforts of our contributors might be an inspiration to you to jot down your own reminiscences that may well prove to be a treasure trove of memories to someone, somewhere, sometime.

I leave you now to browse through the book and I trust that you will find yourself transported on a delightfully nostalgic trip down memory lane.

Happy reading!
Valerie Rodrigues

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SERENATAS DE AMOR (SERENADES OF LOVE)

by Dr. Francisco Colaço, M.D., F.I.C.A., USA
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Serenading conjures up thoughts of young men standing below a window at night, singing or playing for their beloved. But *serenatas*, as they were conceived in days of yore (when the Portuguese tradition was in vogue) encompassed a whole gamut of experiences: lovely chords from our guitars (on quiet nights of twinkling stars); romantic strains renting the air - a courageous attempt by a few musically-talented chivalrous youngsters to tell every lady in town (not only their sweethearts!) that they were lovable, nay adorable. *Serenata* was truly an outpouring of the soul, a toast to femininity, an ode to love and a way of life in those *sossegado* days of my Goan youth, when healthy fun and serious work blended admirably.

Four or five of us gathered at short notice, armed with stringed instruments. There was a “tom-tom” for good measure, and for bass, an improvised wooden box “*caixa de ressonância*” (the sound box). We were nicknamed “night birds” or “night workers” (not in the pejorative sense, of course!). At 10 p.m. we would gather at one of the cement benches in Panjim by the banks of the quietly-flowing Mandovi where we would quickly practice new hits and brush through old songs. *Rua sem Luz* (Road without Lights) was a favourite, perhaps because most roads in those days were without lights! Eloy Gomes was our leader, a genial guitarist, a legend in his own lifetime. (He was bent on adding the prefix *Doutor* to his name but music was his passion). Latin and Portuguese tunes were his forte. *Caçula*, *Amorada*, *Baião Delicado* - he played all these with dexterity. He was the envy of all, even accomplished professionals who came from overseas! Then there was Dr. Rod, the immortal percussionist, the quintessential musician, the artist par excellence. In those days, we mostly “plucked” our guitars; while the thumb etched the *bordão*, the other fingers, in quick succession, chiseled out the weirdest of rhythms, *samba*, *rumba* and *bolero* (*bossa nova* made its debut later).

Our battleground was the girls’ hostel - *Instituto de Nossa Senhora de Piedade* - our first and last destination on weekdays. As the first chords were struck in the dead of the night, the lights came on; the girls flocked to the verandah with shouts of “*Encore!*” Non-stop lilting music flowed, which came to an end only when a stern Dona Guiomar, the disciplinarian Director, unable to control the girls’ exuberance, would summon the police as a deterrent to our over-enthusiasm. Most of us were then medical students. Great names graced at different times our *Tuna Académica* - the Flores brothers (the late Dr. Jorge and Victor) and even Noel Flores (now Professor Catedrático of the Music Conservatory in Vienna). I also fondly remember the late Dr. Raul Peres, my brother-in-law, and the unforgettable Pandit (now a urologist in the USA).



Even today Dr. Francisco Colaço still takes pleasure in strumming his guitar

On weekends, we had a longer itinerary. Moving around in Dr. Fernando Mascarenhas’ coffin-shaped van, we went all around Panjim and even made forays to Vasco, Margão and Mapusá. Jéjé Velho with his mellifluous vocals was with us and, if luck was good, the golden-voiced Arch. Lúcio Miranda (the best *serenata* singer of all times) would also join us. Wherever we went, house-doors, fridges, home-bars and kitchens were thrown open and we had fun all night.

It was through constant serenading I must confess, that I ended up conquering my wife. She was beautiful and had many admirers. We were both shy, but it was through music that the right chord was struck. We have now been married for years and there have been good and sad times too. One of my best days, I remember, came when I stood first in MD Medicine in the Bombay University in 1972, and dedicated my triumph to my beloved wife as a reward for the umpteen sacrifices she had made to see me through. There were other glorious days too, like the day when each of our three petals (one lovely boy, Melvin, and two beautiful girls, Elaine and Annabelle) was born. But beyond doubt, the saddest day of all, our own 9/11, came when we tragically lost our loving son in the prime of life.

As I think back, hidden in the secret recesses of my heart and my mind are times I would have liked totally obliterated; luckily, there are also days that bring in happy reminiscences. The days of *Serenata* - to be precise - figure amongst the most memorable in my life, because they taught me what love is all about. Especially that sublime form of love that finds its expression through the magic of music.

Dr. Francisco Colaço is a well-respected cardiologist from Margao, currently President of the Indian Medical Association (Goa Chapter). He is also the President of 'Lok Shakti', a socio-political outfit which strives for secularism and good governance in Goa, as well as President of 'Goenkarachem Daiz', a recently formed Trust meant to preserve and promote Goenkarponn. A social activist and writer, Dr. Colaço loves music - he plays the guitar and enjoys singing.

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REMINISCENCES OF MY CHILDHOOD IN THE VILLAGE

by Dr. Bailon de Sa
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I was born rather prematurely, in the island village of Santo Estevam on 17th May, 1913. My family was middle class but my parents were much respected for their honesty, integrity and charity. I grew up a normal child – with colds and coughs, fevers and minor injuries. We were fortunate that I had a cousin who was a very skilful physician, and whom we consulted for any malady. When I was about six, my father's brother, who had relinquished his job in the railways, took up my education. The village had a Portuguese primary school with five classes. My education was entirely at home. I appeared for both the public exams and passed with distinction, beating all the official candidates. I was then nine years old and too small to leave the house. So I remained for another two years at home, where my uncle taught me Latin and Maths. The foundations then laid were of immense use later in my academic career, when I was sent as a boarder to the then well known English school in Goa – Mater Dei in Saligão. At the entrance examination, I was found fit to enter the 5th standard. But I preferred to go to standard Four as I found the boys in Std. Five rather biggish! The five years that culminated in Matriculation passed rather smoothly. My rank went gradually upwards. At the final Matriculation class, I stood first in the school with a couple of distinctions. Then came St. Xavier's in Bombay. I sailed through easily, until I got my Master's at the University of Bombay and further on, until I got my Doctorate in Germany and so forth. But that is a different chapter of my adult life.

Coming back to my village, where my youth was largely spent. I was born and bred in this village. About 50 years ago it was a poor village with about half a dozen families who considered themselves "good". Most of the villagers were agriculturists and farmers. They lived by labouring hard in the fields, hardly venturing out. But though they were poor they were not destitute. The village had a beautiful church built by our ancestors; it also had its own parish priest, doctor, pharmacist, mid-wife, village idiot and madman, barber, goldsmith, iron-smith, washerman, tailor, shopkeeper, carpenter, fishermen and the village atheist. It was completely self-contained, a mini world in itself. There was also a well-attended Portuguese primary school. The brighter students went to Panjim to study in the Lyceum or the Medical School or to the Seminary in Rachol. That made about two per cent of a population of about 5000. Mine was the only family that went for English education – either in Saligão or Parra – till matriculation.

During the holidays, in summer or winter, we had a very cohesive group of about six from the Portuguese and English schools, who dominated the social life in the village. In summer, the group enjoyed sports (football or badminton), picnics, swimming, fishing etc. In winter, our activities were dominated by Christmas and the feast of the Patron. Dances, plays, football matches, etc. filled our days.

The bullock-cart dominated our transport system. The village had no proper roads. The road system was a complicated network of lanes, by-lanes and footpaths traced according to the convenience of the people. There was one main arterial road from which subsidiary roads branched off. They were dirt roads that, in summer, turned into veritable dust cushions, whilst in winter, they turned into slush. But this never dampened our spirits. In fact, we loved everything, because after all, it was our village! Referring to the intricacies of the network of lanes and by-lanes, our neighbour Dr. José Estevam Afonso, who once lost his way in them, remarked, "*Oh Basilio (my father), isto é a confusão de grandes cidades*" – to the vast amusement of my father.

The dominant feature of my village were its inhabitants. The whole village was one home with no neighbours in the modern sense. Kindness and concern for all were qualities that made it a single unit. The bond that existed between the rich and the poor made it a single home. Never have I met with such affection and mutual respect anywhere – and I have seen the world! That was the village I lived in and loved.

Today, with the spread of education and the youth well employed in various occupations, the village is rich. There are houses that crowd each other and it is one of the most thickly populated villages in Goa. Some of the old houses have gone. On occasional visits that I make to spend a few days in my ancestral house, I am like a stranger – unknown and unnoticed by most. The old spirit of camaraderie and neighborliness has evaporated and I do not feel at home anymore. But I still love that village – once a village of poor farmers, of dirt roads and of universal affection. The village of my ancestors. The memories linger on....

With a doctorate from the University of Aachen, Germany, Dr. Bailon de Sa taught at St. Xavier's, College, Calcutta, for over 25 years. Handpicked by the UNESCO, he then spent around 10 years on education-related projects at Ghana and Libya, before returning to Goa. Dr. de Sa is also a writer of repute, having written extensively on a number of topics. He resides at Corlim, Goa with his family.

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MY GOAN CONNECTION AS A YOUTH

Placido D'Souza
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My youth was spent partly in Dar-es-Salaam (East Africa) but mainly in Pune (India). In fact, I have lived my whole life, except for brief holidays, outside Goa.

As such, I am most grateful that my father and mother took special care to instill in me, and in my sister and brother, what they considered some of the core elements of Goan culture. This provided the bedrock that has remained one of the sheet anchors in my life.

I learnt Konkani at my mother's knee and it was *amchi bhas* (our language) that was spoken at home. My father, a man of few words, strove to inspire us by his example. My mother lent him invaluable support, and it was their immense sacrifices and hard work that provided me with a solid foundation for the future.

My parents always had a Konkani proverb on the tip of their tongues to prove a point or to drive home the moral of some incident or event. Some were similar to those in other languages, but many were unique and rooted in the Goan ethos.

Ingratitude evoked the saying *Kam zalem, voiz melo* (When the work is done, the one who helped is forgotten). Another favourite aphorism - *Moddlelea khursak respet na* (No one respects a broken cross) - was probably derived from my father's bitter experience of friends deserting him, when in later life he was in need of help. Yet another saying that keeps ringing in my ears is *Fudlem zoth veta toxem fatlem* (The oxen behind follow in the footsteps of those in front.)

While in Pune, we would visit my uncle's home in Sorancho, Anjuna, generally during the summer holidays. Theirs was a different world, where life was simple and unaffected, with none of the conveniences that we took for granted such as electricity or piped water. The happy memories of those visits remain indelibly etched in my memory.

My aunt and cousins would prepare the most delicious meals, rounded off with mangoes that grew in plenty on the trees in the garden. Another treat was tender coconut water and sur. In general, no effort was spared to make our stay as enjoyable as possible.

In the evenings we would go to the near-by beach, a rare pleasure for us from Pune. I would collect shells and different coloured pebbles, some of which are still with me as precious souvenirs of a distant past.

At night, we would gather by the flickering light of the *pontti* (oil lamp) to say the rosary, concluding with the uniquely traditional and beautiful prayer *Dev bori rat* I was too young to be allowed to go fishing with the elders, but would watch with fascination as they prepared for the expedition that generally took place at night. The next morning I would wake up to the excited cries of delight over the good catch, and the mock-serious complaints of the women in the house as they had to clean the fish, and cook it immediately as there were no fridges then. Feast days meant a special trip to the Church of St. Michael's, and as this was quite far away, we had the luxury of going there in a taxi.

On the few occasions that a *tiatr* came to Pune, my father would invariably take us for this entertainment. It was then that I came to know of Boyer and other veterans of the Goan stage and began to enjoy their songs.

As I grew up, I discovered role models in the community like Cardinal Gracias and Frank Moraes, the first Indian cardinal and the well-known editor of The Times of India respectively. I wanted very much to follow in their footsteps, but fate sent me into a completely different profession altogether.

Even though I have since traveled to several parts of the world, I cannot think of any holidays that were as enjoyable or as memorable as the ones I spent in Goa. Today, although far away from Goa, I often think nostalgically of my Goan connection and try to remain attached to what is otherwise a fading heritage. In fact the link is, in a sense, now more vibrant than ever, possibly because, to use another of my father's favourite sayings, *Baim suktoch, udkacho valor kollta* (When the well dries up, one realizes the value of water).

Placido P. D'Souza entered the Indian diplomatic service in 1957. In a career spanning 34 years, he saw postings around the world including assignments in Panama, New York and Hong Kong, where he initiated and edited three journals that projected a positive image of India abroad. In retirement, he pursues his hobbies of writing and sketching.

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VACATIONS IN GOA

by Bella Comelo
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My teenage vacations in Goa were the best vacations I could dream of. In mid-April, immediately after my final examinations, my family would make a beeline for Goa. We usually traveled by steamers with names like 'St. Anthony' and 'Ratnagiri'. Since I was young and agile at that time, I was assigned the task of running to the deck to spread a sheet to reserve our place for the night. On the steamer, the hours passed by quickly, as we made new friends, read a book or joined in the group singing of "*Tambdde Rosa Tuje Pole*" etc. As we approached the Panjim dock, our spirits were always high – it was a real homecoming. At the customs, we had to wait for ages as the Portuguese customs officers dug into our baggage. I don't recall what they were looking for – perhaps they were just out to give the returning Goans a bit of hell. The coolies were another lot to be dealt with. We had to bargain hard with them to carry our baggage – thank God for the pull-along suitcases we have now. For some time during the Goa blockade, we had to embark from the steamer at Karwar, then take a cab to the border. At the border there was a no-man's-land which we had to cross on foot, in the hot blazing sun - all this for the love of our vacation in Goa.

After cleaning out the cobwebs and settling down in our house, we would read, go for long, leisurely walks in the hills, eat lots of mangoes and jackfruits and enjoy the *xitt-codi* and fresh fish. There were always some weddings, feasts and *salves* (the 9-day novenas before the feast) going on in the churches or chapels around. Going for the *salves* was what we looked forward to. My neighbour and friend, Visitação, never missed the *salves*. Unfortunately, by the time she ushered the chickens into the coop, served dinner to her old aunt and locked the two dozen windows of her huge house, we made it for only half the *salve*. So we had good reason to stand outside on the porch of the church and talk in whispers to the other girls, and giggle softly at our own jokes. We dared not talk or laugh loudly, as there were always the older righteous women to admonish us with, "*Hem Devachem Ghor. Kiteak tumi hanstar?* (This is God's house, why are you laughing?)" The one time all of us girls made it a point to be in time and go inside the church was when a padre was preaching on the commandment 'Thou shall not commit adultery.' Oh well – it was like a sex education class.

Vespers were held the night before the feast. After the vespers there were the fireworks. Children waited eagerly to see the firework rooster and hen burning slowly amidst myriad colored sparks. Compared to the fireworks on the 4th of July in the USA, this was a little village show. On the feast day, we were always woken up with the *rang-te-tang* of the local band. After the two-hour long High Mass, we endured the heat as we walked in the procession. The men in their *opmus* (a long white tunic and a red cape) and dozens of priests would lead the procession. It was fun buying *kaddio-boddios* and *man'nas* at the fair.

The weddings were traditional, with people from the whole village being invited. This was also like a meat market, with parents watching to see if there were eligible bachelors or spinsters for their children. After a few pegs of *feni* it didn't matter what tune the band played, the older couples did their own style of dancing. Once, I watched an older couple twirling around, oblivious of the fact that the band had stopped playing.

How could I forget the Mapuca Friday bazaar? On Fridays, we would go to Mapuca to buy provisions to take back to Bombay. Cashew nuts, dried mangoes, dried chillies, coconut vinegar, *chonne*, sausages, etc. My mom would be busy making pickle, *balchao*, *doce*, etc. which we would haul back to Bombay.

To cool ourselves, we would also go to the Pomburpa *zor* (spring) and maybe a few days to the Calangute beach. We would rent a small shack and cook fresh fish and rice - and oh, the moonlight walks on the beach! Now I cannot even locate the places where the cottages were before. Calangute has become such a great concrete jungle. The poor fisher folk have been displaced by rich developers.

Before we knew it, it was the end of May and time to pack and get ready for our journey back to Bombay. To be in time for the steamer, we had to get up at the crack of dawn and take the small canoe from Aldona to Panjim. The Mandovi river looked calm and placid, with birds chirping to greet the new day but alas, for us it was time to bid adieu to Goa and to our idyllic vacation.

Bella Comelo lives in California with her husband, Ernest. They have four children - Anil, Anita, Anibel and Anirudh. With a Master's degree from Mysore University and a B.Ed. from Bombay University, Bella works for the Oakland Unified School District and has contributed articles to several publications. She also volunteers on the Ethnic Council of the Oakland Diocese and as a Board Member of the East Bay Alliance for Sustainable Economy.

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MAY IS THE CRUELEST MONTH

by George Menezes
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T. S. Eliot wrote, “April is the cruelest month....” Obviously he was not a Goan going home. For a Goan going home, it is May that is the cruelest month. And it gets crueler or “worsen” as my friend Leitao Sacrafamilia used to say, without bothering about his grammar.

Worsen because you have to return by air since all other means of transport are already booked, and you realize that your *khattli potli* which would have included jackfruits, pineapples, *kokum*, vinegar, dried fish, brooms, jaggery, cashew nuts and *feni* would never be allowed on the flight.

Anyway, finally, after a gap of many years, you arrive in Goa..... like the missionaries in tribal areas, a little breathless and a little late. And like always, you peel off your Bombay shirt, get into a pair of baggy shorts, the hair on your bare chest bristling in the Goan ambience, and lower your carcass into your grandfather’s *voltaire* with arms long enough for you to put your feet up forty five degrees in the air. Ah, this is the life.

You get up late, and take a walk through the ancestral property in order to pick up fallen mangoes and return for a soup-plate full of *kanji* and *kalchi koddli*.

Disappointing news. There are no fallen mangoes. In fact there are no mangoes, fallen or otherwise, in the entire property. No *malcurad*, the king of mangoes, and no *malgese*, the juice-filled ones that go into the making of mango jam.

A blight has ruined the crop. Nasty looking, octopus-tentacled creepers have embraced the trunks of every tree. Fruit trees, you discover, have emotions. They require the loving care and the tender concern of none other than the *bhattkar*.....the landlord, himself.

Head hanging down in shame, your straw hat in hand as if you are at a funeral procession, you walk home bang into a second catastrophe.

No *kalchi koddli*. Or shall we say, it does not come up to the standards of the *kalchi koddli* of yesteryear. Something happened. The coconut was not fresh enough, perhaps. The modern attempt to solidify yesterday’s liquid curry on a gas flame in a stainless-steel vessel is not the right and proper way to handle a treasure. You require an earthen pot. You require a gentle fire made of wood and coconut shells lasting the whole night through. Like a beautiful European woman taking a gradual tan under a Goan sun.

As if this were not enough, you make other discoveries of the heart-wrenching innovations of modern Goa. At *ladainhas* the singing is still in four discordant voices, the gossip still juicy, but the Non-Resident Goan celebrating the Cross Feast is serving Californian salted almonds from a can in place of the gas-inducing boiled gram in a chipped saucer. Worse still, bottles of Scotch are making their shameful appearance on a tray.

“Can I have some *urrak*, if you don’t mind?” you ask meekly. The host looks at you as if you were a toddy tapper. His father comes to your rescue. “*Bab*,” he says apologetically, “I finished the last *kouso* a few weeks ago. Can I give you some *urrak* from a sealed bottle?”

For a day or two you go into a fit of deep depression. What have they done to this, my native land, when I was away? Slowly you realise that the more permanent residents of Goa have taken things in their stride. In fact, welcomed the development with all its evils. It is only you who want the best of both worlds, the modern amenities of Bombay and the old style charm of Goa.

Yet, my beloved Goa is still beautiful. The water in the well of a neighbour who has no tap connection is as fresh as the morning dew. He invites me to partake of its abundant source. The best fish goes to the five-star hotels, yet the family that rents out the sluice-gate (*manos*) for whose son I found a job, says to me, “*Bab, tuka ami nistem dinav zalear, konnank diteleav?*”

That night someone takes you to the *tiatr* (folk theatre) and for three hours of tears and laughter you are immersed in a Goan sauna.... a nostalgic massage of giant proportions. Goa is still there alive and kicking, it is midnight and all’s right with the world.

As I said before, May is the cruelest month. Not for those who manage to make it to Goa, but for those of us who cannot.

A Squadron Leader in the Indian Air Force, a diplomat with the Indian embassy in Paris, a Director of Human Resources, an award-winning writer and member of the Pope’s Pontifical Council for the Laity, George writes with humour and compassion in order to relieve his own stress and to give insomnia to people who misuse their power.

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FESTIVE CELEBRATIONS IN MY VILLAGE

by Zoe Rodrigues
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I recently attended a Feast Mass at the St. Andrew's Church at Vasco, which brought back nostalgic memories of such celebrations during my childhood. The patron saint in my village church of Chicalim is St. Francis Xavier, whose feast is celebrated on 3rd December. I remember that in this church we had a sacred relic, a toe-nail of the saint, which was taken out for veneration on this day. Apart from the feast of St. Francis Xavier, other feasts were also celebrated in our village like the feast of Our Lady of Immaculate Conception on 8th December, the feast of St. Bartholomeu on 24th August (the day on which the blessing of the new harvest was also done) and the Nativity of Our Lady on the 8th of September. I particularly loved this feast as, during the novenas, we children used to weave little baskets out of broomsticks or bamboo and go collecting wild flowers early in the morning, which we then sprinkled on the statue of Our Lady during the procession.

Preparations for the celebrations would begin much before the actual feast day. The church was beautifully decorated with paper buntings, paper flowers, and cut-outs of angels, doves and birds carrying bunches of grapes in their beaks. The decorations would hang gracefully from the side walls to the chandeliers and were a pretty sight to behold. On the previous day of the novenas, there was a ritual called *mhadi* when a picture of the saint or of Our Lady would be blessed and hoisted up on a bamboo pole amidst prayers and bursting of crackers. The novenas would start with the rosary followed by the *salves* when boys and girls, trained by the village *mestri* would sing the hymns. These young boys and girls would be dressed in frilly white clothes with a crown of flowers on their heads so as to represent angels from heaven. Members of the *Confrarias* dressed in their traditional red or blue *opmus* would line up in the aisle, lighted tapers in hand. As they sang, the 'angels' would move up and down and around the statue of the saint or of Our Lady placed on a small table in front of the altar. A well-known preacher (*pregador*) was usually invited to give a befitting sermon on the life and virtues of the saint so that the parishioners might imitate the exemplary character of the saint. The sermon would be delivered from a pulpit high above the heads of the people. The vespers would take place on the day prior to the feast. After the vespers, the people would rush out to see and enjoy the display of fireworks.

The feast day itself would begin with pleasant lively music called '*Alvorada*', when a few members of the band would go around the village playing the violin, drum and trumpet to awaken the villagers. The solemn High Mass usually began at 10:00 a.m. Prior to this, some parishioners and members of the *Confrarias* carrying the traditional colourful umbrella, would accompany the 'President of the Year' (the person celebrating the feast) to the church. By 9:45 a.m., the church would be fully packed with everyone in their best attire. The Mass was in Latin but the sermon would be in Konkani, delivered by a preacher who was specially invited for his enlightening and touching sermons. The altar was draped with a rich gold embroidered altar-cloth and gold candle-stands were placed atop. Carpets were laid out over the floor and aisle. The priests also wore richly embroidered satin and gold vestments and the statues too were draped in silk and satin. Towards the end of the service, the statue of the saint was taken out under a canopy and the last blessing was given while raising the statue. Following this, all the people queued up to kiss the statue of the saint. Once the Mass was over, everyone cheerily wished each other "*Boas Festas*" while the band played beautiful tunes that I remember even today with nostalgia. Outside the church was the *feira* (fair) where all sorts of things were sold, including stalls selling *kaddio-boddio*, *chonne*, *laddoos*, etc. We girls would step into the stalls that sold rings, trinkets, bangles, handkerchiefs and veils, while the boys would rush to buy toy guns and balls to which were attached long rubber bands. These they would playfully aim at the girls just for fun.

At almost all houses in the village, there would be a festive lunch with delicious dishes like *arroz refogado*, *sorpatel*, fish *recheado*, roast pigling, chicken *xacuti*, *vodde*, *san'nas*, etc. A variety of drinks like *tinto*, *porto*, *cinzano*, *muscatel*, *vinho branco* and foreign whiskeys were also served. In the evenings, a football match was usually arranged between a team of single men versus a team of married men, which was much enjoyed by the villagers. Later there was a concert or *khell tiatr* for the villagers to watch. At the celebration of the harvest feast, everyone gathered for a coconut breaking competition, followed by eating of freshly-made warm, fragrant *pattoleos*.

Feast days and weddings were the main festive occasions in those days, and we ended the day happy, and looking forward to the next celebration.

Hailing from the village of Chicalim in Salcete, Goa, Zoe Rodrigues spent many years in Kenya, E. Africa. Returning to Goa, she and her husband Miguel, started and ran a very successful kindergarten in Vasco. Now retired, Zoe is often visited by her ex-students and enjoys hearing about their lives. She also takes part in several social initiatives and is an enthusiastic member of the Vasco Senior Citizens and Social Welfare Groups.

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MEMORIES OF MY YOUTH

by Electra M. Karandikar
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Youth is a period when the sun seems to shine on every action and activity that one undertakes. The glow never fades. I remember Goa as a place where one could live with open doors and no grills and where there were helpful people, who had no barriers or mental blocks. People lived with one common bond and that was "I am a Goan." This was the scenario during my upbringing in the town of Vasco-da-Gama during the Portuguese Colonial rule. Goa then moved at a very slow pace. The population was less, people had time for each other, the demands were less and although people were ambitious, their ambitions were restricted. And for the young, this was certainly Paradise.

The day started with the sound of the baker's horn - he was the first person who greeted us with a "*Dev boro dis dium*" (May God give you a good day). Memories of the Portuguese primary school will always linger, as our teachers were adorable. School was a 'full-filling' attraction as on every Wednesday and Saturday, '*sopa grossa*' (a thick soup that contained vegetables, rice, macaroni, etc) was doled out to us, the taste of which still lingers in my mouth. Saturday was the day for jam, bread and a huge banana. There was no need to coax us to learn! I looked forward to holidays as a special period, since I spent most of the time with my regal maternal grandmother, an epitome of grace and wisdom. She lived in the capital, and the journey by the 'Brass bus' was exciting, with its wooden seats and shining exterior. Granny was in her eighties, yet she made '*mutlim*' a Goan sweet for me, a rarity nowadays.

Festivals, marriages and other occasions were much looked forward to. A Catholic wedding was an elaborate affair lasting more than one week. At an Aunt's wedding there was '*bikareanchem jevonn*' for the beggars of the village and the '*zantteanchem jevonn*' for the elders of the village who would not be able to attend the wedding. The previous day was '*ros*' (an application of coconut milk and turmeric paste, substituting for the beauty parlours of today) which was applied in rotation by the elders to the bride, accompanied by special songs called '*zotti*' wishing the bride good luck for the future. Then came the actual wedding day. After the Church ceremony was the reception, and the band 'Johnson and his Jolly Boys' entertained everyone with a range of melodies to suit the crowd. I remember in particular the only toastmaster in town for almost all the Catholic weddings, Dr. Mukunda Camotim, who was completely western in his attitude, dress and speech. Almost all the wedding toasts raised by him were alike, except for a change in names. He extolled the virtues of the groom, bride and their families with such bravado, that one failed to realize the version was the same!

Funerals, on the other hand, depended on one's place in the social ladder. I remember poorer people were hired to cry at an Uncle's funeral and the procession was led by a brass band. The meal on that day was just as exotic as at a wedding and one could drown one's sorrow with the liquor available. At the end of it all, a '*garrafão*' of local brewed liquor was served outside the cemetery to the gravedigger and his assistants.

Higher education in English meant travelling across the border with a Portuguese passport. The journey comprised myriad events, with most of the Goan students travelling together by bus. The Portuguese outpost on the Goa side was a pleasant experience. The customs officials were really nice and kind to us teenagers, after which came the long & tiring walk across 'No Man's Land' till we reached the Indian outpost at Majali. There we faced long queues, unending questions and searches. Crossing over to Karwar was first by bus, then by ferry and then again by bus to Hubli. From the Hubli bus stand it was a bullock cart ride to the railway station with our bags and baggage, either to Pune or Bombay.

College days flew by and I remember two exhilarating moments for me during those days. One was when I represented my college for table tennis and the other was when, although the youngest, I was nominated as Deputy Warden of the Ladies Hostel. It was not an easy task to supervise 65 girls, but I took up the challenge. Overall, my college days are etched with nostalgia as I recall the innocent fun we all had at someone else's cost.

After college, I returned to a changing Goa and met the love of my life, my husband Gopal, who is an engineer and who has been an important part of my life for the last 42 years. Like us, Goa is growing old, but is still full of hope and young at heart. Viva Goa! My beautiful land!

Born in Goa, Electra Maria Karandikar studied Portuguese and did her B.A. (Hons) in Pune and her B.Ed & M.Ed from Bombay University. A teacher from 1964, she has presented educational papers at various conferences and continues with educational activities till date. She is currently writing a reference book in geography for teachers. Married to engineer Gopal Rao Karandikar, she has a daughter and son, both computer engineers, working in Australia and USA respectively.

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JOURNEY ... REFLECTIONS OF A WRITER

by Diogo Mesana Fernandes
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I was born in a village in South Goa, where there was an abundance of verdant tropical growth. The coconut plantation was one of the most important crops of the village, with the slender leaning palm trees rising to a height of up to 80 feet. Mango was one of the most important and widely cultivated fruits in my village. The mango tree is evergreen, often reaching 50 to 60 feet in height, and attaining a great age. Beautiful green young rice plants ripen to golden at harvest time.

My childhood was spent in the village. We had no electricity, running water, or the conveniences common today, yet we were happy. I would fly kites or play with wooden toy cars. I was taught at a tender age to play the violin by the village *mestri* who also taught me to read and write. I played the violin in religious ceremonies at our village church. It was in the village church that I first saw a book called the *Biblia Sagrada* (Holy Bible), which aroused my curiosity to read it.

At the age of eight I was enrolled in a Government School – the *Escola Primaria Oficial*. The teacher who taught me *Primeiro Grau* and *Segundo Grau* was a woman named Maria Visitação. She was the most enlightened teacher I met who taught me the joys of reading. In teaching the young, she never seemed to age by a single day. She was a virtuous woman and virtue does more to preserve youthfulness than all the ointments in the world. Even after I started my working life, I stayed in touch with her until her death.

I became an altar boy when I was eight, serving mass at St. Rock's, our village church. On the patron's feast day, the Bishop of Goa was invited to celebrate the Solemn High Mass. While I was taking the wine cruet, it slipped from my hand and dropped on to the marble floor with a loud bang. People in the crowded church looked at me aghast, as if I had dropped a bomb below the altar. Seeing the terrified looks of the people, I was frightened almost to death.

After I completed *Segundo Grau* in the *Escola Primaria Oficial*, I was enrolled as a boarder in St. Anthony's High School, Monte de Gurim run by the Franciscan Fathers and Brothers. They were excellent teachers, given to discipline. The school and monastery lies on a hillock with a legend behind it. It is said that Hanuman, the divine monkey chief, was asked by Rama to fly to the Himalayas to get medicinal herbs to heal the wounded warriors. Hanuman flew to the Himalayas and carried the mountain of medicinal herbs to restore the wounded amongst Rama's army. While flying, a part of the mountain fell in a field, thus forming a hilly village, which came to be known as Guirvaddo or the fallen village.

Every year, in order to invite the public to witness the school's cultural activities, the students presented a theatrical play. I had no theatrical ability, but Brother Salvador, who was in charge of the school's dramatic activities, felt that somehow or other I had to be in the play because my father had donated some money for the programme. The title of the play was 'Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves'. I was given a role as captain of the robbers. After I came near a huge rock I had to utter the magical words, "Open, O Sesame!" and forthwith would appear a wide doorway in the face of the rock. While leaving the cave, I had to speak the magical words, "Shut, O Sesame!" whereupon the door would close itself.

In the month of April when I was at home for the summer holidays, I would go climbing the hills with my father, to pluck cashew apples grown in a small plot that my father had inherited from his godparents. As we climbed, the majesty of the high hills impressed me, their wildlife enthralled me, and the peace relaxed me.

At the end of a long life, one generally hears two things said - that things are too good to be true and that things are too bad to be true. As I cannot fathom the meaning of the saying, I wrote this essay in the hope that someone may find the truth in the above saying. Over seven hundred words make up this essay. Though I read it often, it never reads the same. The more I lift my eyes from it, the more I feel the need to write my own autobiography that all might see what I want them to see.

Diogo Mesana Fernandes was born and brought up in Goa. He completed his Primary Education in Portuguese and Secondary Education in English in Goa and his University education in Bombay. His fourth and latest book entitled 'ABBE FARIA – the Master Hypnotist who charmed Napoleon' was released in October 2006. He recently retired from Macau Government Information Service where he worked as a publicity writer.

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MEMORIES OF AN OLD SEA DOG

by Nascimento Caldeira
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Well, how should I start? I was born in the village of Cavelossim, Goa. A *Shastikar*? Yes, very much so. I was delivered into the world in the front bedroom of my home, with the assistance of only a midwife, back in those days when the *Doutor* came on horseback! I was the 'last drop' to come to fruition! The only son, so my sisters and parents were happy. And here I am, decades later, reminiscing about my past.

I lived in Goa up until the age of six, with only my mother, whilst my father and sisters lived in the big city of Bombay. This kind of divided family life was quite common to Goan families endeavoring to make it in life. I remember my folks coming to Goa for the holidays with huge tins of biscuits and dry fruit for me and *Mai*, just like people used to stock up provisions for the monsoon season. I remember going to the beach and playing 'slippery slides' on the high sand dunes! Of course, travelling to Margao by '*carreiras*' the petrol buses from FIAT, was quite a treat.

In Bombay, I was admitted to St Sebastian's Goan High School. Two tram stops away, and we used to alternate from front coach to rear, to escape paying our fare to the tram conductor; or hitchhike a ride in the back of the *ghoda gaddi*!

Here I finished my 11-year matriculation at the age of 15 years, with flying colours. I scored distinctions in Algebra, Geometry, Physics, Chemistry, and French, ably assisted by my teachers - Mr. Keni (Maths and Science) and Mr. Kamat (middle school), both Goans, and one Mr. Burde. The latter was so obsessed with English Literature that sometimes he would take two whole periods of tuition to expound on one line of 'Wordsworth'. Keni and Burde helped mould me, and instilled in all the pupils the need to learn and excel, not just pass! We also had one Mr. Siddique, a Goan, as Drawing and Sports master. To them, I am very grateful.

Festival times like Christmas and Easter, in Goa and Bombay, were nostalgic with the making of traditional sweets, like *neureos*, *cornbollam*, *dodol*, *mandare*, *pinagre*, *chakli*, cake, etc. *Neureos* stuffed with salt were specially kept for the unsuspecting, friendly (?) visitor. The females usually helped each other with preparation of sweets from house to house; and the males did likewise with decorations and running errands! Remembering Christmas caroling, serenading and singing of *mandos* and *dulpods* from house to house with a little help from donated *feni* or *urrak*, brings back sweet memories of my innocent youth! The Catholic Gymkhana was a central point for sports and social activity, for my friends and me. Life in Bandra brought about more enjoyable activities, interacting also with my East Indian Catholic friends at the Bandra Feast and the Bandra Gymkhana.

India's Independence, with all its woes, came about during my schooldays; as also my Papa breathing his last quite prematurely. I could not afford university, and had to rely on an Engineering Apprenticeship to achieve my ambitious goals! With a seafaring career, I was happy and prosperous, though not fully satisfied.

My career exposed me to a variety of cultures, for a good 25 years in all, and thus earned me the name of 'old sea dog'! I went all out to imbibe the best in other cultures and observances through sightseeing. I became 'international', and I loved it and still do!

After Princess Street and Bandra in Bombay, I lived for 17 years in Goa before migrating. My large stylish house and home, that I modernized throughout to a very high standard, enabled us to live the 'Good Life', and my mother was happy to see her grandchildren grow up in front of her, in comparative affluence. My mother died before I could buy a car and for this I feel bad. The car made it possible for me to travel within Goa and socialize; so I made a lot of friends with the elite as well. I discovered the sheer beauty of Goa's culture and its scenic splendor. Most of all I loved the *khell tiatro*, and I made a beeline to wherever one was being performed. I cannot forget the spontaneous 'Carnival Mischiefs' and the 'Fancy Dress' competitions.

In true Goan style, partying, entertaining and dancing have always been a part of my life; and something in which I excelled. My wife was the essential 'ingredient' to our chosen lifestyle in Goa, but she is no more! My kids and I always cherish memories of the good times in Goa. However when I made a return visit to my Goa in 2004 and 2005; I found it 'unlivable' so to say! I will stop reminiscing now, lest I erase the good memories, but not without saying, "Viva Goa! Viva re Viva! Viva Goan Culture!"

Nascimento Caldeira, known to his friends and family as 'Nascy', considers himself very "Goa-centric" saying that he "truly loves all things Goan." He adds, "Even though somewhat removed in far away Australia, I love to live the true Christian Goan culture I was born into and very much cherish the 'Cultural Heights' that are unique to India."

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Whilst those of our generation had a more leisurely existence and enjoyed the simple things of life that evoke nostalgic memories even to this day, we cannot pretend that everything was better in the past and that all is bad at present. For one thing, there was little, if any, economic and social development and whereas a small section of the population may have been better off, the vast majority still remained illiterate and with little scope for social and economic advancement.

There is no doubt that the massive migration to the Gulf during the past decade and the consequent inflow of remittances have effected a sea-change in the fortunes of a vast majority of the population. This, in turn, has transformed the village from a sleepy seaside hamlet to a bustling suburb, displaying all the positive as well as negative aspects of development. There has also been a significant increase in population and some immigration from outside the village, with consequent pressure on the land and other resources as well as services.

When we were young, there were no tarred roads, electricity, running water, telephones, and no TV! Motorcars were a rarity and very few people had motorcycles. Today we enjoy all these facilities, and more, right here in our own village. If our grandparents had been told that this would be the state of affairs, they would never have believed it.

Have we, therefore, achieved Nirvana and converted our village into a little paradise? Unfortunate though it may seem, this has not been the case. Along with all the social and economic progress achieved, we have unfortunately also acquired many of the evil features of modern industrialization, whilst discarding some of the good traits which characterized our society in the past.

In the space of a short essay such as this one, we cannot be expected to discuss this problem in any detail or suggest any instant solutions. We can only highlight some of the less desirable features of our present-day society, in the hope that those in authority and those in a position to influence development would make the required effort to correct the situation before it is too late.

The first undesirable characteristic which hits you in the eye is the appalling indiscipline observed right across the board from people in every walk of life, every age and every field of activity whether at home, at work or in public places. A typical example is the utter chaos which prevails on our roads, where nobody observes even the basic rules of traffic control. Is it any wonder that hundreds are slaughtered every year on our roads and that we have one of the worst records in this respect in the entire country?

What is most worrying about this situation is not the immediate problem of traffic management, but that it is a reflection of the prevailing attitude of complete disdain for all rules and norms and shows a lack of respect for the law. In the bargain, we have lost one of the most precious features that characterized our society, and our community in the past, and that is the common courtesy extended to the elderly, to neighbours and to visitors. As a corollary, we have also lost our reputation for being a peaceful and law-abiding community and the crime rate has been rising, even leading to murder! Increase in tourism has also brought in its wake some undesirable aspects such as drug abuse and there is a great danger that prostitution could follow soon.

What of our future and that of our village tomorrow? Whilst we can hope and pray for a bright future for our children and the generations to come, it will require a concentrated and united effort by all of us to see that development is planned and executed with the interest of all the people at present and with the future in mind, without unnecessary damage to the environment or ecology. Along with economic progress, we have also to ensure that the social, educational and cultural needs of the people are met and that efforts are made to control some of the less desirable features at present observed in our policy.

Born in Benaulim (Goa), Tony Correia-Afonso graduated in Agriculture, and did his Masters in Agricultural Economics. Following a B.Litt. in Agricultural Economics through Oxford University, he became a Fellow of the Royal Economic Society, London. After holding senior management positions with several multinational companies in Bombay, Poona and Calcutta, he returned to Goa and worked with Salgaocars and Zuari Agro Chemicals till his retirement in 1988. Interested in social service, Tony is an active Rotarian.

GROWING UP WITH MUSIC

by Dr. Gerald Rodricks
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I have fond reminiscences of my childhood in Goa, which dates back to over 75 years. I am a thoroughbred *Goenkar* with both my parents hailing from the same village, Carmona.

I was the fourth of nine children. As my mother became very ill, I was bundled off to Goa, to my *grande-mae* Sapiensbai (in Latin, "the wise one"), where I was brought up by her for three years. I was taught prayers in Konkani and picked up abuses in Portuguese as well as healthy eating and proper toilet habits - including not jumping up imagining every piggy would bite my little bottom!

Most mornings, granny took me to church, carried astride her hip. My job was to carry her *bankin* and when we arrived, I would thump out the beat of the hymns, to the amazement of the *mestri*, who predicted I would be a good musician. This proved prophetic as, for over 60 years, I sang with choirs in Bombay, Goa and Kuwait, including the St. Xavier's Choir, the Bombay Madrigals, Goencho Nad etc.

By the age of two, I turned out to be a tiny terrorist chasing newly hatched chicks, once even grabbing one, leading to its sad demise. As a result I was locked up in the *loz* where I was told that Sao Pedro would come to take me to Hell.... now I wonder if he'd changed places with Satan.

My wise *grande-mae* must have been a paramedic, because when I twisted my frail ankle, she applied the *deek* of the Banyan tree onto a piece of paper and stuck it on my ankle. I certainly got cured, but probably more out of fear than any curative powers! Bathing for the next week or so was a pleasure as one leg had to be kept up, to prevent it from getting wet.

Joy and pain were interspersed for me, when my pet goat who gave me my daily nourishment of milk, delivered two cuddlesome kids. However, sad was the day when a month later a tall bearded, turbaned thug took the two kids.

A slight touch of consolation came my way when a tiny poskem named Pidu, appeared as an addition to my family. My granny told me that Pidu would be my playmate, and carry my bag when I went to Bombay.

Rusting away in the *loz* was a very old tricycle (probably my granduncle's) which had no leather on the seat and no rubber tyres. Hence my cycling around the house left deep furrows on the cowdung floor, which led to more beating and agony when a workman came with fresh dung to re-do the floor.

At the litanies I attended at the *bairro* cross, I learnt hymns I can never forget, like "*Deus Adjutorum nostrum...*", "*Hos signum crucis*": and the grand finale "*Exultemus con alegria*". Years later I had the thrill of singing all these, in Florida, at a friend's place, where many Goans assembled and could not contain their joy on hearing them after ages.

The October vacations meant devouring *bangdde* by the basketful, prepared in the most delicious way. In fact, the entire menu in Goa was different - we had sweet black tea, with *kakonn* bangle-bread; *poieo*, canji with water pickle, red-streaked Goa rice, *san'nas*, *koillo-io*, *filoz* and the best being *atoiloli koddi* which tasted best when licked directly from the *kundlem*. Each vacation in Goa meant chasing dragon flies (*birmotis*); swimming in the *tollem* and *posenk* for small fish; whipping chameleons and then crucifying them with thorns, and going to the beach, not so much to wet our feet as to rob cashews, which grew in abundance on the way.

One amazing incident I recall was dad giving a hundred rupee note to granny for her expenses. She refused, saying that no vendor or hawker had change simply because each purchase never exceeded 2 to 3 *annas*. She explained that all she did was flash the note and get everything free, with the words "*sutte nam*". Of course, dad had to settle all bills of the *poder*, *nistekar* and *posorkar* later.

I must narrate a side-splitting incident of which I was a witness. It was at a meeting of the erstwhile "Carmona Union" when neighboring Cavellosim was part of the Carmona parish. Also included, were Zaler and Tamborim, smaller villages in between. The members present wanted a new name that encompassed these important villages. The first suggestion was "Ca-Ca Union" an abbreviation of Carmona and Cavellosim. Thank God all four villages did not demand their names included, as that would have led to the "CaCaZaTa Union".

The most satisfying part of my retired life here in Goa is that my childhood experiences have cultivated in me a strong love for music. This has led to me performing the lead roles in most Gilbert & Sullivan operas, culminating in my becoming the conductor of an 18-strong 4-voice choir in Miramar, Goa.

Long live Goa, the cradle of my entire happiness.... *Ad Multos Annos*.

Dr. Gerald (Gerry) Rodricks, son of Baltazar and Concilia of Carmona, was born and educated in Bombay. He studied law, did his M.Ed. and Ph.D. and was Headmaster of a school in Goa and Principal of a school in Kuwait for almost 30 years. He excelled in drama, doing lead roles in Gilbert-Sullivan operas and in various plays. He received the State Award for Drama in 1982. Presently leader of a 4-voice choir, he is also Entertainment Secretary of the Senior Citizens' Guild at Panjim, Goa.

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CROSSING THE INDIAN OCEAN BY SHIP DURING WORLD WAR II

by Dr. Cornel DaCosta
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Many Goans in East Africa worked hard for five years and then took long leave, of about six months, to visit their loved ones in Goa.

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On the *Tilawa*, I recall the terrible fears of the hundreds of passengers. During the day, an escorting British frigate was seen just twice and provided some reassurance. However, at night all lights on board were switched off, so that the ship would not be visible and become an easy target for marauding submarines. At best, one had a torch to find one's way to a toilet and young children prone to tantrums were desperately quieted by their anxious mothers.

It is difficult to describe the fear of the passengers while crossing the Indian Ocean in such perilous circumstances. Most were simply fatalistic or took to ceaseless prayer. They literally counted the hours rather than the days when they would make it safely across the sea. But why did they travel in such hazardous circumstances?

A number of reasons come to mind. Firstly, they were prepared to take the risk of a crossing in wartime. Many assumed that the Indian Ocean was relatively safe compared to other seas in the world and believed that a harmless passenger ship would not be sunk by the enemy.

Their prime purpose was to renew contact with family and other loved ones in the ambience of Goa. They took with them, from East Africa, presents like chocolates, ground coffee, sugar, bars of soap and manufactured clothing for folks 'back home'. In turn, they took from Goa things not available in East Africa, such as genuine Goa sausages, Goan sweets and the permitted bottles of *feni* and Portuguese wines and spirits. All these were transported in metal trunks which were stacked in the depths of the hold of a ship.

Spending six months in Goa was an absolute joy. Homes were alive with so much activity. Christmas, Easter and *Carnaval* were a particular treat. Moreover, at least one goat would be bought and reared for milk for the children, chickens would provide eggs and meals too, while a pig was invariably fattened to provide homemade sausages by the expert chef in the locality. Tailors were employed at home to produce clothing of one's choice and the relatively empty beaches, in an incredibly under-populated Goa, provided real pleasure. To be taken around in horse-drawn carriages was a great novelty, as was travelling in the rickety buses on red roads which threw up a lot of fine dust every time one of the few motorised vehicles went past.

As electricity was not yet available, lighting in homes at night was limited and the shadows thrown by candlelight in large homes were often rather daunting. This was not helped by local people providing endless stories about ghosts and haunted homes as well as accounts of encounters with snakes. However, this was compensated by many new experiences, including the skill of expertly drawing water from a deep well.

Secondly, children were able to meet with grandparents in Goa for six months at a time, even if they did miss schooling for such long periods as I did periodically! If children were starting school in East Africa, keeping to school re-opening dates were deemed important, however difficult the sea passage.

Thirdly, there were those who were travelling for the first time to East Africa after obtaining a much valued 'permit' to work there. And there were those who had gone to Goa to get married and were returning with new spouses.

Clearly, these voyagers across the Indian Ocean were really brave to travel in the difficult and dangerous circumstances during the six-year Second World War. I salute their fortitude and use this opportunity belatedly to convey my condolences to families who lost their loved ones in the depths of the Indian Ocean.

Because of very fortuitous circumstances, my family and I were lucky not to have gone down with the *Tilawa*, missing that fate by just a single earlier crossing. Fate does work in strange ways!

Dr. Cornel DaCosta lived in Kenya before moving to London in 1962. He completed a doctorate and then taught at UK universities for many years. In Kenya, Cornel developed a passion for the saxophone, formed an amateur quintet and played dance music until 1961. Subsequently, he also played in London. Cornel's varied writings have appeared in articles, books and in cyberspace.

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CROSSING THE INDIAN OCEAN BY SHIP DURING WORLD WAR II

by Dr. Cornel DaCosta
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Many Goans in East Africa worked hard for five years and then took long leave, of about six months, to visit their loved ones in Goa.

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ON BEING AN ALTAR BOY

by Lenny Barretto
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Of the many memories that come to mind, none is more vivid than that of me as an Altar Boy. Before I became fluent with all my prayers in Latin, I asked my older partner, "How do I answer or say prayers that I don't know in Latin?" He said, "No problem; when you get to that part, you just mumble." I got away with it for sometime, till the old priest caught on! Then, after a few kicks on my behind, I quickly learnt my prayers. I was drilled, by one of the senior altar boys, in the complex Latin prayers, which required a lot of memorizing. I also learnt the art of carrying the missal with the stand from one side of the altar to the other, and how to swing the censer that sent up the holy smoke, without scattering the coals.

I disliked serving at the early morning Masses at the nuns' convent chapel. It was difficult waking up at 4:00 a.m. to serve the 5:00 a.m. Mass. It was also an experience serving at the nuns' chapel during Lent. It seems that the nuns fasted for days during that time. I could hear, all the way up to the altar, their stomachs gurgling and growling. It was always special to be selected to serve at Midnight Mass, with the Church filled to capacity, the bright dazzling altar lights, the numerous candles lit by the servers, the smell of incense and the choir in full swing and at their best. I also enjoyed serving at the school Mass, when my 'buddies' came to receive Holy Communion. It was such fun to 'nick' them with the paten and hear them squeal. All of us altar boys liked to serve at Wedding Masses, as we received a gift or a tip from the newlyweds. We always got a 'Thank You' from the Parish Priest on feast days and holy days, when he would give us a great tea party, with the most delicious pastries and a special cake from the best caterer in town. We also looked forward to receiving a special gift and a group photograph of all the boys. Once a year the Parish Priest would arrange for a full-day picnic to the beach or to a resort located in the countryside.

Many of my altar-boy friends became priests, and some were made bishops and archbishops. They all came from good, comfortable homes and many have willingly given up much to work in the remote villages and remote faraway areas in Pakistan.

Born and educated in Karachi, Leonard (Lenny) Barretto also spent a few years in Bombay, returning to his homeland at the time of Partition. In Pakistan, Lenny enjoyed working with the Goan Community, organizing Goan Cricket and Hockey teams, which qualified to compete at the National level. Working for the US Government, he eventually emigrated to the US with his wife Lydia and their daughter and son. Now retired, he is presently compiling essays of his days in the sub-continent.

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I was born in my mother's house in Candolim in a room called '*Quarto de Cavallo*' (horse's room) because of a huge mural on the wall depicting a fiery white steed with my great-grandfather mounted astride. But until the age of fifteen, I grew up in our home in Mapuca, with a short spell in Dar-es-Salaam. I completed my Portuguese studies in Mapuca before moving on to Belgaum. Life was good in Mapuca in those days; provincial, placid, uncrowded and carefree. It was great fun going to school, a good half-hour's walk away, especially in the monsoons when we eagerly shed our wooden clogs to play in the gushing waters of the mini-waterfalls formed at various street levels.

The weekly Friday Bazaar was an opportune diversion. It was not so much the sensuous sights and sounds that filled the air, as the endless procession of relatives and friends. They dropped in to rest weary feet in between intervals of shopping, or to await the bus for their villages and, more particularly, to say "Hello" to my grandmother. Woe betide any one who came to town and returned without visiting her. A tongue-lashing the following Friday was a certainty.

We always looked forward to July. St. Anne was the Patroness of the home and we celebrated her feast with pomp. Cousins would come during the Novena to help build a three-step altar attached to our Oratory. Resplendent with a profusion of flower vases and rows of candles in elaborate candlesticks, it was a veritable treat to our childish eyes. But the highlight was the singing: The final hymn had a chorus that went "*Rogai, rogai* (the full line being '*Rogai, rogai a Jesus por nos*' i.e. 'Pray, pray to Jesus on our behalf') sung by all, followed by "*Rogai*" in a different, lower tone by a soloist. When my father was home, his was the solo and his stentorian, bass response provoked loud, unbecoming chuckles from us to the consternation and "big eyes" of the elders.

The Milagres feast was, of course, THE celebration of the year that we children yearned for! Pardonably perhaps, because each of us got a shiny silver rupee from the grandmothers and uncles, a princely sum in those days! Since we lived right in the heart of the fair, our exhilaration and excitement were all the greater. We relished visiting the food stalls and would down cups of ice cream and buy our own packs of '*Doce de festa*' (*laddoos, khajjims*, etc) which we jealously guarded afterwards.

Every year, in May, we went for a '*mudanca*' (literally meaning 'change' i.e. a holiday outside town) generally to Candolim beach or, at times, to my grandmother's house there. Mostly we went by '*boilanchi gaddi*', an excruciatingly slow, bone-rattling two-hour journey. But looking back, it was romantic! Candolim beach in those days was unique, stretching from the tinto for a good ten or fifteen minutes walk to the sea. If we were lucky, some mornings we would manage a good catch of '*mannoio*' and could anticipate a mouthwatering '*pullav*'. At times we walked to Aguada along the beach front, climbing the escarpment while avoiding looking down at the menacing waves splashing and splattering on the craggy rocks below. Once, when I was nine, I lost my footing, fell and was carried away by the waves. I reached fairly far out before an elder cousin managed to get hold of me by the collar, and pull me to safety - a close brush with Death.

Among the more 'adventurous' episodes of my youth, two bizarre ones are indelibly etched in my mind. The first related to a trip from Collem (rail junction) to Mapuca. Once when we arrived at Collem, there was only a single bus left for Mapuca, and a large number of passengers. With his '*matxem fuddem voch*', the 'cleaner' (name for the general bus assistant in those days) managed to accommodate the women and children. But, seventeen men were left with the grim prospect of spending the night on the railway platform, awaiting the next day's bus! We were offered an option - travel on top of the bus!! Collem being a jungle, we decided to go! On top of the bus we clambered, over baggage strapped down under a tarpaulin and tied criss-cross with ropes. Thus we left, clinging for dear life to the ropes! Even the Good Lord commiserated with our fate and, a half-hour out, started shedding such copious tears that we arrived at Mapuca soaked to the bones! But, He was good and permitted no sequel: no colds, no pneumonia, nothing, despite the drenching.

The next year we decided to proceed to Margao instead of alighting at Collem. But, bad luck dogged us still. The train ran very late and when we reached Margao all buses for Mapuca, Panjim and Cortalim had gone! We were stranded in a strange town where we knew no one! Then we remembered an aunt who was a nun at a convent in "next door" Nuvem. Why not walk there? Lugging our bags, we set forth. But soon we realised it was like Balzac's "Illusions Perdues" (Lost Illusions), for, in pitch darkness, we trudged...and we trudged.... and we trudged and not a sign of "next door" Nuvem! Dispirited, famished and exhausted, we toyed with the idea of setting down our baggage and going to sleep by the roadside! However, we walked a little more and, lo and behold, we spied dim lights in the foothills! At last! We rushed across the two hundred yards to the Convent and at exactly 9.30 p.m. knocked at the doors. Fortunately then, unlike today, there was no banditry or crime. Doors were unhesitatingly opened to wayside knockers. Apprised of the situation, food and accommodation were arranged at the chaplain's residence on the main road. Thus ended our quest for the place that was "next door" and proved so distant!

Born at his maternal home in Candolim, seat of the 1787 "Pinto Conspiracy", Marcos Gomes-Catao led something of a wanderer's life. Four childhood years in Tanganyika were followed by seven years in Mapuca, Goa and eight years in school and College at Belgaum. Marcos Gomes-Catao worked in the Human Health industry in Bombay, with spells in Delhi and Singapore. Transferred to Brazil, he lived there for 27 years. He currently resides in the U.S.A

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SPORTING MEMORIES OF KARACHI GOAN HOCKEY PLAYERS

by Lenny Barretto
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Goans have always shown a natural flair for the game of hockey and have always played thrilling and delightful hockey. In undivided India, the Karachi Goans gave India their finest and most outstanding hockey players. The Karachi Goan Hockey teams were great crowd favourites at the famous Aga Khan Hockey Tournament held in Bombay. I remember witnessing the wizardry of the Karachi Goan players at the Cabral Shield Tournament in Karachi, against the top teams that were invited from all over India like the Bhopal Wanderers, Calcutta Customs, Kalayam Mills, Khalsa College and Jhansi Heroes.

The first Goans considered for selection in the All India Hockey teams, were the Karachi Goan players. There was little to choose from between the two left wingers - Peter Paul Fernandez and Julius Tellis. The explosive and volatile Peter Paul Fernandez was selected to play for India at the Berlin Olympics. On his retirement from International Hockey, Peter Paul trained and worked with the St. Patrick's School Hockey team. It was the year St. Patrick beat the Bhopal Wanderers in the semi-finals of the Cabral Shield Tournament and then went on to win the trophy by beating the Calcutta Customs in the finals. Both the Bhopal Wanderers and Calcutta Customs had Olympians in their teams. It was said that Julius Tellis had tremendous dash and was a very exciting left-wing forward, but he did not win an Olympic Blazer.

Lawrie Fernandez, known as the Rembrandt of hockey never made it to the Olympics. When he played opposite Dyan Chand in Calcutta, the crowd went crazy over the wizardry of Lawrie and some called out to Dyan Chand that he was playing his father. Lawrie played for the All India Telegraphs. It is difficult to understand why he was never selected for the Olympic side. When he retired from the Telegraphs, he returned to his home in Karachi. He was an excellent tennis player and played tennis at the Karachi Goan Gymkhana. His tennis tips to us teenagers were invaluable.

Hockey aficionados at the Aga Khan Tournament, would come to watch the skill and razzle-dazzle of Patrick Mendis (a high school teacher at St. Patrick's High School in Karachi) whenever he went to Bombay with the St. Patrick's Sports Club or the Karachi Goan hockey teams. He was also one of the School Hockey coaches.

Jack Britto, who was selected for the Pakistan Olympic team at the Helsinki games, had excellent stick work, was a skillful dribbler and was one of the best 'goal shooters' in the game. He was also asked to coach a hockey team in Africa.

Milton D'Mello, the magnificent right half, toured with the Pakistan Olympic team to Spain. It was his outstanding play that helped the St. Patrick School team to beat the famous Bhopal Wanderers at the Cabral Shield Tournament and a special trophy was awarded to him by the Bhopal Wanderers team.

Gerry Barboza was selected for the Pakistan Hockey team to tour East Africa and New Zealand. Gerry was a very intelligent, persistent and constructive left-half. He was also an excellent cricketer and often helped the Karachi Goan Cricket team.

The crafty dribbler on the left-wing to play for Pakistan was Gordon Vaz. He had great speed and stick work and was always a threat to the opposing team.

The All India Olympian (1936) and Bombay Customs Hockey Captain, Feroz Khan (who migrated to Pakistan and was Chairman of the Pakistan Hockey team and Chairman of the Pakistan Selection Committee at the time when Pakistan won the Olympic Gold Medal at the Rome Olympics), once told me that the 'cream' of Indian hockey were the Goans.

Born and educated in Karachi, Leonard (Lenny) Barretto also spent a few years in Bombay, returning to his homeland at the time of Partition. In Pakistan, Lenny enjoyed working with the Goan Community, organizing Goan Cricket and Hockey teams, which qualified to compete at the National level. Working for the US Government, he eventually emigrated to the US with his wife Lydia and their daughter and son. Now retired, he is presently compiling essays of his days in the sub-continent.

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CHILDHOOD DAYS IN CURTORIM

by Prof. Louis Jose Dennis
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The decision by Goa Sudharop, a US-based NGO, to mark 2006 as the 'Year of the Senior', with various programmes, including essays by Senior Citizens of Goan origin from across the globe, speaks volumes of the love and affection the organizers have for those in the sunset of their lives.

The wise words of my elders "Participating makes you grow, award-winning makes you glow", deeply rooted in my mind right from the days of my youth, have prompted me to participate with this essay on the topic "Reminiscences of my Goan Youth".

During the days of my primary education in Portuguese, the importance of discipline was instilled in us by our teachers. This has been emphatically mentioned by me, because the teachers always moved about the classroom with a polished stick which was seldom used, but frightened us nevertheless. I remember acting in a Konkani play "Bhattkar" wherein the leading role of *bhattkar* (landlord) was played by me, to the amusement of the audience. Later in life, the fictitious role of a *bhattkar* enacted by me became a living reality in Curtorim.

I vividly remember the good old days in Curtorim, when I used to accompany my uncle, who was also my godfather, to our *predio* (property) comprising paddy fields, even in inclement weather. During the sowing season, the farmer used to sow the best variety of rice seeds in the fields, throwing them with a dexterity at which I used to marvel.

The *non'ni* (weeding) and transplanting of the paddy fields by the women labourers was interesting, as the women used to indulge in village gossip while performing their duties. *Canja* (rice broth) was provided by us during the short break at around 10 a.m. They made up a very jolly group that kept me amused with their jokes in Konkani. They addressed my uncle as 'Mapit Bhattkar' and would jokingly ask me when I would take his place.

The harvesting season was equally interesting with the women harvesting and the men tying the sheaves, which were brought to my *forad* (open space in front of our house) for the *boil-molli* (threshing with oxen). The height of amusement for me was at the threshing and winnowing time. This took place from late evening till the early hours of the morning. The labourers were treated with rice-curry, salt fish and mango pickle, along with *maddanchi-feni* (an alcoholic drink distilled from coconut toddy) after which they started the threshing accompanied with lively Konkani songs which continued throughout the night, with *maddanchi-feni* flowing, and the singing of the rhythmic Konkani song, "Xekoi! Xekoi!" (Drink! Drink!). At midnight *attol* (a rice and jaggery sweet) was served, to the delight of the labourers. I used to watch all this till early morning, when I fell asleep in the balcony, only to be awakened by my uncle for breakfast. The paddy was stored in a granary with a *koddo* (bamboo mat placed around the grain).

I can never forget the *paddo* (coconut plucking) every three months. The *paddekar* (coconut plucker) would climb the tall coconut trees swiftly and fearlessly, wearing just a *kashti* (red loincloth). On reaching the top he would sing songs and whistle to let us know that he had reached the palm fronds. Then, loudly counting the coconuts, he would drop them to the ground, either in bunches or singly.

The May holidays were not complete without the mango plucking. Mangoes - *Malcurada*, *Xavier* and *Montserratte* - were stored in hay in one room of our ancestral house, and were relished by all those who visited us. Then again in the month of May, when all students studying outside Goa returned home, the *Mocidade de Curtorim* (Youth of Curtorim) of which I was the President, organized the traditional May Ball at Curtorim which was largely attended by the elite of Curtorim and the neighboring areas. Here the elders, all 'suited and booted', attended this *Festa dancante* (Ball) on the lookout with eagle eye for an eligible damsel for their son or an eligible macho male for their daughter. *Arroz refogado* (pulao) and *orxata* (an almond drink) were served to all those who attended the function, as the Ball continued till *madrugada* (wee hours of the morning) to the strains of a brass band.

On 18th December every year, St. Alex Church of Curtorim celebrates the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe popularly known as 'Kelleam Fest'. On the eve of the feast, relatives and invitees flock to Curtorim to celebrate the feast. *San'nas*, made from rice and toddy, are prepared in the *copro* (san'na oven) on the burning firewood, and the whiff of delicious *sorpotel* (a dish made from pork) is in the air. At the break of dawn the villagers of Curtorim, wake up to the sound of the popular Goan *Alvorada* (wake-up call), and the young and the old, decked out in their best, attend the High Mass followed by a procession and the benediction. By noon, a sumptuous lunch is dished out in every house. In the evening all go to the *kermess* (fair) where friends gather to celebrate the event. I remember I was given just *quatro tangas* (4 annas) by my uncle to spend at my discretion at the fair. But till today I cherish the memory as with this amount I bought *kaddio-boddio*, *chonne* and other sweets.

One Christmas season before the lotus bloomed in the main lake of Curtorim, the group "Curtorcares" in which I took part and which had been awarded the second prize at the Second All Goa Mando Festival at Panjim, performed the same Mando in a special canoe which went around the lake to the thunderous applause of the vast crowd that had gathered to witness this unique event.

Words fail me to adequately express my gratitude for this golden opportunity afforded to me, a 77-year old, silver-haired senior citizen of Goan origin. It was grabbed by me, for such an opportunity knocks at one's door just ONCE!

An educationist, Prof. L.J. Dennis was Head of the Biology Department at Chowgule College, Margao. Presently Manager of the St Xavier's Institute Primary School, Curtorim, he earlier held several positions including Deputy Sarpanch of Curtorim Panchayat, Member of the Jury of the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum and District Governor of Lions Club International. Married to Alcina Nazareth, Prof L.J. Dennis has one daughter, Dr. Renuka - married to Anil da Silva - and two grandsons, Ashley and Aaric.

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NOSTALGIC MEMORIES OF MY CHILDHOOD

by Loretta Andrade
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Listening to family stories and reminiscing about the past can be healing, both physically and emotionally. People feel good relating their life stories and talking about their meaningful life, experiences and relationships. Remembered stories rekindle thoughts of love and a connection with others, as well as help to distance today's concerns and worries. Memories are what they're made of.

My childhood memories take me back to Anjuna. Often, I visited the ancestral house of my grandparents. Every holiday, the passage home was a mix of adventure and some anxiety about not being on time to catch the last ferryboat. We crossed over when the ferryboat came, walking past the new Mandovi Hotel and intrigued with the scene depicted by the Abade Faria statue. We walked along the road with our trunks in hand, and stood near the Adil Shah Palace with some apprehension of the sentry on guard duty. After an hour-long wait, we took the *camihao*. Before we got home, word would have reached that we were coming. It felt so good to have arrived home.

The walls of the large-sized hall were almost fully covered with photographs. Behind each glass were faces frozen in time, in groups, as couples or alone. They sat or stood besides a tall stool or with a vase of artificial flowers. Some preferred to pose outdoors, standing proudly in the *balcão* or against the backdrop of trees. Often I gazed at them, yet never was I worried about so many silent eyes looking at us all the time we stayed there, awake or sleeping. My grandpa's favorite game was guessing the identities of the people in the photographs. It was not easy even for me. They looked a lot different from the naked, squirming toddlers held firmly in front of the camera by an adult. The clothes these people wore were very old-fashioned. The women wore blouses with frills or puff sleeves and tucked in the *pallu* of their *sarees* firmly at the waist. The men wore baggy pants. Spectacles, with small round frames, were common to both sexes.

I remember very vividly going shopping to the Mapusa market on Fridays. My grandmama would purchase spices and loads of chillies to pound fresh *masalas* at home. The recipe was top secret and never divulged to anyone, except to the daughters of the house. It had been so for generations, the recipe passing from mother to daughter, and so on to me. Every time I hear the Spice Girls singing, unsung melodies of my childhood come to my mind.

Childhood summer vacations in Anjuna, meant swinging from the tamarind tree near the well, battling hordes of squabbling parakeets to get to the guavas first, knocking raw mangoes or gathering juicy jambul fruits near the stream. A *nag champa* tree grew on the other side, looking like a 1000-headed serpent guarding a *shivling*. Near the stream were large pits of coconut husk soaking at the edge of the water. Women could be seen threshing the cured husk and turning the fiber into coir ropes. The stream was always full of water and there were a few spots where migratory birds halted on their flights. Barely visible from there, was a little hill with a cross atop it. It was customary for the church to announce the hour of the mass, by pealing the church bells in different tones. Other lasting impressions were of sounds like those from the trumpet-like car horn, the *poder's* horn and the sound of the bullock cart stacked with hay, trundling down the muddy pathway. For me, there was an element of magic in these sounds. They helped to spread a little extra sunshine and cheer in my life and those of others. And surprisingly, the memory of this childhood magic still lingers on.

In Anjuna village, we did not depend on the weatherman to know when the monsoon would arrive. Our grandma was a better forecaster. She looked at the signs nature provided. The sound of waves breaking in the rough sea, the fireflies (glow worms) which lit the nights, the insects flirting with light and particularly, the croaking of frogs, were signs that the monsoon winds had touched Goan shores. Various sounds associated with nature, evoke nostalgic memories. Early in the morning, the chirping of birds was like an alarm clock for me to wake up to. Cattle meandered through the muddy pathways on their way to the grazing grounds, a number of them with brass bells tied around their necks.

In the evenings, when the chickens have come to roost and the fire is lit and the *feni* is at hand, folks talk of the many families who lived in and around Anjuna. The only people still about are a couple of elderly people. Even today, I continue to feel that I am very much part of the village, to the extent that my childhood has remained a part of me. Fortunately for me and thanks to God and also to some village folk, the village has remained, affording me some consolation in my nostalgia.

Born and educated in Mumbai, Loretta Andrade spent most of her childhood holidays in Anjuna, Goa. She was a Professor of English and Psychology at Damodar D.Ed.College, Margao. She has written several short stories, essays and articles, which deal with themes drawn from everyday life. Not only does she write, but she is also a poet at heart, having six books to her credit.

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MUSINGS OF A FREEDOM FIGHTER

by Froilano Machado
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At eighty-one, I have led life to the fullest, undergoing many exciting experiences, witnessing diverse events and indulging in a wide variety of activities.

Being the youngest child in a family of six, my parents devoted time and care to give me a unique informal education. My father was a very learned man – a freelance journalist, lawyer and member of the Council of Government elected in 1917. My mother initially studied Portuguese, French and music in Goa and later studied at the Good Shepherd's Convent in Bangalore.

My father, except for his food habits, was Gandhian. He led a simple life, wore khadi and kept neither alcohol nor tobacco in the house. He stressed on events in India and on Mahatma Gandhi's role in India's independence through passive resistance (*ahimsa*). My mother supplemented this with stories of great Indian patriots, martyrs and the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre. In short, I was breast-fed on Nationalism, a vital influence in my life.

After my 3rd year Lyceum, I switched to English. My sisters and I chose Dharwar as our Matriculation centre, staying as guests with a Muslim family, close friends of ours. I called the lady of the house who had two sons and three daughters 'Ama'. After my matriculation in 1940-41 at the age of fifteen, I joined the Bachelor of Arts course in Karnataka College, staying in the college hostel. Soon after I returned from my Christmas holidays, I fell ill. My roommate, a good chap, Linus Menzies, informed Ama's younger son, who rushed me to their home. With the treatment of the efficient and popular Dr. Araujo (incidentally from my village, Verna) and Ama's dedicated care, I was nursed back from a very serious attack of typhoid. My mother arrived to see me fully recovered, as the postcard to her reached 24 days late due to censorship.

The next year Ama told my family that she wanted me to stay with them and be escort and protector to her daughter, who after doing brilliantly at her matriculation had joined college. Ama treated me like her son, little realising that her daughter and I were becoming too fond of each other.

Then came 9th August 1942, when Mahatma Gandhi gave the "Quit India" call. All top leaders were immediately arrested. In Dharwar too, there were protest meetings, processions and non-attendance of college for nearly a week. I was a member of the Belgaum-Dharwar group led by Nath Pai who set fire to Amargol, a small station between Dharwar and Hubli. After sitting for my Inter Arts examination, I silently bade adieu to Dharwar as I did not want to betray the trust of my beloved Ama.

In April 1943 I went to Bombay with a close friend, the late Felix Sanches. With the help of an older friend, we got fairly good jobs in the Ordnance Depot. I also joined Jr. B.A. in Khalsa College. But my jubilation was short-lived as I suffered a severe emotional setback with the sudden death of my dear Muslim sister of meningitis. I realised how much I had loved her. The shock was so great that it took me a long time to recover. I got a new job, took to intensive reading and for at least eight to nine years, though I tried to fall in love with some of the girls who seemed fond of me, at the last moment "Twixt thy lips and mine there fell a shadow".

In April 1945, I came home as I was suffering from some liver problem. After my recovery, my father insisted that I leave the job and join college full time. I chose Wadia College, Poona and studied hard, but though I did very well in my first 3 papers, I went blank for the fourth. Frustrated, I returned home deciding that I would go to Bombay for the second term and appear for the final exam. During the first term's stay in Goa, I accepted an offer to teach English and History in St. Joseph's Institute. I was introduced to Dattatraya Deshpande from Kholapur, a teacher from the other English School. On 18th June 1946, Dr. Lohia launched a movement in Margao for Goa's freedom. We attended and participated actively and along with thousands, were beaten, though not arrested. Two days later, Deshpande and I organised a complete *hartal* of students in both schools to protest against the brutal beating in Margao of our great Goan leader, Dr. T.B. de Cunha. Thereafter, we organised a procession which was broken up by the Police with the help of African troopers. Later we had a big meeting, without obstruction, in what we now call Tilak Maidan. A few days later, though, we were both sacked under pressure from the authorities. Thereafter, from 1st August till 20th October 1946, I worked underground under the late Purshottam Kakodkar and Dr. Mayenkar. Deshpande became, along with Lawande, the founder of the Azad Gomantak Dal.

In September, the late Adv. Joaquim Dias and Chandrakant Cacodkar held a Satyagraha. Mahatma Gandhi's directives were translated in Belgaum overnight and brought to my late sister Sara for distribution at the meeting. In Chandor I was beaten badly but not arrested. Thereafter, I left for Bombay and joined St. Xavier's College. There I attended meetings of Goan nationalists like late Dr. Julian Menezes, George Vaz and Pio Gama. I lost my father on 31st December 1946. He was seventy-two and I was twenty-one. I was deeply grieved for we were good friends. I went back to Bombay, and passed my Final B.A. exams.

With my father gone, I was a bit confused about my future career. I started teaching in Bombay and, a year later, joined M.A. and L.L.B. classes. I then came home, as my sister was going to Kenya to be married. Our family had sizeable debts with very low income from properties. I had no choice but to stay back. With hard work and help from Providence, I helped stabilise our financial position. Whilst I had not totally cut off my underground political activities, I was more careful. But on 20th June 1953 my home was raided. I was arrested and jailed in Margao for nearly 2½ months. When released I tried to go to Bombay for my final L.L.B exam but was pulled out from the train at Collem. I was arrested again in 1955 and jailed in Panjim for another two months. Not wanting to remain idle, I accepted a job offered by a Goan Exporter. I specialised in Shipping (Stevedoring and Agency work). In the meantime, the most inspiring incident of my life took place. I fell very deeply in love with my cousin who was ten years younger. She had lost her mother when she was three, her father when fourteen, and had a brother two years younger. She had just one paternal aunt who treated her harshly. It was only my mother and my sisters who showered affection on both brother and sister. I tried to resist this love but in vain. She was responsive, although she denied when asked, until she was twenty-one when she came out into the open. We got married in 1959. She was twenty-three, and I, thirty-three. She was goodness itself in every way, a truly devoted companion.

After Liberation, with hard work and God's help, I successfully built up my own Shipping business. I remained active as a Congressman, particularly with the Opinion Poll and our fight against merger with Maharashtra. When I contested two Assembly

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elections, my beloved wife worked hard with me, resulting in victory by a large margin. When I was elected Speaker of the House, she took over the management of our company, proving to have good business acumen and fine entrepreneurial qualities. She was also a dedicated and genuine social worker. A pillar not only of the Machado Family but also of Machado & Sons Pvt. Ltd. We had five children, all married, and eight grandchildren when on 19th January, 2000 she died unexpectedly – a victim of a car accident - leaving me shattered.

Founder of Machado & Sons Agents and Stevedores Pvt Ltd., Froilano Machado is probably best known to the Goan public as a prominent freedom fighter and ex-Speaker of the Goa Assembly. A graduate in History and Economics, he earlier held important positions including that of Vice President of the Federation of Stevedores, India, Director of the Goa Urban Cooperative Bank, Member of the Indian Standards Institute, etc. Froilano loves Goa and has been actively involved in protecting its ecology and environment. He has written articles and poems in English, Portuguese and Konkani.

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GOAN DANCE BANDS OF YESTERYEAR: SOME PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

by Dr. Cornel DaCosta
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News on television of the death of Artie Shaw, at ninety-four, included reminders of many tunes made famous by him as an outstanding American clarinetist and dance band leader. These included 'Begin the Beguine', 'Lady Be Good', 'Moonglow', and 'Frenesi'. These were also tunes that generations of Goan musicians played in Goa, Bombay, Karachi, Calcutta, Nairobi, Mombasa, Kampala, Dar-es-Salaam, Iringa, Colombo, and on the high seas on many ocean liners.

It has often been said that music runs in the veins of Goans. I agree, of course, but want to add that it has flowed with much sentimentality and nostalgia for cultural 'Goan-ness'. Early training in Goan villages particularly on the violin, accompanied by singing in harmony, generated and supported a distinctive Goan musicality and sociability and also created a productive symbiosis between the musicians and those enjoying what they generated.

Every one of the places mentioned above has a narrative to tell, and if only we could delve deeper down memory lane, what a lovely story we would have of so many musicians who gave, and have continued to give, so much pleasure to fellow Goans and others.

In the little town of Mombasa, Kenya, where I was brought up, I recall Goan amateur bands like Abel Correia and his Toe Ticklers, Neves Pereira and his Pieces of Eight, Raul da Costa and his Luar Blues, Edmund Silveira and his jazz quartet, and Nelson Pereira and his Gay Caballeros (before the word gay took on modern connotations!)

Interspersed with the above bands, was my group, the Melody Dance Band (MDB) which played between 1957 and 1961. However, we musicians also played in support of each other when necessary; I personally played the saxophone and clarinet across three bands. Additionally, as Mombasa was a major port, we had the good fortune of having periodic visits from large ocean liners like the steam ships (SS) Kenya and Uganda, which plied between India, East and South Africa, the Mediterranean and the UK. On board these ships, especially on the UK run via the Suez, were outstanding Goan professional musicians. They played alongside local Goan bands from time to time when their ships docked. Further, Goan dance bands between neighbouring East African countries like Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda and Zanzibar helped to generate variety.

Until about 1960, wind instruments like the saxophone, trumpet and clarinet dominated the dance band scene with the support of rhythm, percussion and other instruments. Subsequently, a major change came about with the electric, rhythm, lead and bass guitars. These effectively replaced the traditional wind instruments. Benny Mascarenhas and his Shiftars in Mombasa, represented this transition which was undoubtedly related to developments in the technology of amplification and the new immense versatility of stringed instruments including keyboards, and to changing tastes of course. With the advent of rock, disco (a little later), and new tempos and rhythms, there was the demise of the slower romantic music. The mellower, melodic music of the romantic 1950s suddenly gave way to much livelier music.

From the stage, musicians invariably had the advantage of minutely observing the goings-on in an arena of overt and subtle behaviour between the sexes. After all, at the time, the dance floor was the 'approved' venue for partners to meet each other and the rituals were clear. All the women in their best gear sat around a hall. The men generally stood around within close proximity of the bar. Basically, they were working up enough courage to get on to the floor, especially if they were new to dancing. The extent to which the younger men were initially fearful of asking for a dance now seems odd but, for many, it was a huge burden that had to be got over! Procrastination at putting one's best foot forward was therefore common. Today of course, sitting at a dance tends to be in set groups at tables and I feel that the prospects of meeting more than the people one came to the dance with have lessened, which is somewhat disadvantageous.

Generally, a dance or large ball would be scheduled to start at 9 p.m., but what was known as "Portuguese time" invariably prevailed. The musicians, having tuned their instruments endlessly, would face an empty hall until about 10 p.m., and the dance would only begin to pick up at about 11 p.m. But when the dance was to end at 2 a.m. nobody, but nobody, amongst the revellers felt that they had had enough and it was normal to go on until around 4 a.m. Indeed, many a time, a band played on until sunrise!

The space between the start and finish at a dance was filled with sets of dances with three or four pieces. Each set stuck to a particular beat or rhythm except when there was a medley. After each dance set, the men chivalrously led a partner to their seat and offered to obtain a drink as well as to book the next dance or two. Today, dancing has largely given way to individuals doing their own thing and one can be entirely creative in what steps one tries, unencumbered by the need to hold a partner. In the 1950s however, Goan men (and perhaps women too) were pretty stressed out about following the correct dance steps from the waltz, tango, Latin American steps and the jive. As there were no dancing schools, everyone had to do some self-learning with the help of old hands who could sometimes be disingenuous and teach some wrong steps for their own amusement. Further, a careful decision had to be made about the choice of a dance. In taking the slower choice, would it be a waltz or a foxtrot? Some could not tell the difference and had to check with others, who might themselves not be in the know, but pretended to be so with bogus advice!

Unspoken messages between the men and the women were often transmitted in complex ways, often through requests to the band to play specific tunes like 'Have I told you lately that I love you?'. Other tunes in absolute demand were 'Love Letters in the Sand', 'Sail along Silvery Moon', 'Unforgettable', 'Always', 'Eternally', 'There's a gold mine in the Sky', 'Never on a Sunday', 'Patricia', 'True Love', 'Fascination', 'Kentucky Waltz', 'Harbour Lights', 'Somewhere over the Rainbow', 'When it's Springtime in the Rockies', my own favourite 'You Belong to my Heart', and every latest romantic tune heard on Radio Ceylon at the time. But there were forlorn messages too in the case of thwarted love with consequent requests for tunes like 'Blue Moon' and 'Return to Me'. There was a general expectation that we musicians, as friends, could play requested tunes at a drop of a hat. This was not always possible, of course, but we became quite good at playing by ear as sheet music was expensive and not widely available. Nor were tape-recorders available except for some very large expensive machines.

Dance bands like the MDB played at least twice at weekends, for dances, weddings, and the occasional Konkani concert. However, although we played Swahili tunes, and even 'Meri Jaan', which was the only Hindi number we knew, the call for Goan/Konkani numbers was small. Consequently, the *mando*, *dulpod* and the *lancer* were played rather rarely.

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Kenya was residentially segregated and the three 'races' (Asian, African and European) lived quite separately but met in working situations in towns. Although there were a few African bands, Goan bands had virtually no competition from other community groups and therefore played for the Ismaili, Seychelloise, and European communities. As I was politically aware quite early but lived with little or no power in a colonial situation, I had absolutely no compunctions about charging the Europeans as much as I could squeeze out of them, but we often played free of charge for deserving Goan and other causes. The Indian community, as such, thought of us Goans as an odd Indian lot who loved dancing so much. They did not dance publicly then, but haven't they changed much and perhaps even outdone the Goans, through *Bangra* and other raucous dances now?

For me and the musicians I played with, I can really say that we just lived for the music we played and that regular day work was only a means towards that end! It was immensely satisfying to provide dancing pleasure to so many, and especially when partners were secured in the dance hall with a view to matrimony. While it has often been said that half of all Americans were conceived to the strains of Frank Sinatra, I can attest that our Goan dance bands provided fully to the vertical expression of horizontal desire! The Goan dance band (as with sport and church) was thus, in some senses, the cement that held the community together. It promoted much internal harmony and integration. Strangely, this has not been lost even though the Goan community from Mombasa (as elsewhere) is widely dispersed today. London now has a sizeable population from East Africa. Many are now pensioners but significant numbers meet, at least on a monthly basis, at day socials organised mainly by Goans but subsidised by the local authorities. At such dances, nobody asks for disco or the salsa. All they want is those old tunes we played almost fifty odd years ago, and they had so loved, especially when played by many a revitalised musician of old! We have indeed come full circle in this respect and the old Goan dance band truly lives on.

Dr. Cornel DaCosta lived in Kenya before moving to London in 1962. He completed a doctorate and then taught at UK universities for many years. In Kenya, Cornel developed a passion for the saxophone, formed an amateur quintet and played dance music until 1961. Subsequently, he also played in London. Cornel's varied writings have appeared in articles, books and in cyberspace.

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FOND MEMORIES OF THE CAMINHÃO

by Tony Felix Fernandes
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A 10" long plywood replica of the 'caminhão' skillfully handcrafted by Tony Fernandes

For me the 'caminhão' remains as a nostalgic memory. When I was young, the *caminhão* was the popular mode of public transportation in Goa. Most of these buses were privately owned. I recall travelling on these buses right from childhood to my early teens to various places in Goa - visiting relatives, attending weddings and going on annual vacations to my grandmother's house in Siolim during the month of May. These vehicles were unique in character and possessed their own charm and style.

The *caminhão* plied from city to city and town to town, making several scheduled or unscheduled stops as it wound its way through picturesque villages, its engines whining at high pitch as it climbed the hill slopes. It made several stops along its journey - stopping at a whistle or a loud high-pitched "rau re" from a lone passenger waiting along the way. (Konkani: 'rau' means stop; 're' is a form of address to a male).

Some of the coaches were built in Goa on an imported Bedford, Ford, Chevrolet or Dodge chassis. They were quite unique in their outward appearance. Each coach had a wooden framework, a wood panelled dark brown varnished interior, and brass sheeting with wood trim on the exterior. Some passenger seats had leather upholstery while others were made of wood. The design of the bus did not allow any room for standing passengers. Fitted on the roof was a 'carrier' consisting of a metal railing that would hold and transport a gamut of goods - from paddy sacks and metal trunks to firewood and bamboo baskets containing vegetable produce. The carrier also held the spare wheel and a tarpaulin cover. The rear of the bus was fitted with an iron ladder for access to the top. The driver and passenger sides had doors, with a vertically hinged passenger door at the back. Some buses had a lengthwise and parallel seating arrangement. The side windows had sliding glass panels. Some of the engines needed to be cranked up to start. Most of the 'caminhões' (Portuguese: plural of *caminhão*) were fitted with quaint brass blow-horns that had their own appeal and tone.

Powered by front engines and a rear wheel drive, some of these vehicles had steering column-mounted gear-change levers while others had floor-mounted gears: 3 forward and 1 reverse. The windshield consisted of two separate glass panels fitted with motorised wipers, with a dividing frame support and an overhead rear-view mirror in the centre. The instrument panel consisted of the odometer, speedometer, fuel and engine temperature gauges, and toggle switches for headlamps and windshield wipers. The headlight dipper was foot-operated, mounted on the left side of the clutch. Most of these vehicles had chrome-plated front bumpers and radiator grilles. The headlamps were mounted on top of the fenders. The front hood or bonnet consisted of double-leaf lateral flaps with a latch. The small buses had a 2-wheel rear axle while the bigger ones had a 4-wheel rear axle.

Known generally as the 'caminhão', these buses were called 'carreira' when they plied on regular routes with apparently fixed timings. In small, medium or large sizes, they plied all over Goa. The larger ones plied on longer routes like Panjim to Margao via Ponda, Margao to Vasco da Gama, Mapuça to Betim, Mapuça to Siolim, and Mapuça to Aldona, Tivim and Bicholim. The larger models were often hired for weddings and by schools to transport their students on picnics and to football tournaments. The medium and smaller models plied from Mapuça to Calangute and Mapuça to Candolim as regular private services.

Other than the driver, the *caminhão* also had a conductor, called 'kilinder' in the local dialect, who was in charge of collecting passenger fares. These two *caminhão* operators had their own brand of communication and a private signalling system: a certain rhythmic tap on the side of the bus to reverse, a whistle here and a shout there to slow down, stop, leave, or to ignore waiting passengers, if extremely full. And as the 'caminhão' took off, the 'kilinder' would be the last to board. He had his own peculiar way and style of sitting when the bus was filled to capacity. I would describe this as placing himself just barely on the edge of the side seat at the rear of the bus, with the rear door half open, one leg inside the bus and one on the riding step. On many occasions the conductor would sacrifice his modest seat in order to make space for one more passenger. He could then be seen standing on the ladder at the back with his fists firmly gripped around the rungs.

I would eagerly look forward to journeying on these buses. Some of the trips that I fondly remember travelling on as a young boy, were from Mapuça to Siolim with my mother, accompanying my grandmother for her annual salt water dip to Baga Beach, and a trip from Mapuça to Old Goa via Porvorim, Betim, (ferry crossing), Panjim and Ribandar for the annual feast of St. Francis Xavier.

On long journeys, passengers made friends and carried on conversations, while I happily looked outside, enjoying the beautiful scenery as the bus trundled its way through peaceful and quaint villages, serene fields and hills. I saw people sitting in the *balcão* of their houses, others going about their various daily chores, small wayside tea-shops, *tavernas* and small grocery stores, children walking home from school, people on bicycles, motorcycles and bullock-carts laden with laterite brick stones, firewood and salt.

A regular unforgettable trip was when we boarded the bus at the Mapuça *Praça*. We young children would normally find a seat to occupy at the start of a journey, but somewhere along the way we would find ourselves sitting on a parent's lap, as the conductor pleaded with us to sit closer to one another in order to make room for more passengers waiting to be picked up en route. If one was close to the town, it was preferable to board a bus at the starting point so as to safely secure a seat, rather than wait at a roadside stop.

The *caminhão* was a friendly vehicle, with its distinct smell of all sorts - gasoline, old leather, wood, spices, salt fish and the occasional 'beedi' or cigarette smell. It played its part in society - families relied on it for transportation, for kids visiting relatives, for picnics and weddings and at the 'muino' and 'portonem'. By the late fifties the first modern bus appeared on the scene plying between Mapuça and Betim, and by the early sixties, modern buses replaced most of the old 'caminhões'. The *caminhão* era slowly but surely came to an end as it was slowly phased out of service. Those were the days - the golden age of the *caminhão* that played a vital role in the public transport system of a bygone era. Today the *caminhão* is fondly remembered by the last of the veterans of that era as a true classic.

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Tony Felix Fernandes was educated at St. Anthony's High School, Monte de Guirim, Bardez, Goa. He graduated in Applied Art in Bombay. Besides computer graphics, he pursues his creative interests in art, photography, handicrafts, glass etching and music. He presently resides in Mississauga, Ontario - Canada, with his wife and three children, but keeps in touch with his roots by visiting Goa every now and then. Tony is also the author of 'GOA - MEMORIES OF MY HOMELAND', a collection of short stories and poems.

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THE GOA I KNEW

by John Eric Gomes
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I go back in time to the last few years of Portuguese rule. Our family settled in Poona (now Pune) in the year 1955, when I was a student in college. We used to travel every year during the summer holidays to Goa by train, which was the most convenient mode of transport then. The third class 'through' bogey train (no getting down and changing at Londa station), drawn by a steam engine, was usually jam-packed. The coolies at the Goa railway stations were women. We had to stop at Castlerock for the Indian Customs clearance and at Collem for the Portuguese Customs clearance. On our return journey, the Indian Customs were a pain, as the foreign and imported items available in Goa were a big draw for them.

Goa, to me, meant our huge ancestral house with rooms full of the choicest of mangoes, plenty of fish, sausages, Goa rice 'cunjee' drunk from "vatlis" with 'kalchi kodi', orchata (a drink made from almonds), Rowntree chocolates, St Pauli beer, and the smell of *feni* (which, being young, I was only allowed just one small sip at times). *Feni* was used as a medicine, for colds and coughs (with burnt sugar or honey), rubbed on the chest etc. My mother and various aunts were recognized experts in removing "disht" (evil eye). Goa also meant late night Konkani theatre, beach dances, fresh toddy, and the dreaded pig lavatories, which I could never get used to. Everyone used to laugh at me when I carried a 'bindul' full of water in one hand and a stick in the other to scare the pigs away. Goa also meant daily *ladainhas* (where everyone had such beautiful voices and enjoyed singing in falsetto and seconds), bathing with water drawn from the well (there were no taps or electricity then) and oil lamps at night. Lighting those lamps every night and later putting them out, together with the one 'petromax' we had, was a big daily chore. There was a roadside cross built up for every few houses, and one summer I was told that being the son of the house, I would have to be the celebrant. Little did I know that I would be dressed up, a crown put on my head and then carried aloft by a crowd of friends and neighbours! I had to serve them boiled gram, sweet drinks, *urack* and *feni*.

Goa was indeed God's Own Acre. The beaches were clean and the sea unpolluted. Baina was one of Goa's best beaches. There were no plastic bags, and murders and crime were an aberration. There were Portuguese, African and Goan troops and police. People, rich and poor, of all castes and creed, lived in harmony and by and large with good manners and neighbourly relations. There were no street lights, TVs or mobiles or even a telephone at home. Anything urgent went by telegraph. No roads as we know them today, but just two strips of macadam for cars and public vehicles (*caminhões*). The driver would stop anywhere and once, to my consternation, even went off the road through a field to pick up something. Everyone else seemed to not mind and took this as quite routine. There were no bridges but, instead, efficient ferry services. Vehicles had to negotiate over wooden troughs in lieu of ramps to get onto the ferry. These were put on, adjusted and taken off manually with steel hooks.

I usually tried to spend most of my holidays living in shacks at Calangute, Caranzalem or Colva. I would get up early in the morning and wait below the coconut trees for fresh toddy. I would watch the fishermen, most of them Goan, pulling in their nets from the sea, in long lines, like in a tug-of-war. I used to join them sometimes, and come away with fresh fish and, sometimes, big crabs. Life was slow, tranquil and comparatively safe. Families were generally big. My grandparents had more than eight siblings each. There were no fights or major problems between the children, as the elder siblings looked after the younger, handing down both clothes and values from usually strict parents. Nowadays parents find it difficult to handle even two children.

Whenever I visit the Calangute, Baga or Colva beaches today, and think about what happened to Baina, or when I encounter the attitudes of our people today and see what tourism, all types of pollution and our own politicians are doing to Goa and Goans, I feel that my generation was lucky to have been able to experience a paradise that seems lost forever.

A product of St Vincent's school and Wadia College, John Eric Gomes completed his B.Sc. from Pune University. He joined the Indian Navy in 1959 and took an active part in Goa's Liberation. He retired as Assistant Director, Naval Operations from Naval Headquarters, New Delhi. An ardent consumer activist and hardcore 'Niz Goencar', he has settled in Goa at the Defence Colony, Porvorim and contributes his writings to local newspapers and magazines.

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REMEMBERING MY CHILDHOOD HOLIDAYS IN DIVAR

by Leonilde Sequeira



Leonilde Sequeira at her home in Miramar

My thoughts go back to my childhood days. I was born in Mhow, a small town in Madhya Pradesh, the third child in the family. My father had a chemist's shop there. It was a cantonment area, safe, clean and very well kept.

I remember how we used to come to Goa for our May vacations. Since my father was tied down with the business, he couldn't always accompany us, but he made sure to send us at least once in 3 years, especially as his mother lived alone. As kids, we really looked forward to this holiday though we didn't quite enjoy the journey. Madhya Pradesh can be very hot in the month of May. When we travelled by train, if we took the Frontier Mail, we had to change at Ratlam, or if we took the G.I.P. we had to change at Khandwa. But what was worse was the boat voyage that followed. We all suffered from sea-sickness so we could neither eat nor drink anything on the way.

When we arrived in Panjim, we had to go through certain formalities. Our baggage was fumigated and a doctor would check us. After refreshing ourselves at one of the nearby restaurants, we had to go through another ordeal to reach our village of Divar. We had to face yet another trip by boat as my maternal grandfather would arrange what is called in Konkani a "voddem" (a small boat) in which we would sit all cramped up. By the time we finally reached, we were quite famished. We would walk home while my mother hired somebody to carry the baggage. But it felt good to be back. After refreshing ourselves and washing up, we enjoyed a delicious plate of Goa rice, fish curry and fried fish that Granny had prepared for us. There was no electricity in those days, nor were there taps, but we didn't mind – we loved drawing water from the well like the other girls in the neighbourhood.

There is a particular incident that I remember even now. My maternal grandfather had a plot some distance away from the house. It was called Muddi. It so happened that when we came to Goa one year, it was time to pluck the coconuts. This time my father had also accompanied us. My aunt, my mother's sister, decided we would make an outing of it. So we set out from Piedade, while she ground some *masala* and carried some ingredients for cooking and set out with her children, my cousins. Grandfather was of course there to supervise. The boys went to fish where they caught some nice mullets. My aunt who was very efficient, cleaned the mullets, put salt on them and then fried them. She also made curry, kept the rice to cook and then relaxed. We loved Goa rice. We had a hearty and tasty meal with fish curry, rice and fried fish and for years afterwards my father raved about the delicious mullets we had enjoyed that day.

Since we shared a well and the water was not sufficient, my mother would hire a shack in a place called Dudonem. This place had a spring, and hence lots of people would go there with their pots and pans, etc. It was a nice shady place with coconut and mango trees. We walked to this place from São Matias. It may have been a mile or perhaps more, but we didn't feel it at all. The spring had two pipes and the water flowed continuously. This property belonged to Cosme Matias Menezes. The place had a couple of rooms and a big open verandah. Later my sister got married to the son Pascoal, so we used to go and live there. It was great fun being together.

Leonilde's family was originally from Divar, Goa. Though she spent her childhood in Mhow, Madhya Pradesh, where her father worked and later had his own business, the family visited Goa at every opportunity. After her marriage to Joe Sequeira, Leonilde moved to Mumbai. The couple had three children, two sons, Ronnie and Anselm, and a daughter, Jennifer. After Joe passed away, Leonilde moved to Goa and now lives in Miramar, Goa.

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THE VOW

by Raymond Fernandes
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95 years young birthday boy Raymond Fernandes at the Oakland Park Bridge Club, Plantation, Florida.

I celebrated my 95th birthday recently on 16th February 2008. Perhaps my long life is due in part to my genes. My grandfather Augustine lived till the age of 94, my uncle Blaze lived to the age of 98 and my sister Armine to the age of 96. My sister Lena in Hyderabad also lived till the age of 96. But apart from my genes, there is also something else, which makes me feel that I will make it to a century. This is a curious incident from the past, which I would like to share with you.

I was baptized at St. Joseph's Cathedral, Hyderabad and named Raimondo Eulogio Milagres Fernandes. In Portuguese, the word '*milagres*' means miracle and though I always wondered why I had been given that name, I only came to know the real reason at the age of 21. When I was studying in college in Bombay, my aunts Augusta and Ruby told me the story. We were 12 children born to my mother Rose. However, until I was born, no other male child born to my parents had survived. In those days my father had a pharmacy and it was thought at the time that girls could not run a pharmacy. Hence my parents were very keen to have a son. When my mother became pregnant again, she was in Goa, supervising the building of our house. There is a church in Mapuca, not far from the main Mapuca market, where Our Lady of Miracles (*Milagres Saibinn*) is worshipped with great devotion. My mother therefore made a vow, whilst fervently asking that she be given a male child who would live to a 100 years of age. In return, she would give the child the name Milagres, dress him in rags for 5 years and make him beg for alms outside the church, giving the money so obtained to the poor. It seems that such vows were not uncommon in those days. Anyway, her prayers were answered and I was born. As part of her vow, my godparents too were chosen from amongst some Catholic beggars. When my aunts told me this story, I then vaguely recollected being dressed in a long robe (similar to that worn by *sadhus*) and standing outside the church asking for alms. I also remember crying occasionally because I was never allowed to keep the money but instead had to give it away to the poor.

Even though I had a quadruple bypass a few years back, luckily I still keep fit and am also quite active. Since I was 89 years old at the time of my operation, my recovery was termed as a miracle. All I can say is that, like my mother who had a deep and abiding faith, I too believe that miracles still take place in this day and age.

Raymond Fernandes is originally from Saligao, Goa. He spent several years in Hyderabad and Bombay, working as a pharmacist and then later, as a medical representative. Having retired in 1987, he now lives with his wife Rose in Plantation, Florida, USA. They have four children, Yvette, Hilaire, Joan and John, all married and well settled.

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GOA'S SIXTIES REMEMBERED

by Tony Felix Fernandes
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It was a way of life, good and simple. Even though childhood revolved around going to school, running errands and doing daily chores, there was always time for other activities. Football was my passion as well as that of every lad in the villages and towns. Our inter-village football tournament and our annual village picnic to the springs were popular features.

We had formed a recreation club in our village, in a house with a very large 'sala' (Portuguese for "hall"). This place gave us the opportunity to pass our time during the long monsoon evenings. We played carom, draughts and other board games. We also played badminton in the courtyard. It was also a place where we would exchange books that we took turns in reading. Arthur C. Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey* was quite a popular novel then.

Sunday was a typical day with attendance at the first very early morning Mass. Going early meant that we could be on time to hear the Binaca Hit Parade at 8:00 a.m. at our neighbours' place. They had a powerful Grundig valve radio that used huge external line antennae above their house. The program that we used to listen to was broadcast on short-wave, 31-metre band, by the Commercial Service of Radio Ceylon, now Sri Lanka. This radio station relayed BBC News at 7.30 a.m. everyday. I remember meeting my mother going to church for the second mass while we were returning on our way from the first. Jim Reeves, Ricky Nelson, the Cascades, Cliff Richard and Elvis Presley reigned supreme with their hits. Seven or eight of us would be listening with paper and pencil in hand, and *voila!* - in one sitting, we would have the lyrics of the song that we liked. Film epics like *Guns of Navarone* and *Lawrence of Arabia* and actors like Alec Guinness, Charlton Heston and Sean Connery were much talked about in the Goa of those days.

The feast of St. John was celebrated with all the young boys jumping into the wells. On the eve of the feast, bonfires were lit and the fire was later put out by beating at it, using the flat bases of the stems of palm leaves, while singing a certain chorus. The village feasts as well as Ganesh, Diwali and Shigmo festivals were also celebrated with equal fervour.

During the three days of *Carnaval* all the boys from the village got together. We dressed up in different costumes and went from house to house singing songs. As was expected, whatever we collected for our efforts, went towards purchasing a new football for the use of all.

My mother attended to smaller chores in the afternoons, like darning or hemming a dress. She would also continue her on-going knitting of a quilt or a sweater. Any garment purchased readymade or stitched by the local tailor had to be at least one size larger! They have an apt phrase in Konkani for that: "*vaddtea angar*" (literally, in English, for the growing body). Dad was nice. He let me learn to ride on his bicycle, though never letting me or the bicycle out of his sight! I don't ever remember seeing him idle. He always seemed to have something or the other to do - fixing the kitchen stool, fixing the rungs of the old ladder or replacing broken roof tiles.

The early sixties saw the liberation of Goa on December 19, 1961. Lt. Gen. Candeth was appointed as the first Governor of Goa. On the educational front, the mid-sixties also saw two new colleges namely, Dhempe's in Panjim and St. Xavier's in the village of Bastora, just outside Mapuça.

The dawn of the early sixties also saw new Indian vehicles on the roads - the Fiat and the Ambassador, and the Tata Truck. The Austin, Ford, Volkswagen, Chevrollet, Morris, the *caminhão* and the Bedford truck diminished in their popularity by the end of the decade.

Almost before I knew it, I had completed my higher secondary studies. And I could not fit into my '*vaddtea angar*' trousers any more. In order to pursue studies for my chosen career it was necessary to leave home for a city far away from home. Every year, I visited my folks who seemed a little older each time, and I re-lived the days of my teens for a month or two in their midst. And then a few years later, after I was employed, I returned as a working man to have a great holiday in Goa. We were by then in the early seventies. The sixties were over and out. So were the Beatles and Herman's Hermits. Bell-bottoms, slim-fit shirts, platform shoes and high heels, Abba and Boney M. would be the next in.

Simple things and the rustic lifestyle gave us pleasure. We enjoyed the little things we had and silently wished for greater things for our future. Just like any other kids. The players in my team were not only my parents, classmates, friends and neighbours, but everybody that I knew and those I considered special, including the teachers at my alma mater. They helped shape what I have today - an inner spirit that will forever reside in Goa.

Tony Felix Fernandes was educated at St. Anthony's High School, Monte de Guirim, Bardez, Goa. He graduated in Applied Art in Bombay. Besides computer graphics, he pursues his creative interests in art, photography, handicrafts, glass etching and music. He presently resides in Mississauga, Ontario - Canada, with his wife and three children, but keeps in touch with his roots by visiting Goa every now and then. Tony is also the author of 'GOA - MEMORIES OF MY HOMELAND', a collection of short stories and poems.

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STROLLING DOWN MEMORY LANE

by Raymond Fernandes
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Married for 68 years ...
Raymond Fernandes with wife Rose

As I approached my 95th birthday in February of this year (2008), my thoughts took me back to the years from 1924-1930 which I spent as a boarder in Montfort School in Yercaud. Those were amongst the happiest years of my life, and I still recall with nostalgia the days spent on Big Lake, Small Lake, Bear's Hill, Lady's Seat, Killur Falls, Aeroplane House, Bald Shevaroy, Scorpion Hill and Elephant's Tooth. In 1924, there were panthers, jackals, monkeys and pythons in Yercaud.

My mother passed away when I was just six years old and my father when I was eight. I was therefore an orphan when I was at Montfort School. My bother, the late Bishop Alfred Fernandes, and I were boarders at the school in 1924. He had the honour of being the first Montfort boy to be ordained a Bishop. Likewise, Douglas Gordon, my classmate in study hall, was the first Montfort boy to become a Jesuit priest. I had the opportunity of meeting him many years later in Vijayawada, when he was Principal of the Loyola College there. My brother and I were the first Indians to join Montfort, which in those days was known as Montfort European High School. It was only open to Europeans and Anglo-Indians. There were about 65 boarders then. At that time, Yercaud was a town in Salem district, in the Madras Presidency. Our Principal was Brother Eugene who was a B.A. from Oxford. Later on, we had Brother Victrice who, as Principal, was a strict disciplinarian. I did my High School and Senior Cambridge exams in the same year in 1930. That year I was also awarded the Edward Winkler Silver Medal for good conduct. The whole school voted for me.

In the 3rd Standard, my handwriting was very bad. The teacher, Mr. Rhone, threw my homework book out of the window and asked me to leave the class. Mr. Atkinson, our Physical Instructor, saw me outside and asked me what had happened. When I told him, he took me to his room and gave me some handwriting exercises to practice. As a result of these exercises, known as the "Palmer Method of Business Writing", my handwriting improved dramatically and I soon developed the best handwriting in the school. When Mr. Kershaw, the Inspector General of Schools, was shown proof of my improvement, he made the "Palmer Method" compulsory in all schools.

Mr. Atkinson was a great influence in my life. He had wanted to adopt me as I was an orphan, but my trustees would not permit it. He taught me to play tennis and also introduced me to the Reader's Digest and the National Geographic magazines. From the 5th Standard onwards, I was on every school team in athletics, football, hockey and cricket. Mr. Atkinson told me that America was a great country where one could go from rags to riches. This inspired me to immigrate to this country, and though I did it through my children, I finally fulfilled a lifelong ambition of relocating to the U.S.A.

I have been a resident of this country for the past 20 years now, along with my four children. My elder son and elder daughter are both doctors. My younger daughter is a real estate agent while my younger son is in the food service industry. I am now 95 years old and my wife is 92. We completed 68 years of marriage on the 26th of June, 2008

Raymond Fernandes is originally from Saligao, Goa. He spent several years in Hyderabad and Bombay, working as a pharmacist and then later, as a medical representative. Having retired in 1987, he now lives with his wife Rose in Plantation, Florida, USA. They have four children, Yvette, Hilaire, Joan and John, all married and well settled.

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WHISPERING HOPE ...

by A. Anthony (Tony) Fernandes
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When a banyan tree is uprooted somewhere deep in the heart of the forest, do the echoes reverberate through the ghats, or do they just fade away into the hoary gloaming?



In this picture clicked around the mid-sixties, Cynthia (second from left) stands with (l to r) her sister Phyliss, mother Julie and another sister Joyce.

Cynthia Largo Afonso never stood for public office, nor won a Nobel Prize for Peace, but she was an exponent of the art of looking possibility and opportunity straight in the eye. Someone who made us understand that, if ever we needed a helping hand, the first place to look was at the end of our own arms.

Wife, mother, my godmother and an inspiration to countless others, she was the patent glue that held a clan together, in her own quiet, intuitive way.

Yet, most of all, she had that golden touch which allowed her to establish seemingly effortless rapport with captains of industry and the local "vadi / vaddo" women alike.

Despite her declining health in later years due to genetic polycystic renal disease, she never ever let anything stop her. In between hospital dialysis sessions, she thought nothing of hopping onto a Mumbai-Goa bound plane - or bus, with her trusty moped atop - to travel from her Mahim home (where she'd lived for 40+ years) to visit her beloved ancestral hamlet of Paetona, Salvador do Mundo.

She, along with her husband Olaf, were pretty much surrogate parents to my brother Leonard and me, after her sister (my mother, Joyce Francesca) passed on some 31 years ago of the same condition, aged just 39. They were role models by extension, to us and probably at some stage or other, to so many others, irrespective of whether they were family or not. Many will remember her years with the Choir of the Church of Our Lady of Victory, Mahim, Mumbai, to which her husband was also affiliated. Others will probably also recall her time as a backup singer in what is now popularly known as Bollywood, as well as her recordings with Konkani music greats like Oslando.

Mental tapestry etchings of her remain .. amongst many others, of sepia yesteryears .. of the sisters as a duo or sometimes a trio, harmonizing the strains of their favourite "Whispering Hope" often accompanied by our Uncle Olaf on his guitar, in the then lamp-lit evenings of seemingly endless summer vacations at Grandmother's house!

Were it not for her, I might not be around to write this today....

My first thoughts at the time she urged me to have an ultrasound scan, were "I'm too busy running a resort in Bermuda" and "What do I need a scan for anyway ??!!!"

Years later, in distant London I watched, in gnawing raging helplessness, as she slowly deteriorated, while I, for whatever reason the Gods of Celestial Roulette ordain, and whilst on nightly home-based dialysis, received a 3:00 a.m. phone call, offering me the chance of a potential donor kidney.

How's that for searing survivor guilt? The cold-gutting truth is that, in the world of life on a transplant list, many are called, but few are chosen.

In her passing, as in her lifetime, she was and always will be, an enduring icon of "can do" positivity, with the art of truly connecting with people! In the e-mailed words of Cousin Desiree, "Tony, you said it right! She was indeed a role model and the personification of courage, endurance and life itself! Her cheerful disposition, her bursts of laughter, her endearing mannerisms, her wonderful persona will be sorely missed."

It's to people like her and to my mother that we dedicate this, and the 'Carpe Diem' life that I laser-focus on nowadays. This, because there are no more dress rehearsals and second acts in this 'Renaissance of Life' gift, that naught but a fortunate few have bestowed upon them!

She did not leave a parting message. She did not need to. Her life and love of all humanity was her message. It is our unique privilege to have known and been blessed by her presence in our lives. This, no one can ever take away.

The voice of an angel has been stilled, but her song can never be silenced.

She passed away on 19th July, 2006. On 22nd August, 2006 she would have been all of 67 years young.

From all those whose lives you touched and made a difference to, Aunt Cynthia ... WE SALUTE YOU!

Kenya born and Goa raised, Tony Fernandes is a scion of the "Fogoti" clan of Paetona, Salvador do Mundo and the "Ushellantlem Colle" of Saligao, Goa. Previously Bermuda based, Tony is an apprentice writer and eco-heritage tourism entrepreneur. During the 2005 Christmas season, he received the priceless gift of a cadaveric kidney transplant from an anonymous donor in the U.K. where he currently lives.

GUARDING GOA'S WALLS ... FOR A HUNDRED YEARS OVER TIME

by Frederick Noronha
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This is the story of a quaint publication and the septuagenarian lady who presently oversees its every aspect. The publication once marked each passing day in the life of a generation of Goans, but today is largely forgotten. But in the past, the almanac wasn't just a quaint collector's item. At its peak it sold some 5000 copies, according to 74-year-old Elsa Correia, daughter of the founder of this publication, the late Joaquim Filipe Roque Correia, who first published it in the year 1903.

'Almanac de Parede' is a kind of 'wall calendar' that has completed a quiet centenary of its publication from the South Goa town of Margao. Yet, this event would have gone almost totally unnoticed had it not been for the persistence of a Dutchman. Explains Patrice Reimens, an Amsterdam-based researcher curious about varied cultures encountered across the globe, "Almanac de Parede is basically a double A3 piece of paper, printed in black and white, very traditional. It lists all saints' days and all feasts in all Goan parishes, as well as some postal and other information. It is available in Margao, may be less outside." Reimens was keen to lay his hands on a couple of copies, one for a friend in Romania, where they have "exactly the same, typically Catholic thing".

It is still published in the Portuguese language, probably one of the very few publications in Asia in that language. Goa's last Portuguese-language daily, O Heraldo, shifted to the English language in 1983, due to dwindling readership in the tongue of the former colonial rulers of what is currently India's smallest state.

Elsa Correia, fighting shy of the publicity and the credit for carrying out the publication, says that after the death of her father in 1968, it was continued by her late brother, pharmacist Domingos Correia. She has taken over the reins, "not as a business, but just to continue and serve the readers", as she put it.

"He (my father Joaquim Correia) was a 'calendarist' -- and knew everything regarding calendars, including religious calendars. He was the proprietor of *Tipografia Progressa* ('*Tipografia*' is the Portuguese word for 'printing press') located behind Margao's Holy Spirit Church," Correia recalls.

"It contains much useful information, and is the only annual publication in the Portuguese language in Goa. I've received letters from Italy and elsewhere (voicing interest about it)", she says.

Currently the print-run is 1500 copies. Much of the calendar focuses on giving a run-up on which saint's feast falls on which day of the year. There are also details of the full moon, new moon and quarter-moon dates, feasts of various churches and '*zattras*' (temple festivals) around Goa, postal rates, bank and commercial holidays. In the past, it cost 25 paise. Today, the price is six rupees for the single newspaper-sized sheet, printed on one side.

Septuagenarian Correia says she doesn't have a calculation of the time spent to bring out this publication. "I sit anytime and do it, and need to see other calendars or consult those who accurately know the Hindu festive days. "Some feasts change dates, so as to fall on a Sunday. But in villages like Chandor, the feasts are always fixed," she adds.

She says the press run by the family once brought out other publications. But it became old and "nobody was interested in supervising it". The earlier generation has to cope with advancing age, and the youngsters are not necessarily interested. "He (my father) taught me. Now I need to revise those principles," she jokes.

As if to mark changing times, there is a new set of calendars in Goa. But these are more likely to be in Marathi or English, with only a few published in Goa. Many come from the much larger and more vibrant publishing houses of nearby Maharashtra, focusing primarily on an area that is culturally not wholly dissimilar from this small state. 'Kalnirnay' is one of the most popular that sells in many editions and in a number of languages. Its unique formula is to include on the back of each page of the annual calendar, household hints, recipes or anything else of interest to womenfolk

Almanac de Parede has anyway seen a tumultuous century for Goa, marked by many drastic changes in the regimes that ruled the place and the languages which were favoured by the rulers and the citizens.

Frederick Noronha (42) is a Goa-based journalist, photo-enthusiast, book reviewer, Free Software proponent, ICT4D (information and communication technology for development) campaigner, copyleft backer, and believer in the need to build social capital. He has been long associated with Goanet (www.goanet.org) as a volunteer, through which network he circulated many of his "brieFNcounters" interviews.

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FR. CONCEICAO RODRIGUES AND HIS CONTRIBUTION

by Edna D'Souza

Fr. Conceicao Menino Rodrigues was born on 27th March 1912, at Betalbatim in South Goa. He joined the Rachol Seminary and became a diocesan priest. During the Exposition of the relics of St. Francis Xavier at Old Goa in 1931, he and his companions were inspired to start a new Society, with St Francis Xavier as their patron (foreign religious societies had been suppressed from 1835). The salient features that would make it different from the diocesan priesthood would be those of living in a community under a Superior, according to a written Constitution, and spreading the message of salvation in India, through the sons of India. The approval was granted, and the society of St. Francis Xavier (sfx), commonly called the Pilar Society, was established at Pilar in 1939.

Influenced by the struggle for Independence in British India, Fr. Conceicao wanted Goa also to be free from Portuguese Rule. This was dangerous ground to tread on as the Church in Goa sided with the Government. He was reprimanded for his freedom of expression and fearing further reprisals, he left Goa and went to Bombay in the early fifties. He took up residence in Bandra where he saw many children on the streets, instead of in school. His concern led him to gather them in one place and try and teach them. He soon realized, however, that they could not cope with formal education and so he tried teaching them various skills, which they were quick to pick up. He consequently started short-term vocational training like carpentry, mechanical and fitters' courses, and also started a shelter to keep the children off the streets.

Seeing his good work, the people of the neighbourhood donated land and money near the Bandstand in Bandra, and thus was Agnel Ashram founded on 9th June 1957. Later, more branches were opened in other parts of Bombay and India, and requests and donations kept pouring in. A need was felt for such courses in Goa in the 1970's, and large tracts of land on the slopes of a hill in Verna were donated for the purpose.

It was a challenge for Fr. Conceicao and his assistants to level the ground and plan the projects. Being a visionary, he took it in his stride, making a blueprint of the short-term and long-term projects that could be undertaken to fill up this vast area. The Agnel Polytechnic was founded in 1980 alongside the residence of the priests, offering Production, Automobile and Construction Engineering courses. Agnel Industrial Training Institute was also started in 1980, which was affiliated to the National Council for Vocational Training in New Delhi. An orphanage was started in 1981, the foundation stone of which was laid by the then President of India, Shri Giani Zail Singh. Along with the orphanage, a small clinic, a tailoring shop, and a primary school were started. The High School was started in 1984.

However, Fr. Conceicao was not satisfied with these achievements. He wanted Vocational Education to be recognized on par with other academic qualifications. He strove hard to get University recognition for the Degree course in Engineering. This he finally achieved, but the joy and relief were so great that he got a massive heart attack, and expired in June of the same year, i.e.1984.

Today, there is a Padre Conceicao College of Engineering in Goa, founded in 1997 at Verna, approved by the Government of Goa, affiliated to the Goa University and recognized by the All India Council for Technical Education. Here undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate courses are offered. There are also short term courses in different skills and trades which, without any discrimination based on caste, creed, or I.Q., help thousands of students get education, develop skills and be assured of a future. The orphanage too was expanded to 22 cottages, which house about 200 children. Most of the projects on the original blueprint have seen completion. During the recent silver jubilee celebrations, a citation was awarded posthumously to Fr. Conceicao by the Government.

Fr. Conceicao's vision for the less fortunate, therefore, goes on spreading, thanks to those who remain faithful to his mission of taking the message of the "Good News" to all Indians, through the "Sons of India" via Agnel Technical Education Complexes. Credit must also be given to the nephews of Fr. Conceicao, both of them Senior Citizens – Fr. Orlando Rodrigues, who is Director of the Agnel Technical complex in Mumbai and Fr. Peter Martin Rodrigues, who is the Director at the complex in Verna - and to all those who assist them in running these huge complexes.

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A SENIOR OF WHOM GOANS SHOULD BE PROUD

by Lenny Barretto
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Frank D'Souza was born and educated in Karachi. He was the first Indian to be appointed by the British as a member of the Railway Board of India. In those days, a small group of men controlled the mighty railways of India. It was the railways that kept the Indian Empire working efficiently and effectively, and it was important therefore, that membership of the Board was the preserve of the best. Frank D'Souza being one of the best, was appointed to the Railway Board of India.

After finishing school with a Matriculation, Frank D'Souza started to work as a Railway Guard in one of the Railways. He was a self-made man and educated himself over the years. At the time of Partition, Frank D'Souza opted for India and because of the Evacuee Property Law, which was established by both India and Pakistan, he lost his large property 'Maryville' in Karachi, Pakistan. At the time, Pakistan urgently needed the services of someone to set up the Railway system there. Pakistan decided the only man who could help in this direction was Frank D'Souza. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Founder and the First Governor-General of Pakistan specifically requested Frank D'Souza to help in setting up the Railway system in Pakistan. Frank agreed, but on the condition that his home 'Maryville' be returned to him. Jinnah and the Government of Pakistan agreed.

Frank D'Souza always helped and supported Goans and often suggested that Goans should always try to support each other. He set an example. When he came to Pakistan, he stayed at a Goan-owned hotel 'Braganza Hotel' though he could have asked the Government of Pakistan to arrange for him to stay in the best hotels. Frank was known for his transparently honest Christian character. On completion of his job in Pakistan and before returning to India, Frank D'Souza gave his beautiful home 'Maryville' to an order of nuns. If he had wanted, he could have sold his home in foreign exchange for a good sum. The nuns turned 'Maryville' into a Senior Citizens Home. I had close aunts who lived in the Home and were well looked-after for the rest of their lives by the Sisters of Mercy. Incidentally, a few years ago Frank D'Souza's only son, Ronald - a Catholic Priest - lived the last few years of his life at the Home. He died at the ripe old age of 92.

Goans should be proud of this good man - Frank D'Souza.

Born and educated in Karachi, Leonard (Lenny) Barretto also spent a few years in Bombay, returning to his homeland at the time of Partition. In Pakistan, Lenny enjoyed working with the Goan Community, organizing Goan Cricket and Hockey teams, which qualified to compete at the National level. Working for the US Government, he eventually emigrated to the US with his wife Lydia and their daughter and son. Now retired, he is presently compiling essays of his days in the sub-continent.

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THE CYCLE OF LIFE

by Edwin Fernandes
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Growing up in the Bandra of yore was similar to the life William Brown led, never a dull moment. The most common mode of transport was the humble bicycle. We had a large compound. When in later years, the adjoining cottage was pulled down and a large building complex sprung up, a certain Salman Khan used to be shooed away from our compound. We could barely afford to hire cycles, as we never had pocket money.

I learnt to cycle by falling innumerable times off hired cycles, my knees and elbows often bloodied and bruised. It was my burning desire to own a cycle. WAP enabled CDMA mobiles, P4 PCs and other fancy gizmos were still in the realms of fantasy. With great trepidation, I approached my parents. Mum said I was too young to ride on the road. My Dad (who worked in the merchant navy) was an old hand in man management. Although he was away sailing for most of the year, he still had perfect control over his magnificent seven children! He advocated that unless you put a value on something, one never really appreciates it. He assured me that I would get a cycle, provided I stood among the first three in my class. You could have knocked me down with a feather. To someone who was more adept at wielding a hockey stick than a fountain pen, this was hitting below the belt.

In the 8th standard in the year 1968, I finally struck pay dirt! I composed a snail mail (there wasn't any other then), to my Dad who was in England. Thereafter, I spent the days and months eagerly awaiting my Dad's arrival. Finally came the news that Dad's ship was to dock. One unforgettable evening, an Ambassador taxi screeched to a stop outside our house. On the carrier was a bulky bundle, wrapped in canvas. Dad stepped out of the cab, resplendent in his smart navy uniform. He waved to me and like a true-blue navy man, wasting no time in niceties, hollered, "Are you going to give me a hand with this cycle or should I give it away?"

You could have knocked me down with the same feather, once again. My cycle, my very own cycle! I had expected a Hercules or an Atlas. Certainly not a genuine Raleigh! The military green cycle had a dynamo, a headlamp, a revolving bell and, would you believe it, three gears! My Dad sure did things in style. I was over the moon. That day I even had dinner on my cycle!



The author's beloved Dad...
Especiano Fernandes

I cycled to school, to picnics at the Aarey Milk Colony, to the National Park and to Tulsi Lake. I cycled to my Centre for my SSC finals. I cycled four years to a Bandra College. I won slow cycle races and dodge cycle races galore. I was only barred from fast racing, as my cycle had gears. Oh, my Raleigh served me well. Then I joined a bank and this time my Dad (now retired) was over the moon! I eventually shifted base to Juhu. The cycle remained in Bandra. When I visited home on weekends, I would take it for a small spin. Otherwise it languished under the staircase near the meter room,

collecting dust.

Over the years, as I moved on in life, I acquired a scooter, a motorcycle, a car. Eventually the scooter was disposed of, the motorcycle and car were upgraded. The cycle was gradually fading from memory. I also managed to complete two postings out of Mumbai. The years flew. One day Mummy called to ask whether I was still interested in my cycle as the raddiwallah was harassing her to donate or sell it to him. That did it.

I pulled the trusty cycle out of its mothballs. I felt surges of emotion coursing through my veins. I unceremoniously shooed the startled raddiwallah away. I wasn't ready to sever the umbilical cord, not just yet. I walked it to the nearest cycle shop. The cycle was not the only thing pumped up that day! I heaved my now large frame onto that familiar seat and the old magic was at work instantly. I huffed and puffed all the way to Juhu. It was like the Karen Carpenter song, 'Yesterday once more.' The watchman opened the gate, quite bemused. Let him think what he wanted. This was my very own delirious moment in the sun - I could do without having to answer inane queries.

I did a splendid paint job on my cycle. Dad, who taught me to be meticulous to the core, would have approved. Every night I cycle in the compound much to the amusement of my colleagues, who are convinced my second childhood has dawned, a bit prematurely. We are now in 2006. That makes my trusted cycle a cool 38 years. Truly old is gold; they certainly don't make them (cycle and rider) like this anymore!

Dad, it's been more than a decade since you sailed into the blue yonder, but the great lesson on values you taught me, lives on. Thanks.

Edwin Fernandes was born in Cuncolim, Goa and was brought up in Bandra, Mumbai. He is presently a General Manager in the Industrial Development Bank of India, Cuffe Parade, Mumbai. Edwin has been the editor of his Bank's House Journal for over 13 years. He plays squash on weekends and his other interests include dramatics and public speaking. He has penned this article in tribute to his father, Especiano Fernandes.

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REMEMBERING MAI

by Christine D'Cruz
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“Those who love deeply never grow old...they may die of old age, but they die young...”



Tujee gopant Mai...
Mai carrying Christine

I feel the tears begin to form in my eyes as I recollect sweet memories of her. I didn't even know her real name ... but that never mattered, because we all used to fondly call her *Mai* (mother). No, she was not my Mama nor my Nana. She was our first and only dear Nanny, who cared for us with all her heart. An inner voice tells me that she never felt that she was raising someone else's children ... she was raising her own – my brother Rohan and me.

She was a thin, but hardworking, woman. She spoke only Konkani, but understood the language of the heart. She wore spectacles, but was a woman of foresight. She had no prior experience, yet she was ready to accept the challenge of looking after us. She became a part of our family when I was born. In fact, there was no need for her to work at all. Raising the two of us started as a pastime when my Papa requested her to do so, but she took her role seriously. She started working for us at the age of 60. When Rohan and I were small, she used to happily work 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., seven days a week. Even when she was ill, she would insist on coming to work. She lived at Bogda, Vasco-da-Gama, but always came to work on foot to our house in the heart of the city.

Most people ask the Lord to lighten their burdens. I think she asked Him to strengthen her back. At her age, she was a multi-tasker. At any given time, she was called upon to be a food-provider, nurse, disciplinarian and confidante. My Nana recalls that when Rohan was a few months old, she would keep his cradle in the kitchen so that she could do her work and also keep an eye on him. She used to affectionately call him “*mhozo put*” (my son). She considered Rohan her second son. The truth is that she already had married children of

her own, and lived long enough to see her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

My parents had always insisted that she take Sundays off, which she finally agreed to when we started going to school. Even then, Rohan wanted her to feed him when we got back home. I remember she used to lovingly make little balls of food and give him to eat. She always insisted on using the grinding stone, never the mixer. We all loved her food – her *xit-kodi* (rice & curry), *recheado bangdde* (stuffed mackerel), *ambot tik* (hot & sour fish gravy) and mouth-watering potato chops. She was really a superwoman of her time and would single-handedly draw water from our well with the *codso* (pot) if we had a water shortage. In the evenings, *Mai* would sit on the steps of our house and brush the tangles out of my hair and plait it before I went for my Bharatnatyam classes. Honestly, till now that was the only time my hair was so nicely oiled and well groomed!

We were growing older year after year, and age was catching up with her too. I know it was very difficult for all of us to see her growing frailer day by day. But she still insisted on coming to work for us. She had grown very close to our family. Eventually, she knew it was time to retire. After 13 odd years, she retired from her work, but not from our lives. We used to visit her whenever we could. She lived on a hill and going to her house was like climbing Mount Calvary, gasping for breath at the Stations of the Cross. That's when Rohan and I actually realized some of the hardships she had so willingly undergone for us. Whenever we visited her, it was evident that time and age had left their mark, but to us she was still our same *Mai* who loved us unconditionally.

Her health was deteriorating slowly. I guess we all knew her end was close. On 20th July 2001, she passed away peacefully in her sleep at the age of 81. It was at her funeral that I came to know her real name – Sebastiana D'Souza. That day all of us let go with our hands, but we continue to hold on to her with our hearts. We all miss you, *Mai*. The hearts you've touched will never lose the feeling of love....

I'm sure *Mai* is one with the angels now...looking down on all her children. God bless her soul.



Rohan, Mai and Christine...
special moments then, happy
memories now

A State First Ranker at her H.S.S.C Board Exams, Christine D'Cruz then went on to pursue her Bachelors in Business Administration. After a stint at Prudential UK as a Process Leader at their Mumbai office, this 25-yr old is currently pursuing her MBA in the UK. A vivacious all-rounder, Christine enjoys reading, listening to music, travelling and making friends. And there's a twinkle in her eye as she speaks of the first love of her life her five cats!!!

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BACK TO BICHOLIM FROM BOLLYWOOD

by Frederick Noronha
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Do you remember hit Bollywood film songs like 'Aansoo Bhari Hain Yeh Jeevan Ki Raahein' (from the film 'Parvarish'), 'Chun Chun Karti Aayee Chidiya' ('Ab Dilli Door Nahi') or 'Masti Bhara Hain Sama' (also 'Parvarish'). The man behind these and scores of other hit songs of yesteryear was lying, ailing and forgotten, in a small village outside Goa's dusty mining heartland, when I came across his story via the Net.

Music director Dattaram Wadkar, more popularly known just as 'Dattaram', now resides in Maulinguem in Goa's Bicholim taluka. Independent music director for nineteen films, his work might be a refrain on lips across India, but there are few to take care of him after his return home to Goa.

Dattaram also rendered music in the Bhojpuri and Magadhi languages and for a Marathi film 'Preamchi Savali' which starred prominent cricketer Sunil Gavaskar. His major contribution was as assistant to Shanker Jaikishan from 1948 to 1974. He was in charge of the rhythm section and his name appeared in the credits of most landmark Hindi films of this period. Dattaram is credited with having improvised and innovated many a rhythm which is taken as a standard even today. Said a fan of his, who has been trying to get help for the ailing musician, "Ask a pro from the Hindi film music fraternity in Mumbai, and anyone will tell you about 'Dattu Ka Theka'".

While trying to track the story of this ignored son of Goa from those who knew about it, what emerged was fascinating....

Somewhere in the early forties, young Dattaram made his way to Mumbai and began working in the docks as a labourer. Poor and not really educated, he had learned the tabla for a few years, mainly encouraged by his mother who was a local singer.

Dattaram was an enthusiast at a gym where he met Shanker and became his disciple for the tabla, and also joined Prithvi Theater as a helping hand with music. He worked on many films as a 'theke' player for rehearsals and finally completed his first recording for the film 'Nagina'. After that there was no looking back and he made major contributions under the 'SJ' (Shanker-Jaikishan) baton.

Dattaram became an important member of the RK Group, as it was then called. He worked closely with the likes of Raj Kapoor, Shanker-Jaikishan, Shailendra and Hasrat Jaipuri. Part of this team was Sebastian D'Souza, the great arranger who also hailed from Goa. Dattaram incidentally is the only surviving member of this team.

Through the fifties and sixties, Dattaram found himself close to Jaikishan, who expired in 1971. After the decline of the Shanker-Jaikishan team, Dattaram found himself at sea. He worked with other music directors and was Raj Kapoor's trusted man when he worked on the music for 'Bobby' with Laxmikant Pyarelal. Later he chose to retire and return to Goa.

Said one of his fans, who has been visiting the artiste's tiny village off Goa's beaten track, "Dattaram's health has been rather unstable ... mind you, he otherwise had a robust physique and till two years ago was strong. He underwent two massive heart attacks recently and needs (at the time of initially writing this article) to undergo a gall bladder operation for which he does not have the funds."

Veterans in the music world believe that Dattaram's contribution has, sadly, not been sufficiently recognized. Apart from his contributions to music, he also gave breaks to numerous artistes in the sixties and seventies.

"The film industry, being what it is, little can be expected. But even the governments, central or local, have not really helped this senior artiste," said a fan.

Dattaram's plight was discovered quite by accident by a media professional who was researching for a film script on the life and career of Shanker-Jaikishan. Tracing through newspapers, magazines and books led him to Dattaram. But it was very difficult to trace this artiste, and it took him a year to finally reach Dattaram! "I located him and went across to meet him. He was extremely gracious and we spent three days together," says Pune-based media professional Sandeep Apte. Others who realised the man's contribution, formed a felicitation committee called the Dattaram Sanman Samiti. They organized a program on April 26, 2003, the Shanker anniversary. Dr. Padmanabh Joshi of Ahmedabad, who had written a biography of Shanker-Jaikishan, made an audio-visual presentation about the team and excerpts of a video interview of Dattaram were featured. A purse of Rs.35,000 was also collected. Others involved included Prof. Atul Sapre, Film & TV Institute of India former dean Samar Nakhate, Mumbai-based graphic designer Kamall Mustafa, Pune-based doctor Prakash Kamat, Internet entrepreneur Randhir Dange, the Director of the Institute of Management Development & Research (Pune), Dr A P Bhupatkar and media professional Apte.

"We seem to have a terrible apathy about our culture even as it gets shaped by these very people. Because senior artistes are treated badly, it creates the ultimate misunderstanding about how we value our people. And we end up neglecting the very things we should be valuing in the first place," said one of those closely connected with the event. It is a known fact that artistes from the tiny state of Goa, 600 kms south of Mumbai have made immense contributions to Hindi film music. But today, most Goans themselves seem unaware of it.

Frederick Noronha (42) is a Goa-based journalist, photo-enthusiast, book reviewer, Free Software proponent, ICT4D (information and communication technology for development) campaigner, copyleft backer, and believer in the need to build social capital. He has been long associated with Goanet (www.goanet.org) as a volunteer, through which network he circulated many of his "brieFNounters" interviews.

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THE WIND BENEATH MY WINGS

by Patricia-Ann Alvares
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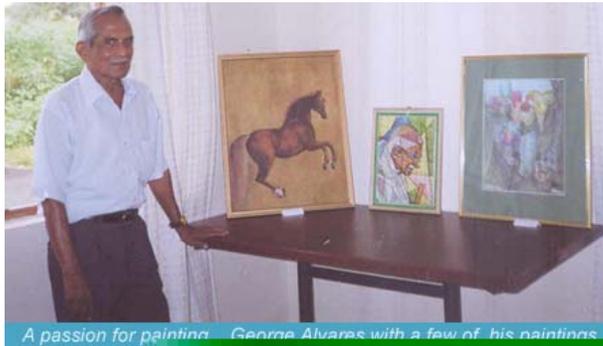
Sometimes we recognise in the lives of others, our own finest impulses and dreams. To my torchbearer, my dad George D. Alvares, who celebrates his 76th birthday this year, this is my tribute.

As a little girl I admired his toil, his creativity and sensitivity. Being on foreign shores, his stories of Goa, Bombay, grandparents and life back then made interesting and lasting memories for us.

His formative years were influenced and moulded by the German priests at the Sacred Heart School, Mhau. As boarders, all the young Georges of his days at school indulged in Tarzan pranks, imitation of William Tell's archery skills and other action heroes of their time. A well-grounded education by the Germans is what gave him the discipline and direction of his life. From there, on to Sr. Cambridge at the University of Bombay. Still in his teens then, he ventured out to Kuwait to work at the Kuwait Oil Company, Ahmadi. It was a daunting and challenging task, but, to a young lad, it was also an adventure.

The advent of a wife and five kids brought on more responsibilities, but as dad reminiscences, those were some of the best days of his life. He made time to teach us our favourite sport, swimming, at the Company Club pool and we kids in turn, helped him scrub his car till the paint almost wore off. Evenings were when his very imaginative and hilarious stories came alive. Seated around him, we'd bend double to hear funny stories about Freddy the Friday Man, but became sombre indeed, when he regaled us with his war-time stories – a burn mark on the chest which resembled that of a bullet, became fodder for such fictional stories! Till date we all cry with him when we watch sad movies. In fact, as all young men dreamed, he too hoped to make it big in Hollywood one day! It was his love of books and movies that have become my forte too. Most of all, though, he taught us the virtue of hard work.

Yet in all this melee, Dad made time to pursue his favourite hobby – painting. At times I sit, amazed just to watch him at his craft, as his paintbrush moves to the confluence of thought, will and creativity and the picture bursts into life. His artistic tapestry reveals



A passion for painting. George Alvares with a few of his paintings.

paintings, sketches, portraits on canvas, cloth, wood, glass and even the old, abandoned LP record - all brought to life by charcoals, crayons, oil, acrylic and water colours. But his talents don't end here. As a hockey player, he won medals for the Kuwait Oil Company hockey team. He is also an avid philatelist with stamps dating back 50 years and an accomplished mouth organist. Residing at St. Inez, Panjim, Goa and into his 76th year, he continues to paint and in fact, has participated in a couple of art festivals. His talent earned him applause and accolades from his fellow Senior Citizens at an exhibition held exclusively for the Senior Citizens Guild on October 8, 2006 at the YMCA Panjim.

I am astounded at the life he has led, because he never had it easy. He started working at a young age, supported his parents and when he returned with a young family to Goa, he worked well past his 60s to give us a good education. It is his persistence and interest in life that have made his achievements that much sweeter. Yet he has been a reluctant hero, reticent and unassuming as always, never one to bask in the limelight but content to work in the wings. My inspiration from him is to work as hard and to achieve as much, so as to enrich the quality of my life rather than the coffers in my bank.

A freelance journalist, Patricia Ann Alvares is a graduate in English literature, with a diploma in Computers and Management Studies. Her writings reflect her passion for travelling and reading, with a focus on art and culture, fashion, music, movies and ancestral Goa. She also has a keen love for animals and nature. Born and bred in Kuwait, she now lives in her beautiful Goa.

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REMINISCENCES OF THE WORK OF THE LATE MSGR.HERCULANO GONSALVES

by Edna D'Souza

On 11th February 1868, Herculano was born in Benaulim, in South Goa, to Remedios and Angela Amarante Gonsalves. He was brought up in an atmosphere of Christian piety and virtue, in the footsteps of his two uncle priests. He did his preparatory studies in his own village and then joined the Seminary to become a priest. Just before his ordination, while still a deacon, he was sent to Calangute in North Goa as assistant to his paternal uncle, who was then parish priest of Calangute Church.

Herculano Gonsalves was ordained priest on 17th December 1892. Fr. Gonsalves' sterling qualities of mind and heart were revealed both in his preaching and in his priestly ministries. For a long time he was a Professor of the Seminary at Daman and a spiritual guide to Congregations of Sisters. He was made Vicar General and later Monsignor due to his indefatigable zeal for the salvation of souls.

In 1929, he returned to Calangute Church as Parish Priest, where his spirit of sacrifice and his unbounded love for children and compassion for women in distress, compelled him to devote all his time, energy and resources for their empowerment. His first venture was to establish a shelter for the homeless by starting the St. Alex Orphanage in 1930, under the able guidance of Theresa Bapto of the same village. Soon after, he began the Little Flower School, for the orphans and poor children of the coastal belt. When the side portion of the building collapsed due to rains, he rebuilt this orphanage by selling off his share of his ancestral property, and enlarging it to house not only the orphans, but other people in distress and in need of a home.

Realizing the need for his activities to continue he subsequently, in 1935, founded a Congregation called the 'Handmaids of Christ', with the first sister being Theresa Bapto. Since then, the Sisters have spread all over Goa, carrying on the work of their founder, who expired on 21st March 1950.

Today, the St. Alex Orphanage has good facilities and the capacity of housing around 50 children. The Orphanage caters to children of single parents, children with financial difficulties and from broken homes, and to children from families with problems. The other activities of the Sisters are the running of boarding houses, schools, hostels, homes for women and children, and homes for senior citizens. Children and adults from different backgrounds live together as one family under, it is believed, the protection and patronage of their late founder, Msgr. Herculano Gonsalves.

In 2005, the St. Alex Orphanage celebrated its Platinum Jubilee. The seed that was sown by a son of the soil has grown into a tree with branches spread all over Goa, under which future generations can also find shelter.

NOTE : Fr. Faistonmo D'Souza of Anjuna in North Goa, started the 'Holy Family of Nazareth' Congregation of Sisters at about the same time, with similar works for girls and women and established boarding houses, hostels, schools and homes for senior citizens. Earlier, foreign missionaries were doing this work; nowadays the locals themselves are spreading the "Good News" of hope for a fuller life.

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OUT OF AFRICA: MERVYN MACIEL AND THE GOAN CONTRIBUTION

by Frederick Noronha
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Mervyn Maciel sees himself as a Kenyan-born Goan. This septuagenarian loved the African bush, and had a particular fascination for the tribes. Some years back he penned 'Bwana Karani' (Merlin, UK, 1985), a personal narrative of two decades in East Africa. The title literally translates as 'Mister Clerk', the humble capacity in which he started his working career in Kenya.

Joining the Kenya Civil Service in 1947, Maciel worked his way up from junior clerk to senior executive. When his post was 'Africanised' in 1966, he moved with his wife Elsie and their four children to the UK, where he worked in various managerial capacities in the private sector.

Now retired, Maciel's days are taken up with social work for various charities, writing and even cooking Goan specialties. After their golden wedding anniversary, the Maciels grow their own produce. Elsie was the first Goan to have a Goan cookery book published in the U.K in 1983.

Maciel estimates that at one point of time there were between 18-20,000 Goans in East Africa. Of these, some were in the Administration while others worked for various government departments. Many more worked in the private sector i.e. banking, commerce etc. A small number went into business e.g. grocers, tailors, etc. while some were professionals like doctors, teachers, lawyers and musicians.

Following independence many, like Maciel, left because of political changes and for the betterment of their children's future. Some returned to Goa, while others emigrated to Europe (chiefly the UK), Canada, Australia and even the USA.

Maciel never loses an opportunity to try to set the record straight on the tremendous Goan contribution to the civil service in colonial East Africa. At the invitation of Sir John Johnson he contributed a chapter on the topic in the recently published book "Colony to Nation". Recently, at a luncheon hosted at Henley-on-Thames, he gave a speech to some 100 former British colonials of the Kenya Administration and their wives, reminding them that Goans too had played a role in building the Kenya Nation.

In his speech, Maciel said, "Why we, former members of the Administration were excluded from membership (of the elitist Kenya Administration Club) for nearly 30 years, is something I find difficult to understand. You obviously had your reasons, but with so few of us in the U.K., I can assure you, you wouldn't have been swamped, nor would there have been any takeover bid.

"Unfortunately, our (the Goan) contribution in the civil service, more particularly the Provincial Administration, although verbally acknowledged in speeches by former Governors, senior officials and even politicians, has only recently, save with a few exceptions, merited a mention in some published works."

According to Maciel, all memoirs by former white Colonial officials spoke only of the European achievement as though the Goans hardly existed. Many, it seems, chose to forget that during their early service careers, it was the Goans who 'showed them the ropes', even though they had no training themselves!

Highlighting the Goan contribution, Maciel says that the majority of posts in the Administration, especially those of cashier, were filled almost exclusively by Goans, apparently much to the annoyance of the other Asian communities. The distinguished Q.C., J.S. Mangat, in telling how Goans in particular dominated the Administration, cites Sir Charles Eliot who in an official report in 1901 had this to say: "The District officers were usually assisted by a Goan or more rarely a European clerk. In the coastal towns there was also a Customs official, usually a Goan; even the Germans envied the British Administration for their Goan staff who they observed 'have enough experience to avoid incurring the distrust which so many of our members inspire'."

Mangat then went on to quote from a D.C.'s report which spoke of the trust one could place in the Goans, adding, "All the names mentioned by the D.C. are Goan (Fernandes, Ferreira, Braganca, Menezes)." He must have forgotten the D'Souzas.

When Winston Churchill visited Kenya in his capacity as Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, a delegation of White settlers protested against the employment of Goans in the Administration.

In 1934 a Committee was instructed to look into the possibility of employing European clerks, and this is briefly what they had to say:

"We have given consideration as to whether increased economy and efficiency could be attained by the more general employment of European clerks, and our opinion is in the negative. We have been favourably impressed by the dedication with which the majority of Goan clerks do the work required of them, and also of their conspicuous loyalty and willingness to work overtime, and their fixed determination to finish at all costs the work that has to be done. It would be out of the question to employ in District offices, European clerks other than those of the highest integrity and proven ability, and in any case the salaries they would demand would be much higher than those paid to the Goans."

Replying to a question by this writer on why there were very few Goans who took the side of the Africans in the de-colonialism struggle, Maciel suggests that most Goans of that era were not political animals. Besides, those who like him were in the civil service could not join any political party or express their views.

However, there were a few exceptions like Pio Gama Pinto, and his brother Rosario (a good friend of Maciel's), whose veins 'flowed with political blood'. They risked all to further the cause they believed in and, as in the case of Pio, sadly, paid the price.

Fritz D'Souza and Oscar Fonseca were two others who had political leanings. Maciel thinks it was the Indians, rather than the Goans,

A Mosaic of Memories

who agitated about being given a voice in the Legislative Council. Jomo Kenyatta did include some Goan blood into his first Cabinet by appointing Joseph Zuzarte, son of a Goan District Clerk (Peter Zuzarte) as his right hand man. Joseph Zuzarte – or Joseph Murumbi as he chose to go as -- served in Kenyatta's first cabinet as Foreign Minister, Minister of State in the PM's office and even Vice-President.

For those interested in the topic, Maciel says he found two tomes "Through Open Doors" (first published in 1983) and "We Came in Dhows" (three masterly volumes published in 1996) by his good friend and author Cynthia Salvadori, a real asset.

Maciel can be reached at mervyn@bwana-karani.freereserve.co.uk or at mervynels.watuwashamba@gmail.com

Frederick Noronha (42) is a Goa-based journalist, photo-enthusiast, book reviewer, Free Software proponent, ICT4D (information and communication technology for development) campaigner, copyleft backer, and believer in the need to build social capital. He has been long associated with Goanet (www.goanet.org) as a volunteer, through which network he circulated many of his "brieFNcounters" interviews.

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A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF HUGO (HUGH) DE SOUZA AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO GOAN SOCIETY

by *Edwin D'Souza*

Hugo de Souza, was born to Dr. Joao Francisco de Souza and Thelma de Souza (of Assagao), on September 22nd 1935, at Raia, a village in Salcete, South Goa. He did his schooling at Loyola High School, Margao, Goa, and his B.A. at St. Xavier's College, Dhobi Talao, Bombay. He did further studies in Law (L.L.B.), and since Journalism had just started in Kisenchand College (KCC) in Churchgate, Bombay, he enrolled for the one-year course; where he won a gold medal for being an outstanding student of Journalism.

As a student, chess and bridge were Hugo's favourite games. He won many trophies in chess and his partners in chess and bridge, all Goans in Bombay, continued their friendly ties with Hugo long after they parted ways. Those who had settled abroad, would come to Goa on holiday, and make it a point to visit Hugo.

The Portuguese had left Goa in December 1961 and soon after, in 1962, Hugo returned to Goa. He soon became the sub-editor of "A Vida", a daily newspaper circulating in Goa at the time. He later became its Editor and Manager and changed the name of the paper to "Divtti" (daily, in Konkani) and continued in the newspaper business till 1975. When competition in the business increased, Hugo felt he had to channelise his talents elsewhere.

In the 1970's, there were several movements in social activism involving students and adults, to fight for the just causes of Goans. For instance, there was the Students Movement, which fought for 50% bus fares for students, not only in public buses run by the Government, but also in private buses. Some of the student leaders in colleges, were penalised and had to, or were made to, quit their studies. Understanding their plight, Hugo used his knowledge and skills to write a project, obtaining funds to start an NGO called IDEAS. A few students came together to run the project in Margao, with links in Bangalore, and this brought meaning, direction and objective to their lives. Much later they completed their studies, becoming advocates, judges and joining other professions. The original Project IDEAS amalgamated with another that had similar ideology and ideas, and the founder members shifted to Bangalore, because of the computer technology then available there. Today they reproduce books and print literature for distribution.

Other NGO's and Groups also used Hugo's expertise to write out projects and constitutions for their respective organisations. Besides the Students Movement, there was the Ramponcar Movement and a movement by girls to protect their hostel/institute in Panjim from being demolished. This Institute/building was put under the protection of the Archaeology Department (Archives), and became one of the first Heritage buildings in the State. There were also the Opinion Poll, the Language and State issue, and many other Social and Political issues in which Hugo took an active part.

But Hugo's brainchild was a movement he started, which he called "Citizens for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties" (CCL). He would sit at his typewriter and type endless letters to all concerned, regarding problems facing the Goan people, creating

awareness, and suggesting solutions. He spent his own money, time, energy, knowledge and skills to do all the networking, and still found the time to encourage creativity and initiative in the young and in the old, helping them to discover their talents and give expression to them. One person who readily admits this is the founder of the NGO called MARG in Margao.

Hugo received a lot of mail, and he replied to all the letters he received. He could not travel much because, for several years, he looked after his old mother. Because of his care, she lived to almost 90 years of age. Though he was at home during most of his later years, he had a lot of friends of all ages, castes and religions, and some of his friendships were more than 25-30 years old. He believed in forming relationships, and usually addressed himself to the other person's intellect which he respected.

He was a voracious reader, and liked to increase his knowledge. His curiosity to know more about his country, took him on a round trip of India. First he went from Madras to Assam in the North East, and then he traveled from Kerala to Delhi to Manali. Manali must have been like the 'Promised Land' with its snow covered mountain peaks, deep valleys, running streams, and hot springs. The people too are beautiful, peace-loving and hospitable, speaking mostly Hindi, and are Buddhist by religion.

Hugo preferred to stay with a family, instead of at a hotel. Since he loved to share his knowledge, he began to teach the English language, which he loved and spoke fluently, to a young boy in the family who was a student appearing for his SSC (final year of High School). In doing this last act of service to a fellow Indian, he also did a service to Goa. The family was most grateful, and fondly remember their friend from Goa.

Hugo passed away on the 21st of May 2002 in Manali, after a brief illness. His family, friends and well-wishers held a Memorial Service for him at Lohia Maidan, in Margao, on 31st May, 2002.

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by Frederick Noronha
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He has played many roles in life: scout-master, artist, teacher, a Jesuit ... but none so unusual as that of a wine-maker.

"Let me boast a little," says Saligao-based Edwin Saldanha, who was 85 years old when we spoke to him earlier this decade about his book on wine-making. "My book is the only one in the whole world that tells you how to make wine from tropical fruits." Interestingly, the book has recipes on making wine from mangoes, bananas, cashews, and even the local fruit known as *kokum* (*bindnna*) or *jambul*.

Secrets of successful wine-making form an ancient tradition, often closely-guarded by many cultures. But Saldanha says his book 'Successful Goan Home Wines' exposes these secrets to amateurs, through time-tested techniques. A former St Britto's school-teacher and once prominent scout-master in the Goa scouting movement, Saldanha explains how his book came to be. He was recovering from an operation, when Dr Nandkumar Kamat (a microbiologist and environmentalist from Goa University) dropped in for a visit with a government official. On being offered a glass of wine, the visitors were intrigued about how it was made. "They begged me to put down on paper how it was done before I die," says Saldanha.

Saldanha's wine-making skills run deep. "I've made wine from everything. One journalist asked me, 'Uncle, what *don't* you make wine from?'" says Saldanha, who jokes that wine can be made even from the soles of old shoes! "I've been making wine as a boy of 13 or 14. My mother too was interested in wine-making," says he. "Some boys from South Africa tasted one of my wines and said it tasted like sherry. Yet it was wine made from the cheapest possible fruit you could use in Goa -- cashew."

Saldanha was once part of the Catholic religious order of the Jesuits. Based in Belgaum, outside Goa, the Jesuits were caught in the cross-fire between India and Portuguese-ruled colonial Goa. Their supplies of Mass wine from Goa were blocked. In those days, India didn't have grape orchards, so dry raisins imported from Greece were soaked in wooden barrels, to make wine. "It's very simple. Dry raisins kept in boiling water, stored overnight, act much like grapes do in the wine-making process," Saldanha explains.

His own story provides insight into the history of Goan migration. Saldanha was born in Entebbe, in colonial East Africa. "There were no schools then, and my parents used to send us to an European lady to learn our ABC. At the age of eight, I was sent to Goa for my primary education, and got stuck here till 1949," he recalls, memory razor-sharp. Later, he went back and spent two decades in East Africa. "But," he says sardonically, "by then, all the trees that used to grow gold coins had already been shaken. Kenya was beginning to fight for *Uhuru* (freedom) and things were getting tough for the many Goan emigrants in that region."

But back to his wine-making book..... Someone reported that they picked up his wine-making book from a railway book-shop in Sydney, Australia. "Something that I did just as a pastime turned out to be quite a success," says he, with a tinge of pride. And his motivation? "Every man and woman should do something to help other people. We should do something for the improvement or happiness of others before we die," he suggests. Most wine-makers, unfortunately, believe that their secrets should never be let out, he regrets.

"There's no secret I know that I've knowingly kept out of this book," says he, with a touch of pride about his openness in sharing information and knowledge. A Dutch friend, visiting this octogenarian-winemaker, commented that this attitude indeed reflected 'open source' winemaking -- keeping knowledge free for being transmitted to whoever can use it. Saldanha says that places like Goa - with its one-time Portuguese influence - had a tradition where affluent women retained closely guarded secrets on wine-making. "They don't sell it, but only use it for festivals and feasts, and make it in small quantities."

What makes wine different from, say, whiskey or liqueur? "Wine is not distilled. It is fermented, and the sugar in the fruit is converted to alcohol," says Saldanha. He has his own understanding of wine: women tend to prefer sweet wine, so sugar can be added in a process known as 'doctoring' the wine. "You just try making one of the most unusual types of wines mentioned - wine made of milk. Do try it," he challenges. Even scientists said it never occurred to them that milk, when curdled, could be used to make wine, he says. There are two recipes for 'milk wine' in his book, one requiring the use of condensed milk with sweet limes, sugar, nutmeg, a little Vodka and spices like cloves and cinnamon.

"Any young educated person can set up a complete wine-making industry on a large scale. It was only when I visited Canada that I understood what 'large-scale' really means. Every day, they have 50 barrels of a hundred gallons each. Everything there is mechanised," he says.

Saldanha believes that some distillers of Goa's traditional liquors use diluted industrial alcohol or a chemical adulterant popularly called '*navsagar*' with little regard for the health of those consuming it. "Liquor sold at Rs. 30-40 per bottle is probably made by adding *navsagar*. Some of the *feni* you get in beautiful bottles with beautiful labels could actually be poisonous. Genuine liquor should be higher priced," says he.

Friends have been urging him to write a book on cooking next. "It might be a good idea," we suggested. "Oh, no," said he. "I've reached a stage where enough is enough. I'm angry with that fellow upstairs. Because I've got a passport, but no visa," he complains with mock ire. "He says there's no need for artists up there. But then, I say, who'll paint all those images of the many saints in heaven," he said, betraying some hints of enjoying his joke.

Saldanha argues that a tiny bit of wine is healthy, especially after one crosses two-score and ten. "It's not good for those young boys falling down in gutters near the bars," says he. His advice: a small 40 to 60 milliliter peg, taken at meal times, and well diluted for someone above 50 years. This, he believes, could help digestion and circulation.

Frederick Noronha (42) is a Goa-based journalist, photo-enthusiast, book reviewer, Free Software proponent, ICT4D (information and communication technology for development) campaigner, copyleft backer, and believer in the need to build social capital. He has been long associated with Goanet (www.goanet.org) as a volunteer, through which network he circulated many of his "brieFNounters" interviews.

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A Mosaic of Memories

MEMORIES OF MY GRANDMA, TAIBAI

by Akshata Virgincar
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Ten years have elapsed since your heavenly voyage
But I fondly remember your loving visage
Though you are physically not with me
I know the mantle of your love and protection shrouds me.

Sometimes I wonder what would life have been like
Without you to comfort me, advise me, to encourage and hug me
You will always be a 'Guardian Angel' to me.

With that immense love you had for me
You performed magic many a time
Sometimes you moved mountains for me
And gave me the moon and the stars every time.

Everyday you looked after us, worried about us, fed us and loved us
Without expecting anything in return
Taibai, I know now and understand that
You actually gave me two wonderful lives - my own and "yours".

I still remember how you would turn an ordinary day into an adventure
Turn a small trinket into a special treasure
Filling with joy and excitement, my hours of leisure
Doing the best you could to give me pleasure.

In life we need someone to trust, to hold, and to call our "own"
Taibai, you have been that someone, whom I have known
You have made my heart feel free
You are and always will be the one who cared for me.

So much of what I am today is due to your care
All the things that you have taught me over the years
Have now become a part of me

You were always there for me, right by my side
You were one of the few who would treat me nice
The warmth of your hand, which supported me, still lingers
The gentle shoulder you would lend me to cry on, still remains.

Taibai, no one can replace you
The place in my heart, which you occupy, will be yours forever
No one can compare with you
That you will be there always to comfort me, I will doubt never.

You were always so courteous, sweet, loving and dependable
You were really special with a personality so commendable
So hard to find someone so loving, generous and kind

Taibai, you are so important to me in many ways
You have raised me to be what I am today
You have guided me through the rough spots everyday
That you will always continue to do so, I pray

Even though, in reality you are not here
I still feel that you are somewhere near
You were there to wipe away my every tear
You are the one, whom I will always hold dear.

In life one cannot be certain of many things
But I am sure that my love for you will change never
You have given me that which money can't buy
I can never repay you, even if I try
You are the most wonderful granny one could have had, ever.



My little brother and I, along with my
Grandma

Akshata Virgincar (25) is a totally computer savvy postgraduate, having completed her MCA from the Goa University. She enjoys reading, travelling and listening to music. Over the years, she has written several articles and poems for the Navhind Times, and her writings reflect her love for her grandparents, whom she has always held very dear to her heart

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by Ramnath Govind Kare
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"A person is not poor if he has no money, but he is definitely poor if he has no vision"



Govind Kare, affectionately called "Baba" Kare

the success of the Kare Group of Companies in Goa and Indoco Remedies Ltd. in Mumbai which is today a flourishing 500 crore Company. Both these companies have made a name not only in Goa, but also in the rest of India.

These words can truly be said of our late Baba who was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth, but who overcame every impediment to keep alive his aspirations. Baba was a man of great vision and foresight, despite being orphaned at the age of 12, with no inheritance and a bare minimum education - just Class 4 in Marathi and Class 2 in Portuguese. His success story has been due entirely to sheer hard work, determination and a quest to serve people.

Baba started his career working with an insurance company and also supplying medicines to doctors. There were no proper roads then, but the long distances that he travelled by cycle and sometimes by foot, did not deter him. In 1932, through good contacts, he started Farmacia Salcete in Margao. Since then, he never looked back and went on to establish pharmacies in all the 4 major cities of Goa, carving a niche for himself.

Baba was so inspired by his vision of the future, that in 1946, he ventured to start a Public Limited Company, Indoco Remedies Ltd., in Mumbai. When India got its Independence in 1947, he left no stone unturned to make this company a success. Unfortunately for him, between 1955-61, the Government of India imposed an economic blockade in Goa, leaving the fate of the entire company hanging in the balance. But Baba did not lose hope. Even though there were many offers to buy the company, he refused them all. After the liberation of Goa in 1962, his 3 sons, Ramnath, Suresh and Ashok, joined him in business and Baba became the driving force behind

Apart from his business acumen, Baba was also committed to social activities. He was known as a man who could be counted upon to render help to underprivileged students who wanted to pursue their studies, as he himself had experienced how difficult it was to survive without education. Even at a young age, he took interest in the Khadi Movement and later in other fields. He was President of the Gomant Vidya Niketan at Margao for over 8 years and during his tenure, a theatre and library were built. Baba was a philanthropist and donated munificent sums to establish the Govind Ramnath Kare College of Law run by Vidya Vikas Mandal. Today students from this college occupy high positions as Judges, Attorney Generals and Senior Advocates. After his death in 1991, in recognition of his work, the Margao Municipality named the road leading from Margao to the College campus the "G R Kare Road".

It is said that behind every successful man is a brave woman. Baba was fortunate to be married to the late Mrs. Vimlalbai Kare affectionately called "Amma". Though hailing from a rich family, she always stood by Baba and even offered to sell her ornaments whenever he was in need of money.

Baba's ideals continue to guide, lead, and motivate his progeny in whatever endeavours they undertake even today. The 'Sanskars' that he cultivated in the family, remain the footprints for his sons, Ramnath, Suresh and Ashok. His three daughters, Suman, Kumud and Sudha are married and well settled in their respective families.

Baba's life can best be summed up in the words of the famous English Poet, Longfellow - **"The heights by great men reached and kept/ Were not attained by sudden flight/ But they, while their companions slept/ Were toiling upward in the night."**

Ramnath G. Kare, is the eldest son of Govind R. Kare. He has been the President of the premier educational institution, Vidya Vikas Mandal, for the past 25 years and is presently Chairman of the Goa State Council of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (F.I.C.C.I) and a Member of the Goa Planning Board. A recipient of several awards, he was also one of the distinguished businessmen honoured by the then President of India, late Giaini Zail Singh on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of Goa's Liberation.

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JANUARIO JOAQUIM PEREIRA - A TEACHER, FREEDOM FIGHTER AND A SOCIAL ACTIVIST

by Bella Comelo
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I deem it a privilege to write about Januario Pereira. Not only was he a respected teacher at St. Thomas High School in Aldona, Goa, he was also a freedom fighter and a social activist. He was also related to me, being my mother's first cousin. He was born on September 19, 1908 at Jodhpur in Rajasthan, India. He completed his high school in Jodhpur and graduated from St. Xavier's College, Calcutta with B.A. (Hons.) in the year 1930, with English Literature and Economics as his main subjects. He studied Hindi, Urdu and Sanskrit on his own. He was fluent in Hindi, both in writing and in speaking the language. I personally think his mastery of Hindi was commendable because few Goans of his time took the trouble to learn Hindi. At a time when the learning of Hindi was not mandatory in schools, he taught Hindi to his students.

He was married to Lucy Nazareth and is survived by his only son Pyarelal, a retired Mechanical Engineer, who has furnished most of his biographical information. Pyarelal still lives in Aldona with his wife Carmelita and his family. An incident that comes to mind is when he took his son to be christened and gave him the Indian name of Pyarelal. This was at a time when few parents gave their children Indian names, and the priest was not too happy. He had to explain to the priest that Pyarelal means "beloved".

Uncle Janie once informed me that Goa would improve tremendously, especially in the field of education and employment, once it was integrated with India. He came to Goa from Calcutta in 1933 and took up teaching in St Thomas High School which was earlier a co-ed school and later, only for boys. He taught English, History, Geography, Civics and Hindi from the 5th Standard up to S.S.C. level.

He was a strict disciplinarian. My childhood visits to the Pereira family were not always pleasant. He would not let me run wild in the house and meal times were a real trial as he made me chew food with my mouth closed. But later as a teenager in high school, I began to understand his philosophy of life and began to appreciate his self-discipline. In 1955 the Portuguese arrested him, along with two other teachers and three students from the school. He was in jail for 4½ years. This was a difficult time for his family.

I visited him in the jail at Aguado. He was guarded by Portuguese soldiers. When it was time for him to go back to his cell, he folded his hands and boldly said "*Jai Hind*" to us. This was really courageous of him. He had lost some weight, but on the whole he had not lost his enthusiasm for life. After his release from jail he started teaching in St. Thomas High School again till his retirement in 1970. He received a State award for his participation in the freedom struggle of Goa. He had a major heart attack in 1977 and a stroke in 1985. He died on January 17th, 1986.

St. Thomas School in Aldona, Goa was a well-known school from the early 1930's. Students from surrounding villages came to this school for a well-rounded education. My husband Ernest and my two older brothers were his students. Many boys who have passed through the portals of St. Thomas will remember him as a great teacher and as an educationist.

He was also the President of the Aldona Home of the Aged, which has been serving the seniors of Aldona and the surrounding areas. His contribution to the education of the youth of Goa and to the freedom struggle of Goa will be fondly remembered for a long time.

Bella Comelo lives in California with her husband, Ernest. They have four children - Anil, Anita, Anibel and Anirudh. With a Master's degree from Mysore University and a B.Ed. from Bombay University, Bella works for the Oakland Unified School District and has contributed articles to several publications. She also volunteers on the Ethnic Council of the Oakland Diocese and as a Board Member of the East Bay Alliance for Sustainable Economy.

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A TRIBUTE TO PADMABHUSHAN AWARDEE, RAVINDRA KELEKAR

by Damodar Mauzo
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Konkani is a language spoken by over 50,00,000 people in India. In spite of colonial suppression and its late entry into mainstream literature, it has created a niche for itself in the vastness of the literary world with great literary talents like Bakibab Borkar, Dr. Manohar Rai Sardesai, and others writing in the language. These stalwarts went on to inspire the then younger generation of writers like Felicio Cardozo, Pundalik Naik and many more who attained name and fame by writing in Konkani.

On the eve of the last Republic Day of India, the Central Government announced the Nation's prestigious Padmabhushan Award to a veteran Konkani writer, thus taking cognizance of the literary output of this giant of a writer. The recipient of the Padmabhushan, octogenarian Shri Ravindra Kelekar, is today the most widely read writer in Goa and other Konkani speaking regions. Incidentally, earlier this year, the highest literary body of India had honoured him by offering him its prestigious lifelong Fellowship.

Ravindra Kelekar has an analytical mind that rationalizes and provides explanations to everything that his pen deals with. In his essays, he debates on local and global problems with a lucidity of expression that makes even difficult topics readable and enjoyable. His writings are aimed at both the common people and the intelligentsia. The revolutionary ideas discussed through his thought-provoking essays have brought him accolades from both readers and critics.

Right from the beginning of his literary career, Shri Ravindra Kelekar's undying zeal for writing kept him ever on his toes, while his prolific and thought-provoking articles netted many young writers who took to the pen. A fatherly figure on the Konkani literary scene, Shri Kelekar is presently an institution in himself, inspiring and guiding young writers with parental love and concern. Because of this he has been called a 'writer of writers' whose work instills great fervor amongst the younger generation.

Shri Kelekar has an insatiable appetite for learning and a burning curiosity about the basic nature of man. He is a voracious reader who has read and absorbed the work of nationally and internationally known literary giants. An ardent follower of the Gandhian philosophy, Shri Kelekar's writings are greatly influenced by the great philosopher of yesteryear, the late Kakasaheb Kalelkar. His long association with Acharya Kalelkar is apparent from many of his earlier books. Shri Kelekar has traveled widely within and outside the country, to the east and the west, and his experiences have found an expression in his writings. His book '*Himalayant*' is a travelogue full of descriptions of nature's beauty revealed with a philosophical touch. Incidentally, his was the first Konkani book to bag the prestigious Sahitya Akademi award in 1977, after the recognition accorded to Konkani. Shri Kelekar's life has been a '*saadhana*' of literature. Writing relentlessly over the last five decades, he has taken Konkani literature to such great heights that the rest of the country has been forced to take cognizance of Konkani language and literature. He has a set philosophy of life that is evident from all his books. Yet, he retains the zeal to learn from nature, from changing times and from the changing nature of man. His writings, including the latest ones, reveal his strong desire to understand and make understood the diverse cultures that exist on this planet.

'*Mahabharat: Ek Anusarjan*' (2 volumes), a transcreation of the epic Mahabharat, is itself an epic with a difference. In his version of the Mahabharat, Shri Kelekar has successfully tried to rationalize the mythological characters and events. His interpretations and style of writing are so interesting that one gets a feeling of reading the epic afresh. '*Tathaagat*' is a voluminous exploration of the philosophy and life of Lord Buddha, told with a difference. From '*Velleveilyo Ghulo*' (musings from his diary) to '*Paanthasth*' (autobiographical essays), all his books make very interesting reading, as his style is very lucid and the flow of thoughts easy. There is hardly any genre that Shri Kelekar has not touched upon. Besides essays, he has written fiction, plays and also juvenile literature. The subject matter of his writings varies from religion to politics, from environment to economics, from theology to astronomy, from sociology to philosophy and from fiction to orthography.

Kelekar is more known in Goa as a thinker-writer, who establishes instant rapport with readers and who cares about things that matter and makes the readers' lives different. He is a writer with vision. He led the Anti-Merger front and vehemently opposed the merger of Goa with Maharashtra. He worked for the recognition of Konkani as the Official Language of the State and also for its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India. Even today we find him voicing his concern about any injustice meted out to Goa and Goans. His vision is to see Goa shining on the international map. Thus, through his writings, he endeavors to give tomorrow a new form and a new meaning.

As a youngster, Shri Kelekar was inspired by Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's demand for liberation of Goa from the clutches of the Portuguese rulers. He plunged into the freedom movement and was forced to leave Goa to avoid arrest. He then decided to spend his days in an ashram at Vardha. He followed the principles of 'simple living and high thinking' in toto. In order to carry Gandhiji's philosophy to Indian readers, and to readers of Konkani in particular, he wrote a number of books in Konkani as well as in Hindi. He writes fluently in Marathi, Hindi and Gujarati. He is also well versed in Portuguese and English. Kelekar's Hindi book, '*Mahatma Gandhi: Ek Jeevani*' in Hindi (1985), has been read and acclaimed widely. It has also been translated into other languages.

Kelekar has won many notable awards of the State: the Konkani Bhasha Mandal Award, the Goa Kala Academy Award and the highest literary award of the State, the Gomant Sharada Award. He is the recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Award both for creative/original works and also for translation. He has also been accorded with many national awards. Now, to top it all, with the Fellowship of Sahitya Akademi and the Padmabhushan, he has brought accolades not only to himself but also to the Konkani language and to the State of Goa. The fraternity of Goan writers feels extremely proud of him.

Born in the village of Majorda, Goa, Damodar Mauzo is a short story writer and novelist with eleven books to his credit. Winner of several awards, including the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award, his short stories have been translated into many languages including Hindi, English, Portuguese and French. His novel 'Karmelin' has been published in translation by the Sahitya Akademi in several Indian languages. He has written scripts for two Konkani films, winning best screenplay award for the film 'Alisha'. Two of his stories have been telecast on National TV in Hindi and a Konkani film made based on one of his novels.

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A TRIBUTE TO MY GRANDFATHER

by Akshata Virgincar
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My beloved grandfather Mr. Vasantao Shrinivas Sinai Dempo, popularly known as Bhau, was born on the 4th of March in the year 1916. He was a man of vision and foresight. He was a genius in the sense that he displayed his talent and experience at the very young age of 18 years, when most of people of this age are just completing 12th Std. or first year of graduation. Having had him for a grandfather has been one of the nicest blessings in my life.

Right from my childhood, Bhau supported me in all my endeavors. He was the pillar of my family, on which a castle of love was built. At home, his smile and strictness created a healthy atmosphere of love. One of my most memorable moments was when Bhau was awarded the Padmashree by the President of India for his meritorious service. He was a philanthropist and also a strong believer in God. Even when faced with difficult circumstances, he didn't lose his faith in the Almighty above. As for me, he was a special person who thought of others first and gave generously of his valuable time and energy, expecting absolutely nothing in return. Bhau was someone who would bring a smile to one's face or dry a tear or even make a dream come true.

When I was small, I always wanted to be like him and till date I still do. I have been comforted by his faith, inspired by his example and encouraged by his strength. It was Bhau who inspired me to put my best effort into everything I did. His small acts of kindness showed me that he cared. Most of all I thank him for just being there for us, the way he was, for just being his true self. Bhau was like a treasure from above and meant much more than anything else in this world to me. He was gracious and soothing and the one closest to my heart.

The 9th of November 2000, was the day when dark clouds shadowed my path of happiness, the day I lost my most precious possession, my Bhau. He was my pillar of strength, the one on whom I could lean on and be comforted, but now this great pillar of mine disappeared. In life everybody needs a friend; one you can laugh with about everything; one you can cry with without shame; one you can trust completely, the one whom you can turn to. Bhau had been that friend to me. But even now that he is no more, I don't have to turn back because I know that he is right beside me, in fact, with me always, guiding me in my times of difficulty.

In a sometimes cold and heartless world, it was Bhau who loved me and always made me feel special. He would never speak out his feelings to anybody, but would express everything through his eyes. He was confident and courageous with firm convictions. He was ambitious and industrious and left no stone unturned to achieve his ideals and goals. Bhau was humble, social and self-sacrificing. To him work was worship and duty a deity. He was a man of patience and had enormous stamina. From his example, I have learnt to live life.



Bhau was my strength when I was weak, my voice when I couldn't speak and my crutch when I couldn't walk. I am grateful to Bhau, for his uncompromising love, his loyalty, his trust, and for making me feel good, when my best wasn't good enough.

Leaves may change from green to gold, the sky from blue to gray. People change, places change and so do the times. But one thing that remains constant is the love I feel for Bhau. Just as the tide recedes but leaves behind bright seashells on the sand, and when the sun goes down, it still leaves behind its gentle warmth lingering on the land... just as the music stops, yet echoes on in sweet refrains... for every passing joy, there is something beautiful that remains...the memories. What it meant to lose my Bhau, no one will ever know. If tears could build a stairway, mine alone would be enough to reach Heaven, to bring him home again.

As long as my heart beats within me, Bhau will always be a part of me

Akshata Virgincar (25) is a totally computer savvy postgraduate, having completed her MCA from the GoaUniversity. She enjoys reading, traveling and listening to music. Over the years, she has written several articles and poems for the Navhind Times, and her writings reflect her love for her grandparents, whom she has always held very dear to her heart.

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EVERYTHING TO THE LORD IN PRAYER

by Fatima D'Silva
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Our beloved parents John Capistrano Camilo & Maria Conceicao (Connie) Fernandes

My parents, John Capistrano Camilo Fernandes from Agacaim and Maria Conceicao D'Mello from Margao began their life together on 28th May, 1946. My father had earlier moved to East Africa, as there were no job prospects in Goa in those days. My parents first lived in Nakuru, which was a small place where all the Goans knew each other. They had lost three children before I was born and so I was considered kind of special. The Bishop of Nakuru had gone to Rome for a Synod and had said that he would bring Papal Blessings for the child that my mother was carrying. This time around my mother had a safe delivery. At that time (1949), the statue of Our Lady of Fatima was being taken around the world and had reached Nakuru – hence my name, Maria Rosaria da Fatima.

God blessed my parents with a total of three sons and three daughters – besides yours truly, we had Augustine (the brainy one, who stood 1st in class right from class 6 to his A levels), Filu (the computer, who never forgets any date or event), Chicky (the pretty one), Agnelo (the witty one) and Felix (the baby of the family). We children lovingly called our parents Paizinho and Maizinha, later shortened to Paizin and Maizin.

Paizin was an only child – his father had died when he was just four years old and his mother never remarried for fear of his being ill-treated. And so Paizin always dreamed of showing his mother his 'wealth' from Africa – his six '*bangarachi burguim*' (golden children). Sadly, God had other plans and that wish was never fulfilled. I still remember how bitterly he cried when informed about his mother's death.

While we were growing up, Paizin always told us that we should thank God for keeping our parents with us for so long. Dad saw all his daughters married and well settled, and also lived to see eight of his ten grandchildren. He always used to say that he hoped he would never be ill in bed before he died. He wanted to go 'while walking' (he used to say that in Konkani). And that was exactly how he left us on 8th April, 1986. He went for a swim during which he suffered a massive heart attack – his first and last.

Paizin was a strict disciplinarian, though we used to bully Maizin who many a time also saved us from his wrath. But both of them were always there for us and never missed even one Parent-Teacher meeting or a school Annual Day. Both were deeply rooted in faith. Dad would come at 8 p.m. to lead us in saying the family Rosary followed by the family dinner during which the day's events were narrated. My youngest sister Chicky and I were the noisy story-tellers (we still are!). And if the crescendo rose, Dad would tell us we had one mouth and that we should first eat and then talk!

Maizin was gregarious and loved to have people around her – the more the merrier. She loved birthday or anniversary parties when most of the family would be together, except for me who was way up north in Kanpur. And how happy she was when my family and I finally relocated to Goa last year! Soon after however, she fell ill and eventually breathed her last on 20th September 2007, aged 87. We were together around her bedside, holding and comforting each other. Though my brother Agnelo was in Portugal at the time, yet he too was with us in spirit. And he had the satisfaction that he had seen her alive and well just the previous month when he was down in Goa on his annual holiday and had had Maizin with him for 10 days.

One of the things I treasure most about my parents is the deep faith they instilled in all of us. Maizin and Paizin taught us to take everything to God in prayer – be it our joys or our sorrows. Paizin had the habit of praying to the Holy Spirit before leaving the house, a habit I still follow. Believe me it helps, especially when you are facing some indecision. Maizin always used to tell us, "Leave everything in God's hands – He knows what to do" and that is a practice I always follow. I am sure that both of them are now reunited up above, and that they will look out for us as they always did whilst here on earth.

Thank you, Maizin and Paizin, for the deep faith you instilled in me and which keeps me going when things get tough. And I promise that I shall always take everything to the Lord in prayer.

Born in Nakuru, Kenya, Fatima D'Silva grew up and studied in Mombasa at Star of the Sea School. After her senior Cambridge, she taught for 5 years. The family returned to Goa in 1971, settling in Vasco, where Fatima taught at St. Therese's High School. In 1975 she married Savie D'Silva, a businessman from Kanpur. She taught in Kanpur for 25 years. With her family, Fatima recently moved back to Goa, and currently resides in Margao.

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A LOVING TRIBUTE TO DAJI (MY KAKA, DR. KASHINATH LADU SINAI SANSGIRI)

by Smita Sunilchandra Tamba
smitsuni@yahoo.com

My dad, Mr. Mukund Ladu Sangsiri, whom we called Aba, had five brothers. As a child I always wondered to myself why, amongst them all, was Daji so different? I never saw him in any colourful outfits. He was always dressed in white, either at home or at any function. As I grew older, I learnt that the only materials he used were pure cotton or khadi.

I loved to see him in his clinic at Parel, Mumbai where he attended to his patients - *Bhayajis* (coming from the downtrodden community). I was overwhelmed to see the patients keeping 50 paise or sometimes even 25 paise on his table. "*Doctor Saab, Bhagvan apka bhala karen*" (Doctor, may God bless you) were the words they uttered as they left the clinic.

Aie, my mother, had full faith and confidence in him. Whenever anyone was ill, she would immediately rush to Daji, whether the illness was major or minor. Till date, she still remembers him when any of our family members fall sick.

Gradually I learnt from Aba that Daji was the leader of a medical group that rendered medical aid to the nationalists at Vazrem to treat the injured Satyagrahis in the 1955 Satyagraha Movement. He took action against the anti-Indian activities of some Goans in Mumbai. Though a great personality, Daji lived a very, very simple life.

I am proud to say that I started my teaching career in Agassaim, where Daji as '*Medico Cirurgião*' did constructive work for a long period. During the time I taught there, I met many of his old patients who spoke highly about him. They still remembered his treatment, especially his loving and consoling words and the injections he administered with a feather touch.

When he came down to Goa in his late 70s, I found a total change in his behaviour. It was as if he had gone back to his childhood. He loved plucking different fruits directly from the trees and would enjoy sharing them with us. He would call us to eat the fruit under the tree. He would say that there is no fun sitting and eating within the four walls. He loved sitting under the trees for hours together, enjoying the fresh air.

Yet even in his late 70s, I remember him as still being very disciplined. He always woke up at 5.30 a.m. and by 6.30 a.m., he was at the breakfast table, ready in his white khadi outfit. His daily routine was fixed. There was no compromise. He preferred and loved to eat plain rice and fish curry. I always uphold him as an example to my children.

Daughter of Mr. Mukund Ladu Sinai Sangsiri and Mrs. Gokula Mukund Sinai Sangsiri from Sancoale, Mrs. Smita Sunilchandra Tamba has been in the teaching profession since 1980. She presently teaches at St. Anthony's High School, Majorda and is happily married to Mr. Sunilchandra Venkatesh Tamba from Ribandar. The couple have two children, an elder daughter just completing her graduation, and a son studying in Class IX.

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SAYONARA, DEAREST MOTHER

by Vinayak Naik
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This is my tribute to someone who was the dearest person in the world to me – my own mother, Sushilabai Nayak – who, on the 24th of May, 2008 suddenly slipped into a deep sleep, never to wake up again.

That fateful evening, there was not even a hint of the catastrophe that lay in store for me. It all happened in a flash, as it were. She kept talking to me, like she normally did, until ten minutes before passing into history. For the first time in my life, I saw a death take place right in front of me. Her benignant eyes roved all over me for a while before settling firmly into fixity. And that marked the end of someone whom I always thought – irrationally, I know – would forever live with me.

Honestly, for the last six years - ever since the demise of my father - I lived with just two preoccupations: my office and my mother. For all these years I was virtually dead to the world after 6:00 p.m., committed as I totally was, to being with my mother from that time onwards till my departure for the office the next morning. The only time I returned home after 6:00 p.m. during this period was on the 1st of August, 2005 – when GUJ (the Goa Union of Journalists) feted me. In fact, I even skipped the dinner which followed my felicitation, so as to be back home with my mother at the earliest.

I would normally reach home at 5.45 p.m., and such was my mother's concern for me, that even a few minutes delay in my reaching home, during the rains in particular, was enough to make her break into a torrent of tears. Saturday used to be a very special day for her. She would be very happy that day because she knew I would return home early – in the afternoon itself. That's what I had actually done that distressful Saturday on which Providence took my mother away. I would hand-feed my mother like a baby – diurnally. Whilst feeding her that night, I didn't in the least imagine that it would be the last time I was doing so.

Although my father was formally well qualified (he was a pharmacist by qualification, but a postmaster by profession), my mother, in my evaluation, was considerably more intelligent and creative. My mother's education did not extend beyond *Segundo Grau* which, incidentally, she had passed with distinction. She was then stopped in her academic tracks, as higher education for girls was not looked upon with favour in those days – in the 1930s, that is. If my mother had been allowed to pursue her education, given her transcendent talent, she could have, academically, scaled the sky.

Until she inexplicably sank into a state of chronic depression, my mother was full of fun, and would send just about anybody who interacted with her into peals of laughter. Every joke she cut had a distinctive stamp of her creativity. Honestly, my much-lauded about memory is attributable entirely to my mother. Her brain functioned, computer-like, even before the advent of the computer. Though not formally qualified as one, my mother was an exceptionally adept economist. My father had the habit of making over his entire monthly pay packet to her. And she would budget it to perfection. About a thousand rupees is all that he would earn as Assistant Presidency Post Master of Bombay GPO in the early '70s, and my mother would spend that amount adroitly, covering the various requirements of our then seven-member family. And surprise, surprise, she would even manage to save something too!

Unquestionably, my mother was the very source of joy and inspiration to me. Her love for me bordered on the maniacal. Although depressed and bedridden, she would focus on my nourishment. Her habit was to ask me, over and over again, whether I had eaten properly. And she was at it, even until half an hour before her demise – repeatedly asking me, as she always did, whether I had eaten properly. With my mother gone, to me, my home has, overnight, turned into a virtual graveyard as memories of her keep haunting me at every turn. Her demise is a mortal blow I am reeling under. The vacuum she has created in my life cannot be filled. Coincidentally, only a few days before my mother's death, I had a bad dream in which I had seen her pass away. It turned out to be an ominous trailer of what was to come, because exactly what I had dreamt came to pass.

That dreadful night, my mother kept calling out to me, urging me to come to sleep at 8:00 p.m. itself. However, the next day being a Sunday, I told her I would delay a bit and I continued with my office work till 11:00 p.m. Had I the slightest inkling of the calamity that was to come, I would have shown a readiness to go to bed even at 5:00 p.m. When I went to sleep at last, as it turned out, my mother had only ten more minutes before eternally falling asleep.

The woman behind my success, up to this point, has unmistakably been my mother. I have no doubt at all that she'll keep spurring me on from the Great Beyond too.

Till we meet again, in life after this life, it's *sayonara* to you, dearest Mother, from your inconsolable son.

A post-graduate in Economics, Vinayak Naik is the Editor-in-Chief of the Goa Today monthly magazine. Apart from his keen journalistic skills, he is also well known for his phenomenal memory. Not only can he tell which day of the week any date falls on, even up to decades ago, but he can also memorise with relative ease, , telephone numbers, long lists of words with their meanings as well as synonyms and antonyms. Vinayak Naik resides at Panjim, Goa.

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A Mosaic of Memories

WRITTEN IN MEMORY OF MARIA CONCEICAO FERNANDES, MY NANA
FEBRUARY 16, 1920 – SEPTEMBER 20, 2007

by Christine D'Cruz
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Serene and smiling as always
my Nana, Maria Conceicao Fernandes.

I had been searching for words to describe what I'd been feeling ever since my Nana passed away so unexpectedly, and these words from a beautiful poem titled 'When tomorrow starts without me' written by David M. Romano, helped me to do so...

When tomorrow starts without me,
And I'm not there to see,
If the sun should rise and find your eyes
All filled with tears for me.

I wish you wouldn't cry
The way you did today,
While thinking of the many things,
We didn't get to say.

I know how much you love me,
As much as I love you,
And each time that you think of me,
I know you'll miss me too.

But when tomorrow starts without me,
Please try to understand,
That an angel came and called my name,
And took me by the hand.

And said my place was ready,
In heaven far above,
And that I'd have to leave behind
All those I dearly love.

And when I thought of worldly things,
I might miss come tomorrow,
I thought of you, and when I did,
My heart was filled with sorrow.

But when I walked through heaven's gates,
I felt so much at home.
When God looked down and smiled at me,
From His great golden throne.

So when tomorrow starts without me,
Don't think we're far apart,
For every time you think of me,
I'm right here, in your heart.

...I had never imagined hearing about the death of my Nana just three days after my arrival in the UK. A mail from my uncle in Portugal informing me about her passing away tore at my heart and all of a sudden I felt lonelier than I had ever felt before. I never realised just how much I loved her until she was gone. I had no one to grieve along with me and it upset me immensely too that I could not be there for her funeral to say my last goodbyes. Unfortunately, I was also unable to be there with my family and relatives at her first death anniversary Mass this year. Therefore, I write this in her memory.

Please forgive me Nana, for this is what I should have told you and shared with you when you were with us. As much as it saddens me now that you will not be able to read it, this is my last gift to you, Nana ... my special tribute to you.

Nana, my maternal grandmother, was the last of my grandparents, and definitely the one with whom I spent most of my growing years with. Her death wasn't expected, not to me at least. And yet, it put an end to the suffering that Mama told me she went through during her last hours. For all those who were with her till the very end, I know it must have given her great comfort to know that her family members were all with her till her last breath.

You can call me selfish, but deep down, I wish she were still alive. She was 87 years old when she passed away and I always thought we would get a chance to celebrate her 90th birthday. I still remember the time we celebrated her 80th birthday. My aunt organised it in a nice hotel, which had an outdoor pool and garden. All her friends and the parish priests were invited. Even at her age, she had lots of friends, as she was a member of the Senior Citizens group as well as the Charismatic group in Vasco-da-Gama. She seemed like a teenager again at the party and it was fun to see her and her friends playing the games we organised.

I will miss her more this Christmas as I will be coming home for a month in December after a year and three months. The day before I left for the UK, I remember her asking me when I would return and I replied that I'd come back after two years. She gave me her blessings and we hugged and kissed not knowing it would be our last. I wish I had also told her then how much I loved her. I just took it for granted that she would be waiting for me on my return, just like she did every time I came back home to Goa from

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Mumbai, when I was working there.

I will also never forget her requests to go for Midnight Mass every Christmas Eve. She could be stubborn about the things she wanted and I know that even at her age, she would have even walked alone to church if no one wanted to accompany her. She always thought it might be her last Midnight Mass and in a way, 2006 was. I am happy she got her wish.

Nana used to share my bed at home and every morning, I would get up and watch her sleep. My greatest fear was that she would die in her sleep next to me and I used to pray to God for that to never happen. Maybe she knew of my fear and so she died without me being there, leaving behind only memories of her smiling face and the happy times spent together.

Nana always had well-groomed white curly hair, and I rarely caught a glimpse of her without her powdered face. Every time she left the house, she was all dressed up. She liked to have nice things, and took a great deal of pride in the things she had, as well as in herself and her family. Mama used to buy her a new Christmas outfit every year because she never wanted to wear anything that had been worn before, even if it had been worn three years earlier.

She could also sew remarkably well. She stitched my First Communion dress. I was the only girl in a pink dress but I was proud of it, not only because it was so pretty, but also because it was stitched with so much love and affection. I am sure at some point of time during her life, most of us who knew my Nana would have got the opportunity to have something either stitched or altered by her.

Even though my Nana is no longer with us to read this tribute, I'm glad to have had the opportunity to write this. It has helped refresh some of my memories of her and in some way, ease the unhappiness of her absence in my life. But mostly I'm glad, because I believe that Nana is smiling down from heaven on me, with my Grandfather, Uncle Felico and Cousin Mark at her side. God bless you, Nana. I love you and miss you very, very much.

A State First Ranker at her H.S.S.C Board Exams, Christine D'Cruz then went on to pursue her Bachelors in Business Administration. After a stint at Prudential UK as a Process Leader at their Mumbai office, this 25-yr old is currently pursuing her MBA in the UK. A vivacious all-rounder, Christine enjoys reading, listening to music, travelling and making friends. And there's a twinkle in her eye as she speaks of the first love of her life her five cats!!!

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MY GRANDMA

by Abigail Dos Santos

A tribute to my grandma, Eltrudes Dos Santos, who passed away on the 3rd of December, 2007. (The feast of St. Francis Xavier is celebrated on the 3rd of December and the day is therefore considered an auspicious day for Catholic Goans.)

My grandma was so special,
In every possible way.
She never spoilt the goodwill,
That we shared day after day.

When we needed her, she came along,
She surely came from above.
For she taught us right from wrong,
That was her everlasting love.

Her words were so soothing,
As sweet as honey can be.
She was the one who was giving and caring,
Oh, how I felt her love for me.

She was the best grandma,
A grandma no one can replace.
Now every time I think of her,
All I see is her smiling face.

12-yr old Abigail, daughter of Clive and Sylvia Dos Santos is a student at the International Indian School in Saudi Arabia. Abigail and her 9-yr old brother Jonathan visit Goa with their parents as often as they can and thoroughly enjoy their visits as well as keeping in touch with their roots. Abigail's hobbies include drawing and dancing.

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A TALL MAN AMONGST PYGMIES

A tribute to the late Vaman Raghunath Shenai Varde Valaulikar (alias Shenoy Goembab)

by Chandrakant Keni

He was a short statured person with a frail body. As he walked on the streets of Bombay, he seemed like just one amongst the masses. His presence in the audience at any program usually went unnoticed. But once he began to speak, his voice was like a temple bell that attracted the attention of even the most disinterested member of the audience. His intellectual calibre, command over language, fluency in Konkani and choice of vocabulary were remarkable. His *Bhatagrami* style of Konkani kept his audiences spellbound not only as long as was on the mike, but even for some minutes afterwards and they carried back with them an image of a tall man amongst pygmies.

Who was this man, who walked the corridors of small and big libraries in Bombay, even rummaging through stalls on the footpaths in search of old books? Unlike others, he was not interested in any luxuries of life. His only interest was books, especially old and secondhand, which he promptly purchased without any bargaining, obtaining the satisfaction a fisherman gets when he nets a good catch. He dressed simply, in a long Jodhpuri coat and white dhoti with a cap on his head, just like any other middle class gentleman living in the Maharashtrian-dominated areas. He had a striking moustache. On special occasions, he would wear a turban and apply 'tilak' on his forehead.

This was Vaman Raghunath Shenai Varde Valaulikar, who later came to be known as Shenoy Goembab, the penname with which he wrote books on practically every aspect of society, as he sought to revive the lost identity of the Konkani language. Born at Bicholim, Goa on 23rd June 1877, he completed his primary education in Marathi and Portuguese and subsequently went to Bombay for his high school education. After matriculation, he first worked as a teacher, then as a clerk at Karachi and later joined a multinational company at Bombay, where his hard work and sincerity paid rich dividends. But his refusal to lower his self-respect by showing unnecessary servility to his superiors compelled him to resign from his job. Instead, he decided to devote his life to the mission of restoring the lost identity of Konkani and to give his mother tongue its rightful place among the other languages of India.

Goa was then reeling under Portuguese rule and the lack of freedom of speech or expression had made life miserable. But this was no justification for Goans settled in Bombay to compromise their self-respect in an effort to win over the goodwill of Maharashtrians. Many Goans were willing to reject their language, considering themselves as a part of Maharashtrian society. Konkani, they argued, was merely a dialect, a regional form of the main Marathi language. Their concern for language, literature or culture became so casual that they even clapped at any statement made by speakers against the Konkani language or its supporters.

What pained Shenoy Goembab was this callous indifference of the Goan community to the humiliation of its mother tongue and the foolish opposition by its own sons and daughters in order to win the goodwill of the Marathi community of Bombay. He wanted to revive Konkani because it had suffered a lot under successive regimes of the non-Konkani dynasties that had ruled over Goa. Throughout history, different rulers had imposed their languages as official and religious mediums. The Kannada dynasties were the first to suppress Konkani. The Marathi speaking Yadavas continued the process. The Muslim rule did not make any difference, as the rulers were more concerned with their hold over territory. The Portuguese came next and they left no stone unturned to uproot Konkani from the soil of Goa. All these atrocities took place right before the eyes of the sons and daughters of Konkani, who did not even raise a voice of protest, leave aside saving it from sacrilege. The renowned Portuguese scholar, Cunha Rivara, aptly summarized the outcome of the Portuguese policy in these words:

“In spite of the great impulse which the language received in the first century of Portuguese domination, there was waged against it an implacable war with attempts to entirely extinguish and proscribe it. Although this was not possible to receive this end fully, as it is beyond human power to suppress a language, it has, however, been corrupted and adulterated and its literary records practically destroyed with serious loss both to the intellectual and to the moral culture of the people.”

Later on, the Portuguese followed a policy of even greater hostility to Konkani, launching a program for its extermination. In 1684, Conde de Alvor, the Viceroy, decided to abolish the speech altogether, according it a lease of life for three years. Yet Konkani did not die. So the earlier decree was further promulgated with more vigour. In 1731, the Inquisition resolved that Konkani Christians should give up their language and speak only Portuguese. In 1745, Archbishop Lourenco de Santa Maria made it incumbent on all Christians to speak Portuguese. If they did not, they would not be allowed to marry or become priests. In 1812, children were prevented from speaking Konkani in schools.

The demoralization of Konkani speakers was now complete. Many Goan families began to call Portuguese their mother tongue and spoke the language even at home. Konkani came to be considered as alien language in its own habitat. Perhaps no language in the world has suffered such barbarous persecution.

Shenoy Goembab believed that the Konkani community was a distinct community of this country, with its own geography and history that in turn, shaped its distinct identity. He expected speakers of the language to be proud of their heritage. He wanted Goans to assert themselves collectively and attain their freedom from the Portuguese colonial yoke and join the national mainstream without losing their identity. Konkani was not merely a means of communication, but bonded people of diverse religions, castes and communities into one cultural stream. He began an unceasing campaign to awaken the Konkani community. The books he penned are a reflection of his intelligence and research and an inspiring reminder to Goans of their history, religion and culture. Shenoy Goembab revealed the richness of Konkani vocabulary and many other peculiarities of the language, proving that Konkani was an independent language of India, perhaps even senior most among its sister languages.

Shenoy Goembab realised that Konkani could be the key to revive and restore the lost self-respect and self-confidence of the people of Goa. He also realised that Bombay could be a safe ground to promote the cause of the language, literature and culture. Apart from lectures, which had limited impact, Shenoy Goembab took up the cause of the suppressed Konkani language and identity through his writings. His devotion to the mission was unparalleled. He was ably supported in his work by the owner of the Gomantak Printing Press, Kashinath Shridar Nayak, an eminent Konkani poet himself. The servility of Goans to Marathi by grossly neglecting Konkani had angered both Valaulikar and Nayak who had discovered that Konkani people were distinct from Marathi people in their customs,

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values of life, temperament, diet, culture and indeed their language. An acrimonious controversy followed and Shenoy Goembab used all his powers to present the case of Konkani, mercilessly attacking the anti-Konkani and anti-Christian attitude of his rivals. The war did not end with his death.

The very fact that Goa observed his 125th birth anniversary as a year of Konkani identity proves that he continues to inspire generation after generation, which is, step by step, moving in the direction of the goal set by Shenoy Goembab. How an idea, however difficult or impossible it may appear, can bring about a revolution through the efforts of single man, is an example that he set. The Sahitya Akademi recognised Konkani as an independent literary language of India in 1976 and later the Indian Parliament accommodated it in the 8th schedule of the Constitution in 1992. Shenoy Goembab was a genius in every sense of the term and his work will continue to inspire Goan and Konkani society to achieve greater heights of glory and win the love and respect of the entire humanity.

Former editor of the 'Rashtramat' and the 'Sunaparant' (the first and only Konkani daily in Devanagiri to be published from Goa), Chandrakant Keni is a prolific writer and recipient of several awards including the Sahitya Academy Award in 1989 for his story 'Vhakalpavnni'. He served as chairman of the NRI (Goa) Facilitation Centre and also established the Goa Information Centre at New Delhi to disseminate information about Goa to other parts of the country. Chandrakant Keni was a founder-member of the Konkani Bhasha Mandal (Goa) and is a staunch champion of the Konkani language.

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MEMORARE

(A Dirge for the GOA of 1940)

Through the dark of the night
The first glimmers of light
Awakened cocks proudly crowing
To a fresh day's labour enjoining
Through the still of the dawn
The diurnal Angelus yawn
Sparrows now steadily tweeting
Far distant, the ocean roaring

Goats bleating: it's the maids milking
Cows mooing en route to pasturing
All these sounds I fondly recall
At the crest of Life's fading Fall.

The gentle lapping of water
On the craggy river shore
In the early morning quiet
'Ere the village's astir

Tawny fishermen in loin cloth
Readying for the catch to be sought
Bearing nets to the boats aloft
On peerless sands 'ready hot
Women in spotless 'oll' scurrying
To commence the day at Mass praying
All these images I now recall
Of when my Land kept me in thrall

The honking of the spluttering bus
Carrying folks to town in a crush
The constant *phut-phut* of the ferry-boat
With starched officials going to work

Stately mansions lining church squares
Lowly huts lost 'long thoroughfare
Their welcoming doors wide open
There's no dread of theft to reckon

Wiry women rushing to the market
Dextrous heads balancing the baskets
Sights and sounds I can't help recall
Seeing my Land under a heavy pall

White bubbly froth drifting to the seas
As nubile lasses, water up to the knees
Slap clothes on smooth stone pieces
By the limpid, susurrus stream trees

Early rain drops pit-patting on the tiles
Heralding the onset of the monsoon
Screeching lads splashing in the wells
Filled to the brim by mid-June

Green ears of rice undulating in the breeze
Bowing to the aspersions of the priest
All these memories I endlessly recall
At the sight of my beloved Land's fall

Milling crowds in Sunday best
Perspiring profusely in the mid-day heat
At High Mass, at the annual village '*fest*'
Anticipating the imminent Bacchanalian treat

Moonlight revellers their limbs toss
To the lilting strains of mandolins
Festive evensongs at the wayside Cross
To the accompaniment of '*feni*' and violins

Sweet old world, my childhood world,

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Relics of a happy past, cherished and stored
Surfacing in anguish at the pourried mould
Set in after my Land was sored

Deep-etched pictures that linger
Of hills and town and village
Of a people simple, gay and sober
So hard now to salvage

Gone the peace and quiet of yesteryear
Replaced by lurking sense of fear
Untold folks have sorrowfully fled
Giving place to strangers in their stead

Foul, bedraggled intruders in penury
Dragging their unlimited progeny
Disfiguring scenic town and countryside
To pollute the once clean wayside

Monstrous birds disgorging multitudes
Purveyors of undesirable alien attitudes
Harbingers of moral decrepitude
Experts in bending the path of rectitude

The evening bell that still tolls
For the dead, at eight, as of old
Should it not now ring instead
For the beloved Land that's dead?

Sweet old world, my childhood world
So sad and hard now to behold
Sights and sounds I can't gladly recall
At the sight of my dear Land's fall

- Marcos Gomes-Catao
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Born at his maternal home in Candolim, seat of the 1787 "Pinto Conspiracy", Marcos Gomes-Catao led something of a wanderer's life. Four childhood years in Tanganyika were followed by seven years in Mapuca, Goa and eight years in school and College at Belgaum. Marcos Gomes-Catao worked in the Human Health industry in Bombay, with spells in Delhi and Singapore. Transferred to Brazil, he lived there for 27 years. He currently resides in the U.S.A

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A Mosaic of Memories

THE 18TH JUNE EPISODE

(free verse)

Above, overcast skies
black ominous clouds
threatening storm and thunder
Below, khaki clad soldiery
glistening guns, a few cannons,
bristling bayonets and batons
in readiness to cut asunder
the storm of people's rage
civil disobedience and open rebellion;
yet they all looked askance,
as hordes of people from all corners
stormed unarmed, defiantly
chanting slogans, clamouring for their rights,
challenging undauntedly
the fiery wrath of the Dictator.

What mysterious factor
impelled such a vast multitude of all denominations
to come into the streets
fully determined to resist, to defy?
these very people, who in yesteryears
lived in a cocoon, complacently indifferent,
doing their master's bidding meekly,
accepting oppressive laws timidly!
And well aware were they of Salazar's black deeds,
the brutal fascist means he took
to curb and crush all opposition.
And still they came pounding, in numbers astounding
men and women, young and old,
ready to sacrifice for the Cause,
to do or to die

No news flashes in the papers
no advance announcements,
no tom-tom of the drums,
just a word, a whisper perhaps
along the grapevine –
that an outstanding national leader,
in the evening of that memorable day –
the 18th June 1946, in the historic town of Margao,
would, at the peril of his safety and life,
make a bold bid to break the shackles
that bound his Goan brethren
to such humiliating servitude;
and so spontaneously they came, unafraid,
to bid him a hero's welcome,
to give Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia a rousing ovation.

With hopes soaring high,
enthusiasm unabated,
they saw the one horse open carriage
roll on to the square gracefully,
with the two doctors seated, side by side,
clad in Khadi, pure white
No weaponry they brought,
on their heads they wore white Gandhi caps-
Symbols of Truth and Passive Resistance
the two weapons that shook
the might of the British Empire!
A tumultuous volley of slogans boomed
"Inquilab Zindabad
Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai
Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Ki Jai"
The soldiery in sudden action
Of savage brutality,
People resilient, resisting passively.
Meanwhile, on alighting, Dr Lohia and Dr. Juliao
arrested by a clownish Goan official
with a pistol in trembling hands
piteously bleating "I shot, I shoot",
Contemptuously, Dr. Lohia brushed the pistol aside,

A Mosaic of Memories

exhorting the people to put up a valiant fight
whilst revolutionary slogans resounded endlessly.
The events of the day and after, throughout Goa,
are a saga of sacrifice, courage, heroism,
as much blood was spilled, lives lost,
jail birds, saboteurs, martyrs,
The start of the Struggle for Freedom.

Thus was ushered Goa's Revolution Day.

We, the fortunate to witness and participate
are getting fewer, year by year,
but we carry the memory vividly
and shall carry it with pride to the last.
as we salute the known and unknown heroes,
the living and the dead, of the memorable Day.

- Froilano Machado
machadogo@machadogo.com

Founder of Machado & Sons Agents and Stevedores Pvt Ltd, Froilano Machado is probably best known to the Goan public as a prominent freedom fighter and ex-Speaker of the Goa Assembly. A graduate in History and Economics, he earlier held important positions including that of Vice President of the Federation of Stevedores, India, Director of the Goa Urban Cooperative Bank, Member of the Indian Standards Institute, etc. Froilano loves Goa and has been actively involved in protecting its ecology and environment. He has written articles and poems in English, Portuguese and Konkani.

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GIVING BACK TO GOA AS A TRIBUTE TO MY PARENTS

by Filomena Saraswati Giese
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My father, Antonele Jorge Teodoro da Conceicao Bonamis (Jorge for short) left Margao, Goa for Singapore in 1916 to join a Goan music band that played in the silent movies. After a few years, he went into business and, much later, decided to get married. My mother, Sofia Bernadete Ludovina Dias (nicknamed Bernita), also from Margao, went to Singapore to marry him in 1938. She knew not a word of English, but took with her a wedding *mando* that she sang for the occasion, plus her remarkable Margao-Salcete culinary talents. She had to leave Singapore in 1940 just before the Japanese invasion, taking along my sister, then a year old, and while expecting me. I spent six idyllic years in Goa with doting relatives. We returned to Singapore in 1947 to a very impoverished existence. My father and other Goans struggled to lift themselves up without so much as a penny in foreign aid. I eventually married an American and today I live in Berkeley, California.

The small Goan community in Singapore had the usual Goan bonds and, sometimes, typical Goan association disputes too. Wartime only strengthened the Goan togetherness my father lived by. My parents insisted on speaking Konkani and Portuguese at home and scorned those Goans who refused to speak Konkani, claiming they were Anglo-Indian or even Portuguese. Even our dog, Bobby, wouldn't bark at visitors at the door who spoke Konkani!

Our home was a small social centre for Goans. I remember the entire Goan crew of a P&O boat, staying at our house, while their ship was under repair. My father wouldn't hear of them going to a hotel and insisted on it. If he met any Goan passing through, like crew members of the Air India planes, he would bring them home for a meal, even to stay. New Goan immigrant families sometimes stayed with us until they found a job and could settle somewhere. Mothers from Kuala Lumpur, taking their daughters to Bombay and Goa to get married, stayed with us before boarding ship. My mother's cooking was legendary and she was constantly cooking and inviting other Goans over.

Without having studied a word about multiculturalism, my parents maintained our Goan identity through anecdotes about ancestors and by recalling childhood memories, the Konkani language, music, celebration of feasts and recounting of family fights and property disputes going back decades, even centuries. All as if those they loved and knew in Goa were still alive! We always knew we were Goans, not Chinese, Malay, Indians (Goa was not part of India then), Eurasian, and definitely not European. But close friends of all nationalities passed through our house.

Oh, one last thing. My parents, who rejected caste outright, were socially proactive. My father went to court to rescue a Goan maid when her employer put her in a mental asylum. He distributed free medicines to needy people. He gave small loans, some never to be re-paid, to help someone or other along. I remember my mother daily taking food to a Goan friend in hospital, dying of TB. She insisted on getting our Chinese Amah's daughter enrolled in school. The girl went on to become a successful nurse and hospital matron, and never forgot my Mum who made it possible.

This February I visited Goa after some years. I was able to walk in comfortably as a family member into the homes of various cousins and friends because my parents had maintained close ties with them. I was in Panaji and Margao for Carnival (one of my favorite childhood memories) and thoroughly enjoyed the fun, the parades, the bands, and the happy crowds. I even sat on a "*cadeira a voltairé*" on a beautiful old veranda in the twilight, sipping Portuguese port wine before a traditional 5-course Goan dinner.

Memories of my childhood in Margao picking wild flowers, roaming through rice fields in Cortalim, picking wild berries on the hills around Nuvem, holidaying on the beaches around Benaullim, attending traditional weddings and funerals all came back to me. We supped and played by gas or candlelight in those old Goa houses, without a care in the world. No frightening traffic. No TV. Sometimes a radio was turned on. Infrequently, the old Victrola (His Master's Voice, with the big white dog) was played. Rosary. Then dinner, lots of story-telling, a hot bath, more prayers, and bed.

Goa is still beautifully green. But much has changed. New electrified buildings, offices, hospitals and clubs have changed the landscape and the 'mindscape' of Goa. TVs and cybercafes are a must, like cars, pedicabs, motorbikes, and buses. People talk about destruction of ecology, high accident rates, slums, pedophilia, drug and sex tourism, corruption, gambling, murder, robberies, religious tensions and the building of more casinos. The problems seem almost insurmountable, given the lack of political will to keep Goa from joining the ranks of other sleazy tourist traps around the world, and from falling victim to ecologically unsound "development".

If I am still attached to Goa and want to give something back, despite leaving Goa at the age of six, it has to be because my parents instilled in me and in my sister a deep and abiding love for Goa and Goans. Since the year 2000 when I reached 'geezerhood' and Senior status, I have been part of Goa Sudharop Community Development, a nonprofit organization registered in California, that supports people in Goa who work to improve the environment, sanitation, health, safety, and education in Goa. It seems the right thing to do, given the educational and financial resources I have accumulated over my lifetime, and the strong Goan identity my parents gave me. I hope to keep on contributing to the Goan community as a tribute to the Goan home they created, so many miles away from Goa!

Born in Margao, Goa, Filomena Giese grew up in Singapore and now resides in Berkeley, California. A graduate of the University of Melbourne, Australia, Filomena has a doctorate in multicultural and international education from the University of San Francisco. Filomena and her husband John have two children, Christopher and Ligia. She is on the Board of Goa Sudharop, and strongly supports the organization's commitment to working for the betterment of Goa and Goans.

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GOA– THE FLIP SIDE

by Arsenio L. Desa

Goa, once a paradise, is fast turning into a living hell. Living in Goa has become a nightmare. Incidents like rapes, murders, dacoities, financial scams and the sex and drug trade which were uncommon in the past, are a reality today. Next perhaps, may be a terrorist strike or a natural calamity.

Goa may boast of an 82% literacy rate and a westernized culture, but a look at its elected representatives and their backgrounds is enough to indicate their quality. Our road sense speaks volumes for the carelessness and selfishness that exists in Goan society. Praises may be sung about the religious tolerance in our State, but the reality is very different. There exists a persistent underlying tension which has been demonstrated during the Opinion Poll, the Konkani agitation, the Statehood agitation and the Konkani Railway re-alignment agitation.

On another front, security has become a major concern, with citizens spending sleepless nights worrying about thefts and dacoities. Law and order have broken down. Gone are the days when, in Goa, windows had no grills and houses were left open during the daytime. Money could be safely stored in a secret niche in the house. Menfolk could be counted on for the protection of women whereas today, no female feels safe. Strengthening the police force is the need of the hour. The State Government has to modernize its police force, both with equipment and in terms of professional skills. Culprits must be dealt with a heavy hand and penalised.

Maintaining Goa's natural beauty and the need of its people to live in harmony with nature is yet another pressing issue. It is necessary to encourage agricultural cultivation by giving subsidised loans to farmers. The issue of keeping Goa clean and green must be tackled along with issues like keeping the surroundings free from mosquitoes, especially around construction sites. Drainage systems must be well maintained so that they are not clogged during the monsoons. Gardens and parks must be made available for the public. Nature could be enjoyed free of cost in the past - today however, one has to visit spice gardens and hill resorts to experience nature.

Water, which was earlier available in abundance in Goa, has become a luxury today. People have to rely on water tankers and are at the mercy of PWD (Public Works Department) officials for their quota of drinking water. Corruption is another issue that the common man complains about. We curse our politicians, but surprisingly it is the same old racketeers who get elected every time. This shows that there is a wide gap between what a Goan preaches and what he actually practices. It is high time we wake up from our slumber and tackle corruption from the grass root level.

Almost half of Goa's land is being bought by non-Goans. While Goans are busy blowing their trumpet about their great culture, sharks from other States are closing in from all directions. 'Spot a true Goan' could well be a new adventure sport and tourist attraction a few years from now.

To preserve Goa as a natural paradise, it is necessary to avoid playing with people's lives, creating divisions amongst the people to promote vested interests and destroying the land and environment that sustains us. Public safety is to be ensured, infrastructure developed and there should be a proper supply of basic amenities, water, and electricity to even the remotest of villages. There must be transparency in trade and industry. Jobs must be made available to youngsters, and opportunities created for them to excel in various fields. For all this, proper planning and development is required. Copies of the draft master plan must be made available to Municipalities, Panchayats, the Central Library, non-Governmental organisations and interested citizens. This will help retain Goa's image as a peaceful State. Goa has enough for everyone's need but not for the greed of a few.

Born in the month of October, Arsenio Leopoldo DeSa comes under the star sign Scorpio. However, Arsenio says he does not trust his stars but instead, believes in making things happen himself. While studying at St. Britto's, he won several trophies in football, and though initially slow in academics, later on, reading and writing became his passion. Now aged 73, Arsenio is still going strong and keeps fit, he says, "by walking, working in the garden and above all, sleeping soundly!"

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GIVING BACK TO GOA AND GOANS

by Dr. John Carmo Rodrigues
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If I have achieved anything in life today, it is because of other people. I had the good fortune to have worked for a very large German chemical complex that manufactured over 20,000 products, starting from aviation spirits to underwater welding works. My doing so was made possible because of the good education and upbringing given to me by my parents.

Maximization of profits is the goal of every commercial organization. The company I worked for was a bit different. The slogan of this company was 'People Matter Most', and so each time we did something, it made us conscious that we did it to improve the quality of life of other people. It is because other people appreciated my work that I rose up in this company to occupy a responsible position. It is because of others, that I was placed in a position where I handled the marketing of their range of pharmaceuticals, veterinary, pesticide and diagnostic divisions. Most of the work I did was in the states of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. It is because of the position I held 30 years back and my good fortune, that I had the opportunity to meet people like Dr. Bhattacharya, the Director of Indian Council of Agriculture Research at Ella, Old Goa, Dr. H.Y. Karapurkar who was the Director of Agriculture of Goa for 12 years, Dr. Estibeiro, the Director of Medical Health Services of Goa, his brother, who was Director of Rural Development Agency and later the Director of Agriculture in Goa, and Dr. Kakodkar, Director of Animal Husbandry in Goa. It is because of their support and cooperation that I could carry out many developmental programs in these diverse fields in Goa.

I was invited to be a member of the Rotary Club of Margao. I decided to accept the invitation because of the beautiful motto 'Service before Self'. When I was the President of Rotary Club of Margao, the Theme for the Year was 'Look Beyond Yourself', and the following year, 'Real Happiness is Helping Others'. It is because of the confidence and trust placed in me by the members of the Rotary Club, that I was elected as Secretary, and later President, of the Club. It is because of the support of the Board of Directors and the members that I had the opportunity to carry out a number of programs.

Let me admit that whenever I tried to carry out programs on my own, I have been a failure. For example, when I took voluntary retirement twenty years back, I had set ideas of what I thought I could do. For a number of years, the *Gaudis* of Baida, the adjoining ward of Chinchinim, had worked in our property. I thought it was a good idea to start a Voluntary Organisation and carry out programs to improve their health and financial position. Konkani Sevadham, the organisation I set up, undertook programs in association with Caritas and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. At that time, the youth of the landless labourers of Baida were resorting to unsociable activities during the daytime and robbing coconuts during the night. I felt if we set up a carpentry unit it would keep the youth occupied and give them gainful employment. I was proved wrong. The youth enlisted their names but were not regular in attending the classes. When we carried out a nutrition program for pregnant and lactating mothers and undernourished children, we found that some of the items we distributed, like fortified soya meal and milk powder, were either sold to others or used to feed the pigs or poultry. We built a residential colony for the landless labourers - when we transferred the houses to their names, some of the houses were sold to others. The consolation was that some of the programs like medical camps, supply of drinking water, smokeless *chullas*, setting up of toilets, and providing a T.V. for the recreation centre were a success.

Having been associated with the medical field for over 30 years, it was my belief that people were taking a lot of unnecessary medicines for minor ailments which harmed them by lowering their body resistance and these people were often victims of iatrogenic diseases. I thought of correcting the situation by setting up a Yoga Therapy Centre, which would not only improve the physical health of the people at large, but also improve their mental health and help to improve the memory and concentration of the children. This was not a success as people were too busy with their daily routine and they had no time for yoga or self-improvement. So you see, it is the people who matter most. You can help people only to the extent they want to be helped.

John Carmo Rodrigues, a graduate in Medical Microbiology from the Bombay University, worked for 'HOECHST', Mumbai, for 30 years He was a founder member of the Konkani Mandal of St. Xavier's College, Bombay and designed its emblem. He took premature retirement to return to Chinchinim, Goa in 1986. He has authored three books and has a variety of interests including yoga and winemaking.

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KNOWLEDGE BEQUEATHED, A DUTY FULFILLED TO MY GOAN BRETHERN

by *Electra M. Karandikar*
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Way back in my childhood, the role model I looked up to was my mother. She had started an English school during Portuguese times, extending help to those parents who wanted their wards to learn English. I could see the outpouring of gratitude of these people who wanted an English education.

I learnt then that progress meant intellectual prosperity and that success was the outcome of one's role in society, a role one played for the betterment of each other's lives. Thus, the opportunity to contribute towards this end, resulted in my becoming a teacher too.

When I joined the teaching profession, I looked at it as a vocation and not as a job. For me, teaching seemed like a noble service rendered to the young, who adore you with unblinking love and never question your judgement. Considering this, I felt that I had to study more which I could share with and impart to my students, and therefore I did my B.Ed and M.Ed after marriage. The teaching profession made me realize that I was dealing with live clay, where I could mould the young into personalities of acumen and diligence, and into reservoirs of knowledge.

I taught in a rural school. Geography being my favourite subject, I took my students through journeys of varied lands, helping them to build mental maps and using all possible media and materials to help them comprehend different cultures, people and their heritage. At every juncture, I tried to instill in them values of tolerance, sensitivity to the physically challenged, the very young and the very old, and to awaken in them an awareness of their precious surroundings. All this was done, not only in the classroom but outdoors too, at a time in the days gone by, when such methods were not being used by schools.

Building a rapport with my students was my primary aim so that I could gain their confidence to build up their strengths. In order to do this, I visited their homes after school hours to get acquainted with their parents and their backgrounds. This exercise helped me to comprehend whatever loopholes existed and so plug them with understanding, attention and love. It also threw light on the human conflict, woes, miseries, difficulties and ignorance in these people's lives. I tried to reach out in whatever way I could. Today I see the products of that period, enriched, happy and doing well. The culmination of all this was the Teachers' Award I received in 1996 from the Goa government.

Having retired after thirty-four years of service as a teacher, and 25 years as a Resource Person, I am still actively involved eight years later as a Key Resource person, lecturer, counsellor at IGNOU and as an advisor to teacher-trainees, fulfilling my motto of giving back to Goa and Goans. This is what my dream has always been, to make our younger generation the pillars of an International society.

I have been on the Advisory Committee of the State Institute of Education and the Nirmala Institute of Education. I have also been a Paper Setter and Chief Moderator at the Goa Board. Having authored eighteen books on education during the span of my teaching career, it gave me an opportunity to realize what more I could do. On behalf of the Government of Goa, I have co-authored text books in English from Standards IV to VII and Geography from Standards V to VII, some of which are still currently being used. On behalf of the Ministry of Environment & Forests, New Delhi, I have contributed to writing the Teacher's Manual on Environmental Education for DIET, Goa.

I am often invited to train teachers right from school to College level in the various Training Colleges of Goa, besides other bodies like the School Super Complexes, the Goa Chamber of Commerce & Industry, The Navodaya Training Institute, etc. I lecture on Value education, Environmental education, Leadership Development, Evaluation Techniques, Methodology in education, etc. These encounters have taken me through the entire state of Goa.

The interaction with in-service and pre-service teachers has definitely enriched the teacher cycle from teacher to taught. This enrichment reverberates when, in turn, I see teachers whom I have trained as Resource persons, serving for the betterment of the community.

The satisfaction at the end of a workshop, the beautiful smiles, the acknowledgement and my deep feeling of having shared my knowledge, thoughts, ideas and ideals with teachers of the next generation, is what I call GIVING BACK!

Born in Goa, Electra Maria Karandikar studied Portuguese and did her B.A. (Hons) in Pune and her B.Ed & M.Ed from Bombay University. A teacher from 1964, she has presented educational papers at various conferences and continues with educational activities till date. She is currently writing a reference book in geography for teachers. Married to engineer Gopal Rao Karandikar, she has a daughter and son, both computer engineers, working in Australia and USA respectively.

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ON GIVING TO THE NEEDY

by Loretta Andrade
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My roots lie embedded deep in the fragrant soil of Goa. Though I was born and brought up in Mumbai, I spent most of my summer holidays in the old mansions of my ancestors and relatives in the remote villages of Goa.

As a child I often watched my grandma, and later my mother, cradling a bowl of hot soup or kanji. This meant that someone - a relative, a friend or a neighbour - was under the weather. It didn't matter whether it was a fever or old age. As soon as the cock crowed, grandma tied on an old apron and soon you could hear the clanging of the soup pots and the *moddki*. For nearly half a century, she was known as the 'food carrier' for family, friends and those in mourning. Sitting in the kitchen, I saw her coax the fire to cook the toughest beans and tubers into soul-stirring infusions. I sat at the kitchen table as she ladled her elixirs. My mother Catherine, in her turn, became the 'food carrier'. She dispatched thick chicken soup to the old and sick. During festivals, she cooked a number of Goan dishes and sweets for family and friends.

In grandma's kitchen, I saw how a cake could be baked on hot ashes and embers, with a tin sheet of live coals for a cover. Grandma would fan the tin in the midst of her other chores. I watched her make frilly paper handles for crumb chops, which came to the table as frilly oars in a boat of creamed mashed potatoes. She called it her 'deckrishin'. She would decorate her puddings and jellies equally well. Cashew nuts and cherries topped her caramel custards and went around it like a moat. Her castle pudding was tall and spiked with almonds and raisins.

And I grow nostalgic as my mother did, as she talked of the old cook whom she had watched as a child and imitated. For the ambulatory, our own kitchen was like a spice-scented confessional. My mother would cook and folks would talk, as they sipped warm *pez* or coffee. Extras of whatever we were having - fish curry, *sorpatel* or meat balls - were sealed in aluminum cans and delivered to the old and infirm at their houses. It was when my aunt delivered a baby boy that I donned the apron my mother wore. I prepared a *soji* porridge that mother used to send to new mothers, loaded with nutrition. My aunt who was famished and weak, devoured it and complimented me for my kind thought. Since mother was keeping her company in the hospital, it was my very own thought and preparation. It was then that I knew that I had it in me. In hindsight, I should have seen this coming. Even as a child I found myself carrying food parcels and food products from our home to relatives and friends in need. In Goa I tried to keep up the good work that I had learnt from my grandma and ma by their example rather than from any preaching.

Now I realize that this is missionary work. The impulse springs from a hungry heart and is quite selfish in its own way. I just like to have people around and to serve the old, the infirm and those flayed by the brutalities of their jobs. A fair meal and good food can make you really happy. It makes you want to talk and be with people. And so I still continue to deliver food to the sick and the needy.

Born and educated in Mumbai, Loretta Andrade spent most of her childhood holidays in Anjuna, Goa. She was a Professor of English and Psychology at Damodar D.Ed. College, Margao. She has written several short stories, essays and articles, which deal with themes drawn from everyday life. Not only does she write, but she is also a poet at heart and has six books to her credit.

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About this e-book

A Mosaic of Memories

This book by Goa Sudharop Community Development Inc., a USA-based non-profit, volunteer NGO working for the betterment of Goa and Goans worldwide, is a compilation of essays penned by (and in tribute to) Goan Seniors from all over the world. The book has been edited by Valerie Rodrigues. All feedback (suggestions, bouquets and brickbats) is welcome and can be sent to the Editor at valerie3@rediffmail.com

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