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Sandesh

“The Message”

A Newsletter from IndUS of Fox Valley

From Editors' Desk

Dear Readers,

The theme of our current issue is “Pioneers Across the Seven Seas”. We bring to light lives of some fascinating people who traveled across the globe.

These early migrants not only contributed to the country they adopted, but they struggled to keep their native culture intact. Our lives are easier because of them. We stand on their shoulders.

Sandesh

An IndUS of Fox Valley
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Sikh Pioneers

By Gurumukh Singh

As Indian immigration into North America - the US and Canada - began on the West coast in the last decade of the 19th century, almost all early immigrants were Punjabis from the central Punjab region. In fact, more than 90 percent of them were Sikhs. Why did they leave their homes and hearths to make a living in a far-off land? One, shrinking landholdings and worsening economic conditions. Two, massive Sikh recruitment into the Indian army after the



defeat of the Khalsa Raj by the British in 1849, thus opening the outside world to the opportunity-seeking Punjabis. Third, the development of railway network from Punjab to ports of Bombay and Calcutta, thus triggering the outflow of Punjab's manpower. Many left for North America by mortgaging their lands to pay fare for the steamships from Calcutta to Hong Kong and onwards to San Francisco and Vancouver. And the history of early Sikh immigrants in California is deeply intertwined with that of the early Sikh immigrants into Canada.

Briefly, Sikh immigration into Canada was triggered by the journey of a Hong Kong-based Sikh regiment through Canada. The regiment was invited to London for Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee celebrations in 1897 and on its way back to Hong Kong, it travelled from Montreal to Vancouver via train. Coming from agricultural background, these Sikh soldiers saw huge farming prospects in Canada. So the news spread in Punjab. Many of these soldiers

came back to Canada immediately and others returned after retirement and sponsored their relatives to Canada. In fact, by the first decade of the 20th century, the Sikhs had their full-fledged village called Paldi - on Vancouver Island - in British Columbia. They found work at lumber mills and on road construction sites and farms. But then a recession from 1907 onwards led to tighter immigration controls by Canada. The same year, Canada banned all new immigration and plans were mooted to send Sikh immigrants to Honduras. So these conditions forced Sikh immigrants in Canada to sneak into Washington and Oregon and on to California and swell the ranks of their brethren in the US.

According to Echoes of Freedom: South Asian Pioneers in California by the UC Berkeley, there were about 2,000 Indians in the US in 1899 and their immigration peaked by 1910. In California, these illiterate 'Hindoos' or 'Orientalists' - as Sikhs and other Indians were called then - clustered around the San Joaquin Valley, El Centro in the Imperial Valley and the Sacramento Valley. They formed 'gangs' of seasonal labour to cater to the needs of local agriculture for as little as 10 cents an hour.

Since the law didn't allow them ownership of land, many intermarried women of Mexican and white origin so they could buy land in their wife's name. However, these interracial marriages didn't solve their problem as such marriages were prohibited under California law. But many individual Sikhs saved enough to lease huge tracts of land. During these trying times, the small community - there were very few Sikh women - formed the Pacific Coast Khalsa Diwan Society in 1912 to serve as a focal point for its religious, social and cultural life. And the same year at the initiative of two

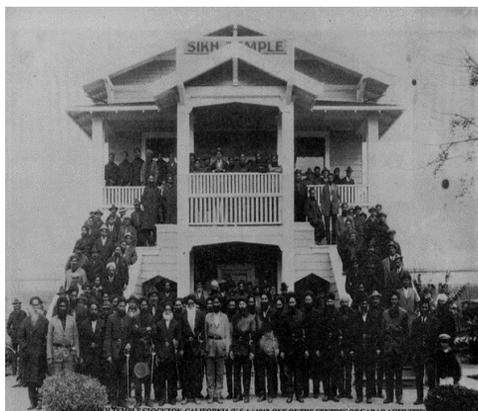
Sikh farmers - Jawala Singh and Basakha Singh the community raised money to build the first Sikh temple in the US at Stockton. As Inder Singh, chairman of the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin, says, "Jawala Singh and Basakha took this initiative. They were initially labourers who later became potato kings and made lots of money. They bought the house on South Grant Street for the first Sikh gurdwara in the US." As Singh points out, "The Stockton Sikh Temple served not only as a religious, cultural and social center for the early Sikhs, but also as the venue for Gadarites to hold their important, secret meetings. Even the late Congressman Dalip Singh Saund was once the secretary of the Stockton Sikh Temple which played such an important role in the life of early Sikhs in California." The Stockton Sikh Temple was to remain the center of the Sikh community's life until the passage of the Luce-Celler Bill in 1946 and the construction of another Sikh temple at El Centro in 1948 when the community started growing around the Sacramento Valley. On the other hand, the anti-immigration sentiment had not been far from surface in the US from the days of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 to bar the Chinese and the Gentleman's Agreement of 1907 to bar the Japanese.



As xenophobia rose again, the US passed the Immigration Act of 1917 followed by the Oriental Exclusion Act of 1924 to ban immigration from Asia, including India. In fact, the xenophobic sentiment

reached such absurd levels that in 1922 the US Supreme Court rejected the citizenship of Bhagat Singh Thind - a Sikh who had served in the US army and was granted the citizenship by an Oregon District Court - on the grounds that only people of the Caucasian race could be granted this privilege and that Thind was not Caucasian in "the common man's understanding of the term."

Enter Dalip Singh Saund - the man of



destiny. This early Sikh settler in California was to get the Indians in the US their citizenship rights and then become the first Asian to get elected to the US Congress in 1957. Born on September 20, 1899, at Chhajalwadi village near Amritsar, this young Sikh came to the US in 1920 to study food preservation in the University of California at Berkeley. But a year later, he got disillusioned and switched to mathematics and received his MA in 1922 and a Ph.D in 1924. From here onwards, his life story was to become the story of the early Sikh - rather Indian - settlers in California and the United States.

But midst all his struggles for survival, the young Saund never let the spark that his association with the Hindustan Association of America at the UC

Berkeley had ignited in him die. He became a vocal advocate of the rights of Indian immigrants and India's right to freedom. In fact, the Sikh Temple in Stockton roped this irrepressible Sikh in to write a rebuttal to Katherine Mayo's book Mother India - which made derogatory references to India.

And Saund wrote a fitting rebuttal in the form of My Mother India in 1930. Years later, this early California Sikh settler formed the India Association of America and joined hands with Sikh businessman JJ Singh Walia (of New York-based Indian League of America) and Mubarak Ali Khan (India Welfare League) to lobby Congresswoman Clare Boothe Luce of Connecticut and Congressman Emanuel Celler of New York to introduce the Luce-Celler bill in 1946 to grant citizenship to the people of Indian origin in the US.

Saund went on to become the first Congressman of Asian origin in US history when he was elected to Congress from the Imperial Valley in 1957. Meanwhile, as the Luce-Celler Bill opened the gates for more Sikhs, the growth center of the Sikh community in California started shifting from the Imperial Valley to the Sacramento Valley. Today, the thriving Sikh community of Yuba City is a symbol of the continuation of the story that began with early Sikh settlers in California.

Gurmukh Singh is the author of The Rise of Sikhs Abroad and California Dreams. Formerly a special correspondent with the Times of India in New Delhi and the Canada correspondent for Indo-Asian News Service, he currently operates out of Toronto where he also occasionally writes for the mainstream newspapers.

If the Wright brothers hadn't put their lives on the line, we would not be flying around the world these days. So we need pioneers.

- Felix Baumgartner, Austrian Skydiver

The Scudder Family Mission to India: Four Generations of Service

By Dr. Sudeep Sodhi

Ever more people today have the means to live, but no meaning to live for." ~ Viktor Frankl

Today The Christian Medical College and Hospital is ranked among the top hospitals in India and is a recent recipient of a Bill and Melinda Gates grant for expanding their vaccinations program. The first American Medical missionaries in India, The Scudder family, laid the foundation of Christian Medical College. They devoted more than 1,100 combined years to Christian medical mission services in India performed by 42 members and 4 generations of the family.

Reverend Dr. John Scudder was one of the first American missionaries to India. He founded the Scudder Memorial Hospital and Nursing School in Ranipet, Vellore, India. Reverend Dr. John and Harriet Scudder's eight children who survived to adulthood all returned to India as missionaries. They all carried on their parent's mission to better the society by providing more educational and medical facilities.



Rev. Dr. John Scudder, Sr., M.D., D.D., born in Freehold Township, New Jersey, September 3, 1793, was the first medical missionary in India. He graduated from Princeton University in 1811, and the New York college of Physicians and Surgeons in 1813. He practiced successfully in New York City. He became convinced that he was called to be a missionary. He then became thoroughly committed to serving God

through medical missions of the American Board, later of the Dutch Reformed Board. On June 8th, 1819, 26 years old Dr. John Scudder boarded the ship 'Indus' along with his wife Mrs. Harriet Scudder, daughter Maria and their maid Amy from Boston's Fulton's St. Dock and embarked on a journey that



would significantly alter many lives in this part of the world. His descendants went on to fulfill his dream - their significant mission contributions include CMC Vellore, Scudder Memorial Hospital at Ranipet, clinic at Wallaja, Arcot Mission, Arcot Seminary, Arcot Academy (later this became Voorhees College), Industrial Institute at Arni, Tindivanam High School, formation of the Church of South India, publishing scriptural literature in the local languages, translation of scriptures, Ladies Seminary at Chittoor, an elaborate organization of schools etc. The most famous of Dr. John and Harriet Scudder's descendants was Dr. Ida S. Scudder, in the first graduating class of women physicians at Cornell Medical College 1899 and the founder of the Vellore Christian Medical Center in Vellore, India.

The idea of starting a hospital came to Ida Sophia Scudder in the late 19th century, when Ida visited her medical missionary father, John Scudder, Jr., at his post in Tamil Nadu. One night, Ida was asked to help three women struggling in difficult childbirth. Custom prevented their husbands from accepting the help of a male doctor and, being untrained at that time, Ida could do nothing. The next morning she was shocked to learn that the women had

died. She believed that it was a calling and a challenge set before her by God to begin a ministry dedicated to the health needs of the people of India, particularly women and children. Consequently, Ida went back to America, entered medical training and, in 1899, was one of the first women graduates of the Weill Medical College of Cornell University.

Shortly thereafter, she returned to India and opened a one-bed clinic in Vellore in 1900. In 1902, she built a 40-bed hospital. In 1909, she started the School of Nursing and, in 1918, a medical school for women was opened under the name Missionary Medical School for Women. The medical school was upgraded into a university affiliated medical college granting the degree of M.B.B.S. in 1942, under the name Christian Medical College. Men were admitted to this college in 1947, ten in a class of 35.

The Ida B. Scudder essay competition was instituted to perpetuate her ideals. The Prize is awarded for the best essay on any subject related to the care of the sick that illustrates that the fullest possible identification with the patient is the best way to serve him/her and meet his/her needs and educational institutions. The Scudder Association, incorporated in 1938 in New York State, is a non-profit corporation.

They promote and furnish support and assistance to Scudder Memorial Hospital in Ranipet, India, and the Vellore Christian Medical College and Hospital in Vellore, India, and support other charitable religious and educational activities, and research and publish Scudder family history and genealogy.

Author Sudeep has been living in Appleton for 13 years with his family. He has a special interest in nutrition and holistic medicine and practices Gastroenterology in the Fox Valley.

Rudyard Kipling an Anglo-Indian Apologist

By Terry Dawson

Many Americans have formed their impressions of India from the writing of Rudyard Kipling, who only resided in America for a few years. Kipling's writings have had widespread and enduring influence, remaining popular despite varying critical assessments. Film versions of his stories have extended his reach beyond readers to a broad audience, even including Disney cartoons.

Americans who read Kipling's many popular books -- including the innocent children's stories of the Jungle Books, the adventures of *Kim*, and numerous other short stories and the narrative poems, might form a picture of an India which seemed exotic and romantic. But the stories came from the skillful pen of a writer who never entirely transcended his imperialist origins, though his craft, humanity and love for India took him beyond some limitations of his legacy.

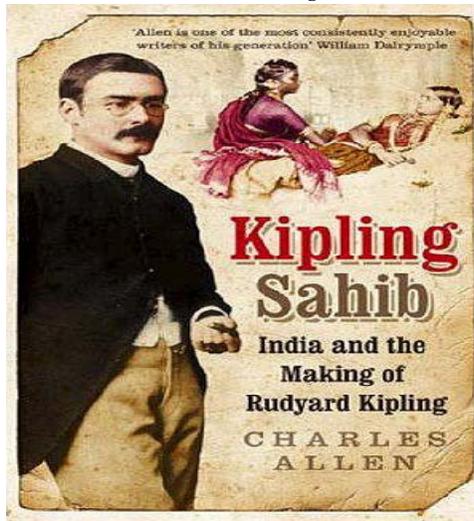
Born in Bombay in 1865, of English parents who identified themselves as Anglo-Indians, he spent happy early years in India before being sent to England at age five for schooling, as was the custom for English children. But he returned to India as a teenager to begin his writing career. Kipling wrote in his autobiography that, on his return to India, "my English years fell away, nor ever, I think, came back in full strength."



As a newspaper writer in Lahore, Kipling was hard-working and prolific, publishing collections of both poetry and

short stories by the time he was 22 years old. Even his earliest works show an awareness of the tensions and conflicts between the English and native Indian cultures. In the early story "Lispeth", included in 1888's *Plain Tales from the Hills*, he seems to readily attack colonial hypocrisy and arrogance.

After leaving his newspaper job, Kipling decided to return to England to make his way in the literary profession. After some further travels, he married an American wife and settled in Vermont, where he wrote *The Jungle Book*, *The*



Second Jungle Book, *Captains Courageous*, and a great deal of poetry. Writing in his autobiography years later, Kipling does not seem during his residence in the U.S. to have had a high opinion of Americans or American society, writing several scathing comments in his autobiography, though there were tensions between the U.S. and the British Empire which were a concern to him. He also expressed low opinions of Irish and Germans he encountered, as well as immigration and the American melting pot. Politically very conservative, he did meet and respect Teddy Roosevelt, even while writing that they argued ferociously. In 1896, following some family disputes with in-laws, the Kiplings moved back to England.

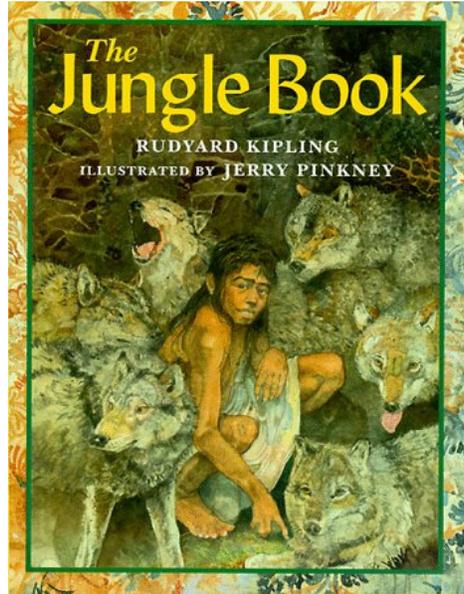
Around the time of Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1897, he published two poems

that would ever afterwards brand him with racism and imperialism. "Recessional" may appear to argue against imperial arrogance, promoting awareness that no empire will endure, but the poem mentions both "lesser breeds without the Law" and the "heathen heart." Some critics have argued that these images constitute a warning against Germany, which did not, in dealing with colonies, hold to the enlightened value Kipling felt characterized imperial Britain. More serious was "White Man's Burden," written earlier, but revised to advise the U.S. as it embarked on ruling the Philippines. "White Man's Burden" may be subject to interpretation, but on its face it appears racist and condescending, justifying imperial conquest as a noble enterprise for the benefit of the conquered, a pure rationalization."

*Take up the White Man's burden—
Send forth the best ye breed—
Go, bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need;
To wait, in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild—
Your new-caught sullen peoples,
Half devil and half child.*

The poem was immediately controversial, prompting criticism and parody. Reflecting on the brutality of American attempts to uplift and improve Filipinos, Mark Twain remarked: "'The White Man's Burden had been sung. Who will sing the Brown Man's?'" He continued to travel, visiting South Africa and becoming concerned about the Boer War. In the early years of the 20th century, he produced several major works. These included *Kim* (1901), said by some to be his masterpiece, and in some respects a sort of fantasy autobiography of an Anglo-Indian child straddling two worlds, and a lovingly written description of the tapestry of

India. Kim's dilemmas of identity, allegiance and life choices mirrored Kipling's own. He also published the children's classic *Just So Stories* (1902), and the collections *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906) and *Rewards and Fairies* (1910). This last contained "If –", still considered one of the most popular poems in English. In 1907, Kipling was awarded the Noble Prize for Literature. He was the first English language recipient of the prize and was only 41 years old. No one younger has since received the honor. Kipling is a study in contrasts, English and Indian, humanist, militarist, and imperialist, respectful and racist. He produced few enduring works in his later years, but continued to advance conservative political views. He died in 1936, and in 1941, critic



Edmund Wilson stated that Kipling had "dropped out of modern literature." George Orwell went further, saying of Kipling that "during five literary generations every enlightened person has despised him" as "morally insensitive and aesthetically disgusting."

More than 100 years after publication of his best-known works, Kipling can still inspire both admiration and controversy. There seems little doubt that he loved

India, but it also appears that he held a lifelong belief that India should always continue to need the guiding, benevolent, imperial hand of Britain. Yet his basic decency and his willingness to respect diversity -- albeit in limited fashion, show him to be a complex person and writer. Nevertheless, though he may have been a product of his times, his role as apologist for imperialism is hard to forget. There is no denying Kipling's writing skills and ability to fashion a sense of place for his readers, while creating an exciting adventure or satisfying verse. Perhaps this is why his children's stories, more innocent than many of his writings for adults, have endured longer and are easier to accept. As Salman Rushdie has written: "There will always be plenty in Kipling that I will find difficult to forgive; but there is also enough truth in these stories to make them impossible to ignore."

Appleton native Terry Dawson studied English literature and library science at the University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley & UW-Madison. He is retired from the Appleton Public Library and volunteers in the community.

Dr. Anandibai Joshi

By Dr. Sandhya Sridhar

The year was 1883. Anandibai Joshi arrived in United States to obtain a medical degree, first Hindu woman to do so. This was a time when orthodox Indian society frowned upon women who wished to pursue education. Some of her neighbors in Bengal even resorted to spitting and throwing stones at her when she walked through the streets carrying her books. She had accomplished a rare feat. She was a mere teenager then, born in 1865 with a razor sharp mind and raised with love in a wealthy Marathi Brahmin family. She was married at a tender age of 9 to Gopal Vinayak Joshi, a widower and twenty years her

senior. He was a postal clerk and also her Sanskrit tutor. Gopal considered mastery over English more important than learning the ancient language. So she began her studies in English. At 14 she gave birth to a baby, unfortunately the baby lived for only ten days. In her grief, she was convinced that access to a female doctor might have saved the baby. She set her mind on becoming a doctor. Gopal supported her dream.

He wrote to American missionaries in India expressing her interest. Royal Wilder responded asking them to convert to Christianity. Not only was this offer unthinkable for the Brahmin

couple, it added insult to injury by publishing their correspondence in Princeton's *Missionary Review*. By a stroke of luck, Mrs. Carpenter of Roselle, New Jersey, picked up the Review while waiting to see her dentist, read Gopal's letter. She was so moved by his hopes for his wife that she wrote to him immediately offering to be her host, if she were to come to United States. Gopal could not accompany her. In the nineteenth century, it was unusual for a young woman to travel alone, but she was determined. So he agreed. She made a public speech in Calcutta explaining her decision to go alone and her goal to open a medical

college for women on her return to India. She added, "I will go as a Hindu and come back to live as a Hindu."

Her speech was so inspiring that donations came from all over India, including a generous gift of 200 rupees from the Viceroy. She sold her gold bangles to make up the difference and arrived in the US. Her correspondence with Mrs. Carpenter shows how two women from very different backgrounds became so close that she called her aunt. "Then began for me", writes Mrs. Carpenter, "a course in education on Hindu manners, customs, religious rites .." (Dall, Caroline, 1888). Mrs. Carpenter answered many of her questions. She was quite impressed by her mastery of English.

This is how she saw her newly acquired niece upon her arrival. "She wore three neck-laces, three pairs of earrings, her nose-ring as a brooch, six pairs of bangles, and a saree of crimson and gold. She looks like a stout dumpy mulatto girl, not especially interesting, until her face lights up. I cannot describe



the effect. It was magical. She speaks seven languages, of which English, Sanskrit and Mahratta are three. Her English is exquisite. There is hardly a

flaw in pronunciation or construction." And more ... "Her feeling of caste is uppermost. She receives her guests with



impassive dignity like a true Oriental." (Dall, Caroline, 1888).

Couple of months later she made another entry in her diary, "Last evening Mrs. Joshee talked well, about the antiquity of her nation, and of her family record, which she asserts is two thousand years old. "Tonight, before quite a large company, she talked in an earnest and excited way about the religions of the world, showing a profound intelligence as well as scholarship." (Dall, Caroline, 1888).

Dall captures Anandibai's personality well from Anna Parsons' impressions of her from her paper written in 1881. "This is an intellectual well-balanced mind, cultivated with great care. The lady is of more than ordinary brainpower, very independent, but neither egotistical nor intolerant. She is not afraid to investigate any subject however unpopular. She is analytical and very frank in speaking her mind. She converses fluently and meets strangers with a cordial, graceful ease

that wins confidence and esteem. She has talent as an instructor, a clear style of expression. She has great equanimity, enjoys the attention of refined people, and naturally drifts into the society of the best, but never shrinks from those less fortunate if she can do them good. She perceives the character of others readily and is seldom deceived, has a fine memory and good descriptive powers. In traveling nothing escapes her. I see her in the future as one who has no superior, living for truth, justice, and honor."

It is no wonder that Anandibai proved to be a model student. She wrote a thesis on "Obstetrics among the Aryan Hindoos". She graduated with an M.D. in 1886. Queen Victoria sent her a congratulatory message. She was offered a job as a physician-in-charge of the female ward at Albert Edward Hospital in Kolhapur, India. (Schuler, 2006). She always wanted to return and serve women of India. In a short time she had developed ties to her newly adopted home. It was not easy for her to return home because she was also ailing for sometime. Unfortunately she had contracted tuberculosis. She suffered chills and coughing fits. It worsened in cold weather and her dietary restrictions didn't help either.

She returned to India, receiving a hero's welcome, but her health did not improve. She died on February 26, 1887, in her mother's arms at her birthplace, and was mourned throughout India, celebrated for her courage and perseverance. According to her last wish, her ashes were sent to Mrs. Carpenter, who placed them in her family cemetery in Poughkeepsie, New York. She was only 22.

It was a promising life, cut short too early. She was a blazing star, a true pioneer and a role model for others to follow. She continues to inspire generations that followed her. The world today is much smaller.

"The land flourished because it was fed from so many sources--because it was nourished by so many cultures and traditions and peoples."
- Lyndon B. Johnson, U. S. President

More than a century ago, when people were not at all familiar with other cultures, Anandibai represented the best of India. *The Life of Dr. Anandibai Joshi: A Kinswoman of Pundita Ramabai*, by Caroline H. Dall, Robert Brothers, Boston, March 1888. (Made available by Library of Congress)

Anandi Gopal Joshi, from Wikipedia, November 12, 2012 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anandi_Gopal_Joshi

Ron Schuler's Parlor Tricks, by Ron Schuler, 2006 <http://rsparlourtricks.blogspot.com/2006/03/anandibai-joshi.html>

Sandhya Sridhar immigrated to USA in 1980 and after completing her doctoral studies at Ohio State University moved to Wisconsin. She has been a resident of Wisconsin since 1987. She teaches at the College of Business, University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh

Mysore Sabu, The Elephant Boy

By Shekar Rao

We have enjoyed as kids and even as adults watching with our kids, movies like *Elephant Boy* (1937), *The Thief of Bagdad* (1940), The 11 year old kid from Mysore who became the graceful actor, Mysore Sabu captured our hearts as the kid who befriended tigers and animals in the forest, who was adventurous and was always fighting against the "bad guys". He moved gracefully in the forest swinging from tree branches and running through streams, hills and jungle.

Whether he was riding thru the jungle clinging to the back of the man-eating tiger, Shere-Khan, while trying to kill him by stabbing him with his "tooth," or leading a herd of elephants to the rescue of Jon Hall or Maria Montez, or combating the evil intentions of Conrad Veidt, or flying on the shoulder of a gigantic genie while holding on to his pigtail, or sailing with Sinbad, it was always sure to be great fun and exciting action.

The movie sound stages of London and Hollywood are a long way from Karapur, Mysore City, India where Sabu Dastagir was born on 27 January 1924. Sabu's father, who was in the service of the Maharajah of Mysore, died when Sabu was a small child. His uncle, Shaik Hussain, also worked for the Maharajah as the caretaker for his herd of two hundred elephants. He hired young Sabu to help care for the herd, thus making his later screen persona as *The Elephant Boy* a legitimate reality as opposed to hype invented by the studio publicity department.

In 1936 filmmaker Robert Flaherty was in Mysore making a documentary for

British movie mogul Alexander Korda. One day he noticed young Sabu working with the Maharajah's large herd of elephants and he was enormously impressed by the extraordinary skill displayed by the boy in his handling of the great beasts. Sabu was also blessed with good looks and an ingratiating personality and



Flaherty, thinking the boy deserved better than a lifetime of shoveling elephant dung, arranged for him to go to England and study acting. It took a while to make the jump from the Maharajah's elephant boy to Alexander Korda's elephant boy, but in 1937 thirteen year old Sabu starred in a British Films production, in the title role of "Elephant Boy."

A.K. Sett, honorary personal assistant to the prime minister of Mysore, recalled his meeting with Flaherty in a letter to Paul Rotha, Flaherty's biographer, in 1958: "My most treasured memory of this day is of Sabu ... he made his appearance slowly, astride an elephant, and there they stood in the middle of the very large compound for all the world to see.

Very thin and naked save a small *lungi* wound round his legs and his head tightly covered with a white turban in the typical southern way.

The manner in which he handled the ponderous, lumbering elephant was enough to stir one's confidence and trust in him." Later in the same letter, he stated: "Years later, Sabu dined with me informally and alone ... I told him how and where I first saw him ... This time he did not make his appearance on an elephant. He arrived in a luxurious Cadillac. He was most elegantly clad, not in a tight turban and skimpy *lungi*, I can assure you. And he spoke with a distinct American accent."

The six-year-old Sabu was taken into the service of the Maharajah of Mysore, first as a stable boy, then as a *mahout* in his own right, and it was when riding one of his beloved elephants that Flaherty first saw him when looking for someone to play *Rudyard Kipling's* Toomai of the Elephants (from 'The Jungle Book').

Sabu's performance was universally praised and the film a box-office hit, and *Alexander Korda* quickly signed him up to a long-term contract. The first fruit of this was *The Drum* (d. Zoltán Korda, 1938), his first Technicolor production.

Sabu's winning performance as heroic young Prince Azim showed that he had real range as an actor, cemented by his third, best-known role as Abu, *The Thief of Bagdad* (1940), a notoriously piecemeal production shot on both sides of the Atlantic. No actor ever enjoyed a role more than Sabu did his in *The Thief of Bagdad*, and his enjoyment is infectious.

In truth, he was a youth, living a fantasy and knew it, so he reacted, rather than acted. When released on Christmas Day, 1940, *The Thief of Bagdad* was deservedly a smash hit, as well as winning Oscars for color cinematography, color art direction, and visual and sound special effects.

The former mahout's final film for Korda was another excursion into Kipling.

The Jungle Book, released in 1942. Sabu was a natural for Mowgli, the feral child raised by a wolf pack. Animal footage was cleverly integrated with that of the humans so that the beasts seemed directly involved with the humans; only the snakes were models. As bibliophiles know, there are *two* Jungle Books, although they are often published as one volume, and together they comprise fifteen tales. This being too many for one film, and with "Toomai of the Elephants" having been treated in *Elephant Boy*, other stories had to be chosen selectively. They are: "Mowgli's Brothers", "How Fear Came", "Tiger! Tiger!" and "The King's Ankus".

Sabu was also signed by Universal, where he appeared in four films in support of "The Queen of Technicolor", Maria Montez. The first was *Arabian Nights*, released in 1942. Sabu received third billing for the first time. However, he did get to lead a cavalry charge at the film's conclusion, arriving in time to save the hero and heroine. For the next three pictures, *White Savage* ('43), *Cobra Woman* ('44) and *Tangier* (46), his role was essentially the same, friend of the hero and contributor of mild comic relief. The last named movie differed only in that the setting was updated to World War II.

The war years were busy ones for the young actor. When not cavorting on the Universal back lot, he participated in the Treasury Department's defense bond sales campaign. He toured 30 cities and appeared on radio. On January 4, 1944 Selar Shaik Sabu became an American citizen. Not long after, he entered the Army Air Force Basic Training Center at

Greensboro, North Carolina. He served as a tail gunner for the remainder of the war, flying over forty missions in the Pacific, and winning the Distinguished Flying Cross among other decorations. He was mustered out of the army a Staff sergeant.

After completing his work on *Tangier*, Sabu returned to England for his ninth film, *Black Narcissus*, the Archer's 1947 award-winner for color cinematography



(by Jack Cardiff) and directed by Michael Powell. His role was not major, though, as the son of an Indian general who attempts to improve his knowledge by attending a school run by Anglican nuns headed by Deborah Kerr, it was an important one. Set in the Himalayas (but shot at Pinewood Studios and Horsham in Sussex), *Black Narcissus* tells of the various problems the nuns have coping with the environment and the populace, as well as the inner turmoil caused by Sister Ruth's (Kathleen Byron) losing her religious calling and succumbing to lust.

Sabu appeared about midway, wearing the scent that gives the story its title. He promptly becomes the object of desire of a young pupil played by Jean Simmons (complete with nose-ring) and shortly thereafter runs off with her. He returns much later to explain the situation to Sister Clodagh (Kerr), and then is off again. Sabu returned to the United States for his last Universal effort, a programmer called *Man-Eater of Kumaon* ('48), which is best forgotten. The actor went over to Columbia for his next picture, and another rendezvous with destiny. On the set of *Song of India*, in July, 1948, he met a young actress

named Marilyn Cooper, who had been called upon without notice to replace an ailing Gail Russell in the female lead. On October 19 they were married and would become the parents of two children, Paul and Jasmine.

Sabu was a practical and realistic person. Early on he realized that his appeal would wane as he grew older. However, he had no intention of becoming a *mahout* again, so around 1950 he began a contracting and real estate business, which occupied most of his time when he was not acting. Time proved him to be correct; his popularity did lessen. He took what film work came his way, even though jungle and fantasy films had fallen out of favor by the Fifties. The results were less than satisfying, however. In 1952 he returned to his homeland for a film called *Bagdad*. This time he did not portray a thief. Toward the end of that year he was back in England, starring in the Harringay Circus with an exciting Elephant act. Initially, he appeared in his finery from the conclusion of *The Thief of Bagdad*, but audience response was low, so he was forced to wear the more traditional *dhoti* (loincloth), and consequently suffered a great deal from the cold.

He made one last film that was released in 1964 after his death, "A Tiger Walks." He died in 1963 of a heart attack leaving his wife, Marilyn Cooper and two children, Paul and Jasmine. Sabu, the Elephant Boy and war hero, was dead at the age of thirty-nine.

Incidentally, I have a particular fancy for Sabu as he hails from my state Mysore (now called Karnataka) in India, and also because of personal stories about him told to me by my dear friend Ben who fought along side Sabu as aerial photographer while Sabu was tail gunner during the War when they were paired for reconnaissance missions over Japan.

Author Shekar Rao is a resident of Fox valley and an IndUS volunteer

Vivekananda

By Sonia Beherawala

Swami Vivekananda was an influential, religious leader who is credited for raising awareness of Hinduism in the Western world. Born as Narendra Nath Datta to an aristocratic Bengali family on January 12, 1863, Vivekananda showed a very early interest in spirituality and religious teachings.

His formative years were spent reading and understanding some of Hinduism's greatest scriptures including the Vedas,



the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, the Ramayana, and the Mahabharata. He showed similar curiosity when it came to the teachings of great Western philosophers like Immanuel Kant and in the idea of evolutionism as presented by Charles Darwin. He also showed a keen interest in ascetics and monks and took it upon himself to wander through British India in order to better understand the plight of the common man. The turning point in Vivekananda's life came when he met the saint Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, who eventually became his guru. It was from this great man that Vivekananda learned and embodied the idea that service to others was the greatest form of worship.

In 1893, Vivekananda was invited to speak at the Parliament of Religions in

Chicago. That year marked the first time spiritual leaders from different faiths congregated in order to evoke interreligious dialogue. When the 30-year-old Vivekananda stepped up to the podium in his characteristic saffron robes and began his address with "Sisters and Brothers of America", he received a standing ovation from the crowd of almost 7,000 attendees for several minutes. His speech that day and during subsequent sessions served to help others understand the true essence of Hinduism as well as to help them identify the reasons behind religious differences. His ideas truly voiced the sense of oneness and universality that the organizers of the Parliament were trying to convey. As a result, Vivekananda was catapulted to international fame and spent many years giving discourses in religion and spirituality across the globe.

On his return to India, Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna mission based on the principles of service and Karma Yoga. He led a simple life until his death on July 2, 1902. His final breath was taken while he was meditating and it is said that he fulfilled his own prophecy of not living until the



age of 40.

Swami Vivekananda truly was an inspirational spiritual leader who revitalized Hinduism both within India and outside of it. He helped spread its teachings, as well as the ideas of yoga and transcendental meditation to the Western world. He was also a powerful orator and an individual who authored several books both in English and Bengali.

Quotes of Swami Vivekananda

"We are what our thoughts have made us; so take care about what you think. Words are secondary. Thoughts live; they travel far.."

"Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life - think of it, dream of it, live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body, be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success."

"You have to grow from the inside out. None can teach you, none can make you spiritual. There is no other teacher but your own soul."

"The will is not free - it is a phenomenon bound by cause and effect - but there is something behind the will which is free."

"If money help a man to do good to others, it is of some value; but if not, it is simply a mass of evil, and the sooner it is got rid of, the better."

Sonia Baherawala is a business professional who has been a resident of the Fox Valley for 23 years. She currently resides in Appleton with her family. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh with a degree in Biology and then went on to pursue additional degrees in Business and Health Care Administration from the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee.

"We asked for workers. We got people instead." - Max Frisch. A Swiss Journalist

I am not young enough to know everything

- Oscar Wilde

Dr. Maxine Bernsten

By Dr. Sandhya Sridhar

Maxine Bernsten whizzes through narrow lanes of Phaltan, in Maharashtra, in



her very own auto-rickshaw. I rode with her and visited two schools she runs. The first one is for children mostly from middle classes. They wear uniforms and are eager to learn. Another is in poor area on the outskirts. Most of these young children are from untouchable castes. Maxine says, "They need better teaching materials and the sort of sup-

port they don't receive at home". Using her expertise, she has developed an informal, hands-on method to teach them reading. She is a strong proponent of teaching them in the language they speak. The teachers also come from the same community. I was impressed with their level of dedication. They literally have to gather many pre-schoolers from their homes before they start their classes. Once there, they enjoy learning.

I met Maxine when she came as a visiting professor to Lawrence University in Appleton. She was preparing a group of students to live in India for a semester.

An American born linguist, with roots in Norway and Finland, Maxine first went to India for two years in 1960s and taught English in Hyderabad. She returned as a Full Bright Scholar and earned her Ph.D, from University of Pennsylvania with a dissertation on sociolinguistic study of Phaltan speech. She settled there and became an Indian citizen in 1978. She continues to work at the Pragat Shikshan Sanstha, and also directs the Center for Language, Litera-



cy and Communication.

Of many awards and recognitions, the most valued bestowed upon her are by her students when they call her Maxine Mavashi (Aunt Maxine) or Maxine Aaji (Grandma Maxine).

Author Sandhya Sridhar immigrated to USA in 1980 and after completing her doctoral studies at Ohio State University moved to Wisconsin. She has been a resident of Wisconsin since 1987. She teaches at the College of Business, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

IndUS News

Sandesh Voice of IndUS Fox Valley was started as a newsletter by Dr. B. S. Sridhar in 2002. Under Dr. Badri Varma's editorship it grew to a theme-based publication. As you know, each issue is built around a unique theme. After a decade of service, many of the original editors are bowing out to make way for the new. We welcome aboard Dr. Sudeep Sodhi, Rajan Subramanian, Sonia Baherawala, Sonu Pareek and Viju Sethu Rao. We sincerely thank departing editors, Dr. B.

S. Sridhar, Shekar Rao, Terry Dawson and Dr. Mahesh Subramony for their contribution in making Sandesh what it is. Dr. Badri Varma will continue in a new role as an advisor while Dr. Sandhya Sridhar takes over as the Chief Editor.

IndUS Fox Valley community donations contributed \$100 each towards the Dr. MLK Jr. Day Celebrations in Appleton and in Green Bay. We have been participating

in MLK celebration in Appleton for several years by providing four \$25 Barnes and Nobel gift certificates to essay winners in each of the four age groups. This was the first time we contributed the same amount for winners in Green Bay.



"A simple way to take measure of a country is to look at how many want in. And how many want out." - Tony Blair, British Prime Minister

"If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward." - Martin Luther King Jr.

We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing

- George Bernard Shaw

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Visit our website at

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IndUS of Fox Valley president Kamal Varma recognized by Toward Community as a volunteer and a diversity educator. She received this year's Jane LaChapelle McCarty Unity in Diversity



Award. Award winners are those who have made great strides in bringing different community members together in the spirit of Martin Luther King Jr.

IndUS-2012 annual banquet (our 14th annual!) was enjoyed by around 325 guests on Saturday, November 17th at the Radisson Paper Valley. This year's theme was *The Mysterious World of Indian Mythology*. The evening started



at 5:00 PM with a reception, exhibition and a cocktail hour for socialization. The reception area had been beautifully decorated with tableaux that became the background for many group photos throughout the evening!

Kamal Varma, President of IndUS welcomed all the guests. The assembly in the banquet hall then commenced with the lamp lighting ceremony. Joining Camille Solberg, a representative of the Honorable Senator Ron Johnson, were

representatives of IndUS volunteers Seema Kamalpurkar and I Dewa Ketut Alit Adnya along with guest



representatives Vicky Rotzel and James E. King. Wendy Fleury, correspondent for Channel 5 and Kartik Ravel, a long-time member and an IndUS volunteer were the emcees. Consistent with the culture of giving Kamal Varma,



President of IndUS of Fox Valley, and Chitra Pandya, President of N.E.W. India Association presented \$1000 checks each to United Way of Oshkosh and Fond-du-Lac. Dr. Gaurav Bansal, co-chair of the event, and Ms. Nancy Heykes, event co-chair and Chair of the IndUS Board



welcomed guests, thanked sponsors and saluted volunteers.

Chef Peter D'Souza once again created a banquet representing both the theme and cuisine from different regions of India.

The first course was Kosambari which was prepared from cucumber salad with soaked moong dal. Main buffet entrees included dishes from various parts of India such as Avial – a dish from southern Indian state of Kerala, Palak Paneer from north India, and



Cauliflower Peas & Carrots from east India. Dessert was roasted vermicelli creamed with pistachios and almonds and a touch of cardamom. This last dish was in special tribute to the theme, since it was mentioned in famous Indian myths. “The vast array of spices, use of vegetables, lentils, fresh herbs, saffron, yogurt, milk, chutneys, breads, rice and



nuts throughout the cuisine makes Indian cuisine unique and similar to its unique mythology,” D’Souza said.

The Silent Auction included a wide range of articles and services to lure a broad range of interests and price levels. We appreciate the support of all donors and buyers. Funds raised will be



children. The cultural program featured mythological imagery beautifully performed by Kalaanjali School of Dance & Music and Kanopy Dance Company both from Madison, Wisconsin. In addition there was Gamelan music from Indonesia,



donated to projects serving the needs of

featuring a variety of instruments . It was directed by Gamelan Master of Lawrence University I Dewa Ketut Alit Adnyana. The cultural program was directed and produced by Dr. B. S. Sridhar.

IndUS report compiled by Dr. Gaurav Bansal and supported by Sonu Pareek

*“Remember, remember always, that all of us, and you and I especially, are descended from immigrants and revolutionists.”
- Franklin D. Roosevelt, U.S. President*

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