



“BROADCAST”

Newsletter of the Toronto Unit

Naparima Alumni Association of Canada

*Naparima Teachers' Training
St. Andrew's Theological
St. Augustine Girls'
Naparima Girls'
Naparima
Hillview
Iere*

Vol. XXXV No. 2

Spring 2012



NGHS Celebrates 100 Years (1912 – 2012)



*NGHS Alumnae
enjoying the Entertainment*



*Mrs. Patricia Ramgoolam, Her Excellency Dr. Jean
Ramjohn Richards, Mrs. Jean Bahadur, Mrs. Mavis
Lee Wah, Dr. Jennifer Yamin-Ali & Ms. Fairy Lalla.*



LAWYERS

OUMARALLY, BABOOLAL



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The Naparima Alumni Association of Canada (NAAC) was founded in Toronto in 1978 and includes graduates of Naparima College, Naparima Girls' High School, St. Augustine Girls' High School, Hillview College, Iere High School, Naparima Teachers' Training College and St. Andrew's Theological College. Among other things, it supports programmes at alma mater schools as well as a steelband programme in schools in the Toronto area.

All graduates coming to Ontario are invited to join the Association.

2011-12 NAAC Executive

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CREDITS

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President's Message

To address the unease that members voiced at the last AGM regarding the future of NAAC, the Executive sought advice from a consultant specializing in non-profit organizations at no cost to NAAC. What we learned was not new to us. I have summarized the main points below.

Just like people, organizations have a life span and although our membership numbers are healthy, members reside all over the GTA and even further afield, so we will continue to have difficulty with participation on a regular basis.

Membership numbers will not increase since fewer young graduates are emigrating to Canada from the T & T schools. Those graduates who are already settled here have not shown an interest over the years. It is possible that our mandate does not meet their needs.

In order to assuage this "unease" we should prepare a binding document, similar to a Will, that clearly states NAAC's wishes re disbursement of funds held in our accounts in the event of any future major changes to our constitution or on dissolution of our organization.

With these facts in mind, the Executive will put forward a draft proposal for discussion at the upcoming AGM with a bare-bones plan for disbursement of NAAC funds.

I look forward to hearing your views on this and other topics, so please attend the AGM on May 26th.

Before I sign off as President, I wish to thank my fellow Executive team members for serving with me this past year.

Merle Ramdial

From the Editor's Desk...

The NGHS Centenary celebrations continued this year and thanks to Principal, Patricia Ramgoolam, we had a great selection of pictures from which to choose. To hear from someone who was there for all the events, read Karma Naik's piece, in which she describes her experience and her feeling of pride in being present at NGHS during the celebrations (p.12).

Dr. Frank Birbalsingh's review of the novel, *The Island Quintet: a Sequence* by Trinidadian writer Raymond Ramcharitar first appeared in another publication. Thank you Dr. Birbalsingh for allowing us to reproduce it (p.18).

"Death is not extinguishing the light, it is only putting out the lamp because the dawn has come." – Rabindranath Tagore 1861-1941. I am not sure how many more poems Ruthven Vince Foster (1945-2009) had tucked away in his portfolio, but I am very pleased to share two of them in this issue. (p.25)

The Trinidad Guardian ran a series of articles appearing over an eight-week period under the headline NGHS Celebrates 100 Years of Passion profiling a few past students. The Centenary Committee sent us email messages alerting us to which Sunday each would appear, so that we could download them. These profiles, now appear on pages 20 -23.

The pictures of the NAAC Christmas Dinner and Dance on the back cover were taken by G. Desmond Teelucksingh. Thanks for volunteering and taking the time out of your evening to do this for NAAC yet again.

Merle Ramdial



NOTICE NAAC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, May 26, 2012 • 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Knox Presbyterian Church

4156 Sheppard Avenue East , Scarborough, ON

Refreshments will be served

Finance Report

This report reflects the Association's financial information as at February 29, 2012. Annual Financial Statements for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2012 will be presented at the Annual General Meeting on May 26, 2012.

Bingo Account

Bank of Nova Scotia	\$19,833.00
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General Account

Bank of Nova Scotia	\$33,014.00
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TOTAL BANK ACCOUNTS	\$52,847.00
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NAAC INVESTMENTS

Bank of Nova Scotia - Term Deposit	
– Balance at Dec/11	\$ 1,230.00
Edward Jones GIC @ 2.0%	\$11,843.00
IPC Securities - Inter Pipeline Fund:	
*1600 Units - B.V. per unit \$10.00	\$16,000.00
**Dividends earned – Apr/11 – Mar/12	\$1,680.00
Riocan REIT	\$14,654.00
**500 units – B.V.	
Dividends earned Feb & Mar/12	\$127.00

TOTAL INVESTMENTS	<u>\$45,534.00</u>
--------------------------	---------------------------

*Market value of the Inter Pipeline Fund as at Feb 2012 was \$19.45 per unit. This reflects an increase of 94.5% over book value. The fund continues to earn dividends at an increased rate of \$140 per month which translates to a return of 10.5% per annum on that investment.

**M.V. of Riocan REIT as at Feb 2012 was \$27.12 per unit. This reflects an increase of 1.8% over B.V. Dividends earned on this stock shows a return of 5.2% P.A.

The Association continues to award bursaries, provide funding for resource materials, book awards, literary awards, and civic awards to NAAC's affiliated schools in Trinidad in the amount of \$6,260 yearly.

This is the sum of the following amounts to each of the five schools: NGHS, Iere and SAGHS in the amount of \$1320 each, Naparima College in the amount of \$1120 and Hillview College in the amount of \$1180.

Canadian bursaries to West Humber Collegiate and Cedarbrae Collegiate in the amount of \$1,000.00 were also awarded during this fiscal year. Thanks

again to La Prima Investments, in association with Mr Roy Bhopalsingh, for another generous donation this year in the amount of \$1000.00 for NAAC bursaries.

For the current fiscal year the main events that contributed to the Association's revenue pool were from the Annual Christmas Dinner & Dance which raised a net income of \$2,187, the La Pique 100 Dinner & Dance with a net income of \$2,206 and Bingo sessions.

Donations to the La Pique 100 Fund stand at \$7,374. (*See the updated list that follows this report on page 4*) Details of income and expense by each project will be presented in our Financial Statements for the fiscal year at the Annual General Meeting on May 26, 2012.

Respectfully submitted

Norma Ramsahai, Treasurer

Bingo Report

Bingo sessions are run at Ultimate Bingo Charity Association, 2355 Keele St., Toronto, Ontario.

For the current fiscal period April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012, NAAC was responsible for 25 bingo sessions. Revenue earned for that period with an estimated projection for March 2012 amounts to approximately \$12,500. This averages out to about \$500 per session, and reflects a decrease of about \$160 per session over the same period last year.

NAAC needs revenue from bingo funds of approximately \$12K annually to financially manage our steelband and bursary programs at West Humber Collegiate Institute and Cedarbrae Collegiate to maintain the status quo. For this fiscal year, bingo revenue was used to pay honoraria to steelband instructors at West Humber Collegiate and Cedarbrae Collegiate plus covering 50% of the cost of steelpan tuning.

Special thanks to all our volunteers especially our team leaders, Vitra Mungal, Ian Ramdial, and Norma Ramsahai for their help and commitment in running the bingo sessions. We look forward to your continued contribution and support.

Financial details of the individual items will be contained in the Profit & Loss statement to be presented at our Annual General Meeting on May 26, 2012.

Norma Ramsahai, Bingo Manager

La Pique 100 Fund Donors

(as of April 1, 2012):

Mrs Juanita Baboolal-Ali	\$ 50
Rev & Mrs Albert Baldeo	\$ 100
Mr Ralph Baney	\$ 100
Mrs Jacqueline Bell	\$ 100
Mrs Vidya Mungal-Bissessar	\$ 100
Mr Anthony Boodhoo	\$ 100
Mrs Gloria Boos	\$ 100
Mrs Marlene Cassim	\$ 150
Mrs Polly Clarke	\$ 100
Ms Marjorie David	\$ 50
Rev Timothy & Mrs Leta Dayfoot	\$ 100
Mrs Joyce Douglas	\$ 100
Dr Ramabai Espinet	\$ 200
Mrs Raabaya Goodman	\$ 20
Mrs Myrtle Gopeesingh	\$ 200
Mrs Nancy Gordon	\$ 600
Mrs Shanti Inman	\$ 100
Ms Brenda Jaleel	\$1000
Mrs Phyllis Jardine	\$ 100
Mrs Angela Jutlah	\$ 100
Mrs June Khan	\$ 100
Ms Joyce L. King	\$ 50
Mrs Barbara Kumar	\$ 25
Mr & Mrs George Lalsingh	\$ 100
Dr Mamin Lee-Sing	\$ 200
Dr Clarence Madhosingh	\$ 100
Mrs Sonia Mallick	\$ 50
Ms Vitra Mungal	\$ 100
Ms Karma Naike	\$ 500
Mr Elsworth Poliah	\$ 100
Mrs Jennifer Ragoonanan	\$ 100
Mrs Kurlie Ramasra	\$ 150
Mrs Vilma Ramcharan	\$ 100
Mr & Mrs Ian Ramdial	\$ 500
Mrs Phyllis Ramjattansingh	\$ 100
Mr Phillip Ramsankar	\$ 100
Ms Shirley Rodrigues	\$ 50
Mrs Wendy Rostant	\$ 100
Mrs Kathy Sammy	\$ 100
Mrs Cynthia Seunarine	\$ 100
Mrs Pearl Seunarine	\$ 100
Mrs Angela Simon	\$ 25
Mrs Margaret Sitaram	\$ 100
Mrs Bess Maharaj-Smith	\$ 100
Dr G.D. Teelucksingh	\$ 200
Mr Clive Teelucksingh	\$ 100
Mrs Angela Thomas	\$ 150
Mrs Marilyn White	\$ 200
Mrs Letitia Yerex	\$ 100
Sale of photos	\$ 104
Total	\$7374

Membership Report

MEMBERS

HONORARY MEMBERS	25
LIFE – REGULAR	153
LIFE – ASSOCIATE	40
ANNUAL – REGULAR	47
ANNUAL – ASSOCIATE	18
ANNUAL – STUDENT	3
TOTAL	286

Are you interested in joining a Zumba Dance class? The Membership Committee suggested this as a means of encouraging members to meet in an informal environment and to enjoy dancing together as a small NAAC group. Members who are interested are asked to contact me at:

Tel: 416-499-7357 or email: cynthia_ramdeen@hotmail.com for further details.

We look forward to meeting all members at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting on Saturday, May 26, 2012.

Cynthia Ramdeen

Chair, Membership Committee

Ann Dabideen, *Committee Member*

Everald Seupaul, *Committee Member*

— REMINDER —

NAAC MEMBERSHIP

*Please remember
to renew your*

NAAC Membership.

The membership year runs from

January to December.

Social Report

Our Annual Christmas Dinner & Dance 2011 is now history. Though not as successful as we anticipated, a profit of \$2,187 was made and a good time was had by all. We thank all our members, friends and donors for their support. Special thanks to Horace Bhopalsingh who adjusted his vacation plans just to accommodate our request that he be our MC. Thanks also to Selwyn Baboolal, who was prepared to sub for Horace, if needed.

For 2012 we looked into another Casino trip but had to abort our plans as unfortunately the Casinos are no longer giving as good incentives as they were in the past. Now we are looking to mid-September and to a day trip to Niagara-on-the-Lake .

Do not hesitate to pass along your ideas and suggestions for any future social events . My email is rostant@idirect.com . Looking forward to hearing from you.

Wendy Rostant

Chair, Social Committee

Quotes to Ponder

"You know there is a problem
with the education system
when you realize that out of
the 3 R's only one begins
with an R."

- Dennis Miller

"A closed mouth gathers no foot."

- Anonymous

Communications Report

If you would like us to communicate important time-sensitive information to you in the months between the publication of the Spring and Fall issues of Broadcast, please send your updated email address to mjrmdial@hotmail.com Just 45% of our members on file have email addresses that work.

In the meantime, we are still working on upgrading the NAAC website to include a two-way messaging component.

Needed: Volunteers to edit and prepare reports and articles for Broadcast. Since we publish only two issues per year, the investment in time is seasonal. Please consider joining our team.

Thanks to Ras Shreeram for soliciting advertisements. The revenue from ads help to defray some of the costs of production of Broadcast.

I truly appreciate the time that Ramabai Espinet has squeezed out of her busy schedule to answer requests from this committee. Thank you Ramabai and I look forward to working with you next year.

Merle Ramdial

Chair, Communications Committee

— NOTICE —

NAAC Bursary Applications

Must be received no later than
Friday November 16, 2012.

Guidelines are printed on pg. 27 and the
Application Form
may be downloaded
from the NAAC website:
www.naactoronto.ca

NOTICE: Steelband Classes • 2012/2013 Season

West Humber Collegiate Institute

Start Date: TBA

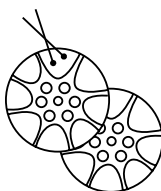
Time: 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Instructor:

Al Foster

Contact Ian Ramdial: 905-844-1254

email: iramdial@cogeco.ca



Cedarbrae Collegiate Institute

Start Date: TBA

Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Instructor:

Randolph Karamath

Tel: 416-283-4152

email: ramachez@hotmail.com

Steelband Report

School Partnership Program:

NAAC continues with its support of the steelband program at its associated Toronto area schools. Bursaries and Awards made to students at West Humber C.I., Cedarbrae C.I. and North Albion C.I. and funding was provided for maintenance of steel pans in the classroom. As indicated in a previous report, NAAC will consider providing more support for our partnership schools for the next school year.

After-School Community Teaching Program:

At West Humber C.I. the NAAC School Community Steelpan Teaching courses were well attended. An average of 30 students attended the Beginner class in each semester while the Advanced class (consisting of members of Panache) had about 35 students – both classes being taught by Al Foster. We look forward to an easier and less stressful transition for the present beginners as they move up to the advanced class in September. At Cedarbrae C.I., Randolph Karamath has been looking after the program with about 25 students in attendance each semester.

Panache:

Compared to activities in recent years, Panache has had a lighter load this past year. The band performed on Sundays at Wild Water Kingdom throughout the Summer break, at NAAC's La Pique 100 event and the annual Christmas Dinner/Dance and also volunteered their services at two community events. In addition, the band had three paying gigs – the Mt. Sinai NICU Picnic at High Park (Jun), a Wedding in Whitby (Sep) and the annual Etobicoke Santa Claus Parade (Dec). The band will perform at the West Humber C.I. Music Night on April 12 and is committed to three other engagements over the next three months.

Ian Ramdial, Steelband Liaison

Music Notes

from West Humber Collegiate

It's been an exciting year once again for the WHCI Music program!! We have played live music for the Grade 8 visits, the Holiday Assembly, the Awards Assembly, and the WHCI-hosted Basketball Tournament!

Our Steel Band, Drumline and African Drumming Ensembles played **Roy Thomson Hall** (our eighth year in a row being selected for this prestigious event!) for the Martin Luther King Day Celebration concert, along with **Kardinall Offishall, Fefe Dobson, and JRDN!**

Our Steel band and Motown bands are very active in the community as well. We played all the music for the Black History Service at Applewood United Church on Feb 5, Grace Anglican Church on Feb 26.

Music Night is Thursday April 12: With special guests "PANACHE" steel band, in their 20 year partnership with West Humber CI! Since 1992! Thank you!!!

-International Equity Conference:

Monday April 16 at the Delta Chelsea Hotel

-Beeton JMS: Two music concerts:

Tuesday April 17 in Beeton

-PANFEST: Grade 11 and 12 Steel Bands

will be performing Thursday April 26!

-Our famous bi-annual MUSIC TRIP returns to Cleveland Ohio, from May 9-13!

For many pictures and video, please see www.whcimusic.com!

Mr. J. Cullen, Head of Arts, WHCI



PHI Electronic Pan at WHCI 2011

Dr. Allan Mckenzie
Remarks at Graduation
Naparima College on October 15, 2011

I consider it an honour and privilege to be invited by your principal to address you today. For the graduates, this is a special day for you and for me too. The exceptionality of today, for me, comes after a long period – about 18 years - since I retired as Principal. After 7 years, as a student here, 7 years as a teacher and 27 years as a Principal and teacher here, Principal Dowlath has resurrected me from relative obscurity. This condition of my anonymity with Naps might have been by design, or by accident of circumstances. Divine intervention is always the agent of the miraculous. So here I am.

Before going on to my essential message, I must congratulate the school for continued excellence in academic achievement, in sports, as well as in many other areas of the social and educational aspects of school life. This school is privileged. For so many years, since the last ten (10) years of my Principalship, we have been able to draw upon the upper levels of developed intelligence among the students of the country. With such a talented distribution within our annual intake, society expects us to do well. But doing well requires more than the input of teachers. It requires, above all, consistent focus on achievement. This is the responsibility of the students and staff present here today. This is my first pause, therefore, to pay tribute to the graduates. You have used your talents well. My deepest congratulations to you and to the staff for continuing to be among the top 3 secondary schools of the country. I say “3” just in case anyone has doubts.

One of the first points I want to make to the graduates is the responsibility which your talents and intelligence have placed upon you. With the exposure you have had so far, with the knowledge and awareness that have visited your mind through technological and environmental awareness, you are a different and unique generation. You, no doubt, will go on, through the process of further education and training, to equip yourself for satisfactory and rewarding employment. As you pursue an occupational career, what engages your mind on this matter? The temptation to think exclusively about

income, about money and the perquisites that go with lucrative employment, is a seductive pre-occupation with the young, and often with older persons as well. Obviously money is important; but money has its place and its uses. That’s all.

However, I invite you to consider seriously doing what you find really enjoyable and fulfilling in life. Human beings, by nature, will never find happiness without a meaningful working life. Your Naparima exposure must have given you insight to develop your own thoughts about career matters, distinct and apart from your parents. As they have lived their lives, so too you must live yours. Of course you are obligated to listen to all those who sincerely seek your welfare. Filter what you hear through the crucible of your mind. But then, regardless of what happens, you must be the shaper of your own destiny, and of your own success. Sometimes there are set-backs from which your intelligence and resilience would enable you to rise again, as you correct your own errors and not the errors of those who wish to direct your life. In the process, the correction is easier to make and joyfully accomplished when you correct your own errors.

But in asking you to take responsibility for your destiny, for the glorious and meaningful and abundant occupational life that awaits you – think well now of this question- How has your educational exposure here at Naps equipped you to undertake that task?

The educated life is much more than passing exams and the acquisition of degrees, or certification. Speaking for myself, after a long life of continuous education and thought, I am convinced that no life can ever be successful without a solid foundation in values. I affirm now that the spiritual aspect of life is the actual criterion to build lifelong success. Knowing that I address a multi-religious group, here, of students, teachers and parents, regardless of your religious orientation or affiliation, you need always, this foundational rock on which your value system is built.

What is the moral compass by which you decide

Dr. Allan Mckenzie Remarks at Graduation Naparima College

(continued)

what is desirable or undesirable conduct? What guides you to make these ethical choices? Life is empty without such a compass. Has Naps laid such a foundation in you? If not, why not? For education without character is not really worth much in life. And many who place a great burden on society are not only without education, but also victims of a spiritually vacuous existence.

Before I come to my final remarks to the graduates, let me focus my attention briefly on the parents and guardians. Today is your day too, filled with happiness and satisfaction. As you gaze upon the spectacle of the collective body of graduates, I wonder what thoughts crowd into your mind? You have been with your sons for a reasonably long time now. You must know that the greatest gift a parent can have is the gift of a child. What can be more precious than your sons? But with each passing year, you come closer to that part of the journey of life, where you would leave your sons, permanently. Your intelligent sons no doubt, may have intimations of your mortality, and quietly think so too. What do you have in mind to leave for your sons? We often think of a house, land, and other material legacies. But I take the liberty of age, if not wisdom, to remind you that the greatest gifts that you can leave your sons are invisible and intangible. These gifts money cannot buy. What greater gift can you leave your sons, through the power of speech and through the exemplary conduct of your own life? But by being what you are, by being the constant exemplar of character, resilience, refinement and sensitivity, simply put, by exhibiting the primacy of virtue in life – that is where your gift lies. It is never too late to ponder on these matters, possibly, with a change of attitude.

To the teachers, who contributed so much to the success of the graduates, I have a few brief words. This is a proud moment for you too. You are fortunate to be working at Naps. You are in an environment of intelligence where many students aspire to practice the noble pursuit of wisdom and culture. Your challenge, your continuous challenge, since you come to the students with differing pedagogical capabilities – your challenge is to rise to the demands of an extra-

ordinary student clientele. The level of intelligence you meet here is questioning and challenging, but never conforming. As you rise to meet the challenges of your students, my best wishes always go with you. But expect not among them the dull, routinized conformity that is alien to the minds of exceptional students. As products of modernity they are different from you, in spite of what you think of the heritage of tradition.

And now, as a man of Naps myself, let me tell you - - the graduates - - that after leaving Naps as a student, I graduated five times from four different universities abroad. But no institution has played such a significant role in my life, and my perspective on crucial matters as Naps. I came through here when the ethos of Naps was lived and lovingly transmitted by teachers, who impacted heavily on the students. Both personality and articulate power were ingredients of that kind of influence. I see you have as your theme “Future Leaders as Communicators”. Well you can lead no one except, in the first instance, by the power of speech. The country is dreadfully short on leaders of substance and worth, who can shape a desirable destiny for this nation. One of the most powerful gifts you can cultivate as young graduates is the power of effective communication. This calls for reaching out to people at all levels. You do so by building up a formidable vocabulary which comes through varied and extensive reading. There is no short cut to the process of acquiring the articulate power of speech. This is one aspiration of most politicians, for example, who profess a passion to serve, but who fall dreadfully short of the power of persuasive speech, because they may not be for real.

Bear in mind that persuasive speech, based on knowledge and developed thought, can change how people think. You can mobilize the human resources with whom you interact. But again, like all gifts, talents can be used for good or for destructive purposes. As I said before, nothing is given worth without the moral and ethical compass, of which I previously spoke.

And as we contemplate the power of persuasive speech in life – let it be clearly understood that the students who graduate today are among the top 5% of the students of our country. You are among the top five to ten percent potentially of the anticipated intelligentsia of the country.

(continued on next page)

***Dr. Allan Mckenzie Remarks at
Graduation Naparima College***
(continued)

You are the ones who must and can provide the leadership in various avenues of organized life, for which our country desperately yearns. And communication will always be an essential ingredient of that leadership. But communication is born out of competence and knowledge which are the products of an ever industrious mind. This communicative power is enhanced considerably by your charisma, as people feel that they can look to you for solutions to the problems of the country. Then to lead others, you need the charismatic power of personality. That charismatic power will only come from the extent to which, what you say to others, is a reflection of your inner sincerity and your true self. It's what I call, being for real, with an attractive authenticity of mind and character. Let this be your goal as you aspire to LEAD.

And what is the image of the man of Naps I wish to leave with you? It is a person who realizes that all his gifts, for example, the gift of speech, capacity for thought, refined sensitivity are really not his own creation, but gifts of Divinity.

A man of Naps is never comfortable with initial achievement but sees each year as a receding horizon that challenges him further to achieve more and to be creative. Above all - the outstanding men of Naps, strike a healthy balance between financial income

and service to their fellow-men. They are prepared to serve even when there is nothing to obtain from such service. In all of this, a touch of arrogance may sometimes be perceived. Arrogance pushes you forward to aspire to what seems difficult and not possible for others. However, arrogance is more tolerable when it is accompanied by intelligence. The arrogant fool is invariably a disaster. Bear in mind also, the most enviable and accomplished men of Naps have always walked with the unmistakable stamp of self-effacing humility. That will always be a challenge for you - - and for me too.

Thank you.



Highland Memory Gardens - Highland Hills Memory Gardens
Pine Ridge Memorial Gardens

“Planning today for tomorrow”



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PRE-ARRANGEMENTS FOR:
CEMETERY • CREMATION • FUNERAL

Pride & Poise - Naparima Girls stands tall after 100 years

School's legacy must live on

Published: 2011-11-08

Yvonne Webb,

Trinidad Guardian

Once you venture up La Pique Hill, it's hard to miss the tamarind tree, standing majestically at the foot of the Naparima Girls' High School, where it was planted in 1917 by Amelia Doon-Adolphus, five years after the school was built. Under its shady branches, the lives of many students, past and present, have been shaped and characterised.

It is no wonder then, that when Naparima Girls decided to publish a collection of poems, writings and art pieces in commemoration of its centenary celebrations, that the Tamarind Tree Blossoms was the name chosen to encapsulate the many achievements of its students. The Blossoms, in the title, refers to members of the Alumnae Association, who can be found across the globe in all spheres of life.

The book was launched on October 8 on the school's compound, and the event was attended by past students, Her Excellency Dr. Jean Ramjohn-Richards, Zalayhar Hassanali, Minister of Public Administration Carolyn Seepersad-Bachan, Dr. Jennifer Yamin-Ali, Justice Gladys Gafoor and former San Fernando West MP Diane Seukeran. The collection, which is on sale, reflects the memories of past students, among them Angela Cropper of the Cropper Foundation, attorney Gillian Lucky, author Rambai Espinet, Dr Clara Foueault, Lara Quentrall-Thomas, Shakuntala Harracksingh and Dr Patricia Mohammed.

Seepersad-Bachan recalled her memories of the tree, where some students were sent as a form of discipline, where classes were held when the classrooms became too warm, where students became friends and most importantly, where they enjoyed cool and relaxing lunch breaks when catching up with gossip and old talk. "This tree grew over the years, almost in tandem with the way in which the school grew, and expanded and built

a rich history filled with students from all walks of life who learned and grew and achieved together. That my friends, is a very powerful symbol, indeed, and it is what makes it an iconic historical symbol," Seepersad-Bachan commented.

Chairman of the book committee and president of the alumnae, Mintee Ishmael, said the book was the brainchild of the first local principal of Naparima Girls' High School, the late Beulah Meghu, to whom tribute was paid. "Miss Meghu had intimated to me that the Alumnae should compile a book of past students' writings in order to highlight their achievements. "As we embarked on celebrating the centenary of the school, the executive of the NGHS Alumnae Association decided that it would be most appropriate to produce the book and make Miss Meghu's dream a reality," Ishmael enunciated.

She said the name was arrived at during their deliberations on how meaningful the tamarind tree was to students, many of whom now hold prestigious and influential positions in various disciplines all over the world. "Right here in Trinidad, we can boast of having produced two first ladies of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, one of whom, Zalayhar Hassanali, together with another past student, Justice Gladys Gafoor, have recently received the nation's highest award, the Order of Trinidad and Tobago. They have made us indeed extremely proud," she added.

Dr. Ramjohn Richards, in her remarks, said while the spoken word was powerful and beyond doubt, very important, "sadly, it can be forgotten, lost to the hearer who received it with gladness, but who, over time, does not retain what was heard. "The written word, however, stands as a living monument, a tangible point of reference to which one may return, from time to time, as the need arises," she expressed. She said the Tamarind Tree will serve to some extent, "as a history of this great institution of learning and as a compass to current and future students. In addition, as we bring this publication to the notice

(continued on next page)

***Pride & Poise - Naparima Girls
stands tall after 100 years
(continued)***



*Dr. Jean Ramjohn Richards, centre, Dr. Jennifer Yamin-Ali, left, and Mintee Ishmael applaud the performance of the Centenary Song by Sonabai Boodhram.
Photo: Tony Howell*

outside the Naps sorority, it will speak to the nation and even persons beyond, of the legacy of excellence that this school has adopted from its inception.”

Seepersad-Bachan agreed that the Tamarind Tree Blossoms must serve as more than just a

reflection of the past, but must stand as a model for the beginnings of the future. “Remember, we stand here today representing the future that students of the past dreamed about. We must accept the responsibility for ensuring that we continue giving life to the future that NGHS has prepared all of us for. “It is therefore for us to do our school proud, our city proud and our nation proud. In fact, I hope that this might even motivate us in San Fernando to return to some of the old values that we treasured in the years past.”

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Day 5	San Juan, Puerto Rico	7:00 AM	3:30 PM
Day 6	Grand Turk Is., Turks and Caicos Is.	11:00 AM	5:30 PM
Day 7	At Sea	–	–
Day 8	Miami, Florida	8:00 AM	–

The Grand Reunion and Celebratory Service – 100th Anniversary of Naparima Girls' High School

By Karma Naike

My trip over the Christmas/New Year 2011/2012 to attend a Grand Reunion and the Centenary Anniversary Service of Naparima Girls' High School was a spiritual journey that returned one to the days of one's youth in the homeland, and an opportunity to participate in the celebrations that marked a landmark in the education of a large percentage of the women of Trinidad and Tobago. NGHS was the second high school for girls, instituted in Trinidad and Tobago in 1912. A Grand Reunion held on December 18, 2011 built up momentum for the 100th Anniversary day service on January 12, 2012. The time juxtaposition of these events at the crossroads of the 20th and 21st centuries symbolically parallels the leaps of progress over the centuries on a global scale.

The reunion of December 18 was an exciting occasion borne on the momentum of expectation. Everyone on arrival had their heads turning, searching the crowd for faces and was in awe of recognizing past friends and classmates and being recognized in return. Distraction was a pleasant interrupting feature during many conversations as the sight of another seemingly familiar face demanded immediate investigation, and another branch of conversation started. Funny things do happen in our perception of the past. There was an occasion of mutual recognition between another girl and me. It happened that I knew her name and her town as she did mine. But I was taken aback when my other classmates did not readily recognize her. Later in



*NGHS students parade at outdoor ceremony
at the Anniversary celebrations.*

conversation, we both realized that she was from my senior year but neither of us could remember how we seemed to know each other so well. Many instances of recognition mix-up was the norm! But it was a dazzling time to be among the throng of familiar and not-so familiar faces – all radiant with expectation, and ready to find an 'old friend'.

The Reunion Day's programme began with worship led by Rev. Joy Abdul-Mohan and was a traditional thanksgiving service with seasonal Christmas Carols and the Centennial Song by the school choir led by Ms. Sonabai Boodram, a music teacher familiar to many of us 'old girls'. We were honoured with greetings from the Mayor of San Fernando, and the First Lady Dr. Jean Ramjohn, an alumna. Dr. Ramjohn took the time to stay around and meet and talk with some of us old friends. Another great feature of this day's programme was the food – snack on arrival, after service, big lunch, and snack in the afternoon, all delicious and local! Following the service the 'old girls' were involved in the pre-lunch activities - School Tours, Art Exhibition, special photography, class meetings and pictures, and memento sales. It was delightful to have Form 6 students being our escorts and presenters on the tours. The students were excellent! I visited a section of the school three floors high, that housed a library, computer rooms and a white room, all state-of-the art equipped. It



Front Row-Dr. Anna Mahase & Mrs. Mintee Ishmael

(continued on next page)

The Grand Reunion and Celebratory Service – 100th Anniversary of Naparima Girls' High School (Continued)

seemed to me that that section of the building was its crown from which you had a panoramic view of the entire school grounds including the new Centenary Building Block in progress, and the background of San Fernando with the Gulf in the distance. Beautiful! NGHS has kept abreast with the times in its structure and its programmes. It is no wonder that its results have been outstanding on a national scale. But more excitement roared as we assembled near the tamarind tree to find classmates for group pictures, and in between we'd run off to look at exhibits and shop for books and souvenirs. But having lunch outside - under or near the tamarind tree with friends – was just delightful! What a time!

The afternoon programme was fun with Parang and Calypso by Denyse Plummer who focused a lot on women in her lyrics. The beat was hot!!! Then there was a Karaoke session led by an 'old girl', a great MC! It was organized to have full participation and we all eventually got up and danced. A friend of mine who never, ever considered dancing without a male partner remarked that she was thrilled to be able to get up and dance with a group of women – an initiation to more enjoyment (?). It was an amazing time to witness how age does not restrict, as there was a 91-year-old dancing with all the moves! This day ended having had ample time to connect with folks, meet new friends, be refreshed with a delicious coconut popsicle, and be energized by the spirit of generosity, love and sharing that the event engendered. We have become women worthy of our quality home upbringing, and our rich high school environment that stimulated the appreciation of education. No grander finale to that remarkable day could have been than in the hundreds of women standing tall and joyfully singing in the open air, 'Youth Undaunted', our school song from ever since, which could be the anthem of our lives.

The pinnacle of the celebratory events was in the Hundredth Anniversary service, January 12, 2012, held at the NGHS Auditorium. It was blessed time in a 'holy place'. The students' participation in song and hymn was stirring. Listening to the solo performances of the T & T National Anthem, and

'You Raise Me Up' lifted our souls, and the choir singing of "Ode to Joy" was as brilliant as I have ever heard it sung. Such music interspersed in a programme of prayers, Readings, and reflections by the Moderator of Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago, and the former principal Jean Bahadur (the last 30 years), an inspirational dance all supplemented by a reminiscence in film by Mrs. Marjorie Laltoo brought feelings of inspiration and nostalgia. We have been part of a great tradition that is relevant and continues to empower youth in today's world thus giving substance and vision to learning. What a more glorious way to end the service than in joining the choir in singing the Hallelujah Chorus!

These events have had prominence in the media and in the general public's awareness. The Guardian published a supplement on January 15th, 2012, dedicated to honouring the 100 Years of NGHS. It was talked about in taxis, and even a tourist visiting Trinidad for one day was told about it. Much credit is due to the organizing committees, and having the First Lady Dr. Jean Ramjohn, as a patron, was an asset. The active participation of Principal Patricia Ramgoolam in all facets of the programme, and the leadership of the Alumnae Association of President, Mrs. Minty Ishmael, and Dr. Jennifer Yamin-Ali, Chairman, Centenary Committee, must be commended for bringing about the success of these significant occasions. However, their work did not end on January 12, for there are other events listed during the year. At the end of the service, a pivotal announcement was made – on January 12, 2012, the establishment of the NGHS Non Nobis Foundation.

NGHS has come full circle and has embarked on a foundation that will serve as outreach in its advocacy for students, and for promoting student service. NGHS has begun to actively pursue service to others. Our community has been the main beneficiary of the service of the Canadian Mission in establishing education institutions for a large segment of women in Trinidad and Tobago. Notwithstanding the records of academic achievements that has made NGHS first class, this reaching out through the Foundation to empower the less fortunate and to promote service for others in its program, add to its historic lustre, and makes it a beacon as a visionary and caring educational institute in the 21st Century.

NGHS 100th Anniversary Celebrations



Reunion Planning Committee



Mrs. Patricia Ramgoolam, Her Excellency Dr. Jean Ramjohn Richards, Mrs. Jean Bahadur, Mrs. Mavis Lee Wah, Dr. Jennifer Yamin-Ali, Ms. Fairy Lalla & Mrs. Mona Jamadar



Moderator - Rev. Brenda Bullock



Ms. Sonabai Boodhram, Mrs. Mona Jamadar, Mrs. Joan Dinnoo, Mrs. Grace Phagoo and Mrs. Lynn Jattansingh



New Building Block NGHS

NGHS 100th Anniversary Celebrations



Denyse Plummer Entertaining Alumnae



Signing In



Alumnae take a tour of the new NGHS classrooms



Past NGHS Students



NGHS Alumnae gather under the tamarind tree to share fond memories

Fishing in Navet

by Hollis Kelly

Preamble

Growing up in San Fernando, Hollis Kelly, as a young boy, treasured his brief stay in Navet, Rio Claro. It was the area that fueled much of the content of Hollis's collection of stories, *Tales of Trinidad*. Navet was a place where children as well as adult villagers believed that animals, both mythical and indigenous, exchanged forms. The following is one of Hollis Kelly's tales.

One day two boys, Anandath and Pooshpal, chose to fish in the Navet River rather than attend their class at the Elementary School. Once there, Anandath decided to teach the dangers of the river to the neophyte, Pooshpal.

"Poosh, you ever hear what happen to Cispee? He was down by the river, every time you miss him, he was down by the river. His parents could never find him."

Anandath was about to start one of his tales:

One day his father followed him and caught him on the bank with a woman. His father called out, "Cispee, come here at once!"

The woman slipped off the bank and dove into the water and his father noticed that she was half-woman, half-fish. She taunted the old man in a high-pitched voice,

"Next time Mermaid will take your son!" before she disappeared into the deep.

"Pooshpal, put your hook down there. Not there boy, down here!"

Anandath resumes his story:

Cispee went home, bawling. His father gave him a sound cut-ar-se but soon they were missing Cispee again. He was still going down to the river.

"Look! You blind or what? The cork on your line sinking fast! A fish is biting!"

So Cispee's father got some help from a man in the village called Mr. Christobale, who knew about these matters.

Anandath explains:

Mr. Christobale was the one who helped to devise

a scheme to stop Cispee from ever going to the river again to see the Mermaid. They followed Cispee when he next sneaked off to the river and they heard him call out to the Mermaid. Suddenly, there was a ripple in the water. A head came up - the head of a beautiful woman. Her hair fell in thick tresses to her waist and there was a comb in her hair.

The comb - the object of Mr. Christobale's strategy:

Christobale asked Cispee's father to hold on to Cispee's feet when the word was given, and not to let go no matter what happened. Suddenly the Mermaid came on to the river bank and ***in Anandath's words:***

Cispee's father held on to his feet tightly, while Mr. Christobale grabbed the comb, lifted the Mermaid's hair and cut a long tress from her head, holding it just out of her reach.

Immediately, the lovely Mermaid changed into an old, wrinkled woman with a high pitched voice who screamed, "You lucky this time! Next time ah go take you and your son," before she disappeared into the black water.

Cispee was in shock, ***Anandath continues breathlessly.***

Anandath had repeated the river's dangers to the neophyte, Pooshpal, but he wasn't quite finished. He himself had learned long ago not to mess with the river. The fishing rods were now proving to be no longer effective so they moved further up the river to bail a shallow basin.

Anandath: "You know, that boy Cispee learned his lesson so well, you couldn't get him to go near the river again!"

Soon the bottom dwelling catfish, coscorobs and sardines were gasping for air, in the diminishing water. Anandath collected some small fish, making sure to throw back the ones that were too small, ***for he was remembering Usman's experience.***

"Tell me about Usman nah, you keeping me in suspense," complained Pooshpal. "You don't want to hear about Usman, man."

(continued on next page)

Fishing in Navet (continued)

"Yes, man! Ah want to hear! What happen to Usman?"

"Look, Poosh, look! I just see a big guabine swimming in that corner over there!"

Anandath resumes his tale:

Anyway, Usman was always fishing in the river; taking big fish, small fish, all kinda fish! The man was so greedy, he would never throw anything back.

One day, as he was leaving the river with a bucketful of small fish, some the size of tadpoles, he heard a noise behind him. But he was afraid to turn back, and kept walking faster. Finally he broke out into a trot. But the noise kept up, and then he looked back and caught a glimpse of something big, sitting on a horse, with a whip in its hand.

Clippity clop, clippity clop... the horse's hooves sounded... right on his heels, no matter how fast he ran.

"Tonnerre! C'est Mama Dlo," he realized. "Look at mih crosses!" he screamed, as he heard her chanting ominously:

Yuh come in de water
Mih children yuh slaughter
Every day of de year...

She cracked her whip and missed. She cracked another, just missing Usman.

Usman knew what he had to do. He bent and dumped all the fish back into the river and never returned.

Anandath pauses, glancing at his friend Pooshpal.

Pooshpal was now anxious to leave the river. Panic hit him. He was remembering how later that evening he would face the wrath of his father, the school master, for l'ecole biche, that unforgiveable act of truancy.

Hollis Kelly is an Old Boy of Naparima College. He taught Biology at a Secondary School in B.C. for 26 years and retired in 1990. His discipline was Science, and he obtained an MSc. in Biological Ecology. He says, "I always wanted to write. The voices of characters from my early years struggled to find a voice and still do." He also says that he would be happy to hear from others who might want to share their own "Jumbie" stories.

His email address is holliskelly@shaw.ca

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Book Review:
**Raymond Ramcharitar, *The Island Quintet: A Sequence*,
Leeds, Peepal Tree Press Ltd., 2009, pp.217. ISBN 13:97818445230753**

The Island Quintet: A Sequence is the first work of fiction by Raymond Ramcharitar, an Indian-Trinidadian playwright, poet, journalist and critic. History, names, ethnic groups and political events in the volume's five stories connect the unnamed island to the Caribbean, specifically to Trinidad; and the action of each story takes place either on the fictional island or among its diasporic population in Britain and the US. If the word "Sequence" in the volume's title seems adventitious, it is because the characters and action of each story are independent, and do not interact with characters in other stories. Like the fiction of other Indian-Trinidadian writers - Neil Bissoondath and Rabindranath Maharaj - who are also born after 1950, Ramcharitar's stories carry distinct echoes of the inherent disorder, fragility and instability of Caribbean civilization most strikingly observed in the work of V.S. Naipaul.

Ramcharitar's impressive literary credentials should be acknowledged, for example, his bold fluency of style, original and ready wit, eagle-eyed observation, pungent wordplay, a gift for phrase making, and richly detailed descriptions of people, places and events: "To the Colos [an Indian family] and their ilk, drink wasn't a lubricant for the mind and libido as it was among civilized people; here it was just fuel for ignorance." (p.102) Elsewhere, one narrator observes a woman who: "flitted about the room in a deluge of tie-dye wraps and whorish make-up," (p.148) and the local university is seen as: "a huge Kafkaesque bureaucracy designed by British colonial administrators intent on creating Xanadu in the tropical reaches of the empire." (p.201) If anything, so far as writing is concerned, there is an "embarras de richesses" in *Island Quintet*.

The narrator in "The Artist Dies," an unnamed Indian school teacher given to sour reflections on distress and corruption on his island, migrates to London where he meets the Artist, another Indian-Trinidadian presumably. Whatever his motive for migration, the narrator now admits to nympholepsy: "the detached pleasure of someone whose orbit had shifted irrevocably, into one charged with longing for something I could not name." (p.20) He sees the

Artist's associates indulging in familiar fakery, for example: "Nofobu, the island's leading African artist; Kassissa, the island's leading Indian artist (p.24)... [who together] ... "provided beautiful confirmations of the Africans' mythic struggles and their noble origins; of the intense spirituality and beautiful colours of the Indians' millennia-old culture." (p.25) The irony is redolent of Naipaul's clinical and clear-eyed dismissal of such false, atavistic fantasies and deluded myths of spiritual transcendence as tell-tale symptoms of the islanders' deep psychic malaise.

In "New York Story" another unnamed, Indian-islander narrator relates picaresque, Rabelaisian adventures as an illegal immigrant in New York city, where he simply cadges board and lodging from the (already mentioned) Colos, described by the narrator as "po'ass coolies" (p.92) As his money is dwindling, the narrator runs into Steve Bamford an African-islander whom he had helped to get a green card to enter the US. (We are given no explanation why the narrator is himself without a US immigration green card, yet helped Steve to get one in their home island.) At any rate, Steve who is involved in the illicit drug trade, is wealthy enough to give the narrator two thousand dollars and enable him to leave the Colos. By now, though, the narrator is himself mixed up with drug traffickers and mobsters who arrange both a house and a green (US immigration) card for him.

Needless to say, the aim of "New York Story" is not to sanction crime as a desirable prospect for immigrants to the US. The rollicking bluster of the story is part and parcel of the satirical tone already noticed in "The Artist Dies." That this technique works most effectively in "New York Story" is due to writing that is more solidly grounded in the lived experience of its characters than the iconoclastic swagger and polemical wordplay found in other stories. In "New York Story" for example, when one of the Colos' daughters-in-law tearfully complains of being sodomised by her father-in-law, her complaint is dismissed by Mrs. Colo as routine since she - Mrs. Colo - was herself sexually assaulted, as a young bride, by her father-in-law, husband and his brother. Within the depraved living conditions of minority

Book Review: *The Island Quintet: A Sequence*
(continued)

ethnic immigrants in New York city the outrageous vulgarity and reckless irreverence of this incident is entirely credible. Similar vulgarity and irreverence, meanwhile, in a story like "Froude's Arrow," create an impression of forced exhibitionism and gratuitous offensiveness, as if the author is flogging a dead horse by relying for effect on four letter words exchanged routinely among upper class characters, and sexual hedonism, especially homosexuality, flaunted at every turn.

The very title "Froude's Arrow" raises polemical flags by hinting at an effort to dazzle the island's cognoscenti, for it refers to disparaging remarks against West Indians by the English author of *The English in the West Indies or The Bow of Ulysses* (1888). Aware of rebuttals to Froude's remarks both from J.J. Thomas and later Derek Walcott in his poem "Air," Ramcharitar pretends to take on Froude through satirical mockery of his island's upper class in a paper whose management holds: "shallowness as

its editorial touchstone." (p.145) But the satire again seems forced because its aim is divided between Froude and local targets.

Ramcharitar's epigraph from *Gravity's Rainbow* by American novelist Thomas Pynchon, for instance, confirms admiration of Pynchon's swashbuckling intellectual gusto and gargantuan appetite for experience. But it is doubtful that Pynchon's work receives as much attention for its specialised interest in intellectual speculation as the more run of the mill fare of other American masters of fiction such as Bellow, Roth and Updike. Like Pynchon, to some extent, Ramcharitar's formidable gifts are squandered on pet topics and causes. Yet a relish for swagger seems to take over, as in using the name of Conrad's "Kurtz" for a foreign free lance correspondent on the island who: "met his demons and sodomised them." (p.156)

Dr. Frank Birbalsingh

Dr. Frank Birbalsingh taught English at York University for thirty-three years becoming Professor Emeritus in 2003.

***Condolences are extended
to the following members ...***

– Mary Newbery-Cragg on the death
of her mother Dr. Andrina Newbery on December 2, 2011

– Ronald Mahabir whose brother Manick passed away on January 18, 2012

– Marjorie Eccles-Mullahoo and her extended family on the recent death
of her husband, Errol, on February 2, 2012

and to

– NAAQ member, Barbara Eccles-Tackoor
on the passing of her husband Angus Tackoor
on March 7, 2012

Naparima Girls' High School Celebrates 100 Years of Passion

Featuring NGHS past student:

Dr. Jennifer Yamin-Ali

Published: 2011-10-16, Trinidad Guardian

Passion is a loaded word. In the context of work, obligations and responsibility, over 100 years generations of southern seeds, once sown, have sprouted and blossomed into ladies who demonstrate this passion in the fabric of their individual lives. 100 years ago, a girls' secondary school was founded in South Trinidad through the passion of the Canadian and Trinidadian Presbyterians who saw the education of girls and young ladies as essential to the development of the human capital of this nation. 100 years later, the passion remains as the school celebrates and commemorates its admirable achievements and further possibilities. Chairman of the Centenary Committee of Naparima Girls' High School, Dr. Jennifer Yamin-Ali is a woman driven by passion. She says it is difficult to ascertain where this passion comes from – perhaps her genes, perhaps the influence of her environment. She sees herself as having been moulded into a lifestyle of discipline and order as a high school student, with a great appreciation for structure, good example, and propriety. By no stretch of the imagination is she a prude, as she does enjoy a good lime, a hearty laugh (one of her signature features) and provocative salsa or calypso moves on the dance floor.

Having attended school for 7 years and taught for over 20 years at 'Naps', she eventually left the sanctuary of La Pique Hill to serve as Director of the South Campus of COSTAATT for just one year, after which, according to her, she found her niche at the St. Augustine campus of the University of the West Indies where she serves as lecturer and coordinator of the postgraduate Diploma in Education at School of Education. Having majored in Teacher Education at the Masters level, her passion for working with teachers was realised when she completed her Ph.D. in education and was able to leave the secondary classroom in order use her knowledge and skills at the tertiary level where she has been for the last 8 years. Though petite in size, this passionate lady, on whose face a smile is spontaneous, has a large life. Apart from her time-consuming involvement with teachers

and teacher education programmes, and the rigorous demands or research in academia, she makes the time to hold on to her original love, the teaching of Spanish as a Foreign Language. She also finds joy in her adult students at the Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business where her Spanish for Business classes



Dr. Jennifer Yamin-Ali

are fun-filled. Apart from her expertise in the field, she is convinced that personality has a lot to do with being a successful teacher. She confesses that one of her nick-names at the GSB is 'the energiser bunny'.

She lives the motto of her alma mater 'non nobis solum sed omnibus' (not for ourselves only but for all) as her life is also filled with serving as Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors of the St. Andrew's Theological College in San Fernando. She confesses that her position there is based not so much on her affinity with theology but with education. Even in conversation about this aspect of her life, she laughs at herself, which in her case, seems to be the antidote to stress. Dr. Yamin-Ali does not separate passion from a sense of organisation, commitment and reliability. For her, they go hand in hand. Passion without these, she says, is superficial. Though she is unsure about the power of destiny in one's life, she seems convinced that to a large extent, her life's unfolding has been serendipitous. Most of the significant developments in her life, especially academically and professionally, were not sought, but seemed to 'land in her lap', so to speak. Some of her most profound philosophies can be summed up in very simple words. Her late mother would encourage her in her school work by saying "Don't worry, those who sow in sorrow shall reap in joy", while her work schedule reflects a Tobagonian quote used by a colleague not so long ago: "Drop by drop bucket does full".

She supposes that it is because of her loyalty to her alma mater, coupled with her organisational

NGHS Celebrates 100 Years of Passion

(continued)

skills that she was asked to chair the centenary committee of Naparima Girls' High School. It is her hope that through the activities of the centenary commemoration, her Naps sisters would have the opportunity to continue on their own personal growth path, interacting with genuine persons and cherishing the sisterhood while appreciating the diversity in togetherness. Whether her leadership guides the promotion of signature items, the organisation of a cruise, the launch of *The Tamarind Tree Blossoms* (a publication of the Alumnae), of Youth Undaunted (a book on NGHS), of a new cookbook, or the staging of a musical in December, or the hosting of a Gala Ball at the Hyatt in July, teamwork, focused decision-making, and attention to detail are hallmarks of her involvement in this context and others. Her passion will, no doubt, have a ripple effect in many places.



Featuring NGHS past student:

Ms. Sonabai Boodhram

Published: 2011-11-13, Trinidad Guardian

A Note of Excellence

There is hardly a profession that embodies the phrase 'living with passion' more than that of a musician. Her talent and passion for perfection can change her softness and childlike naïveté to the archetypal agitation of a raging maestro. The adage 'some have greatness thrust upon them' is a recurring theme in the life of this great woman, musician and music teacher, Ms. Sonabai Boodhram. The influence of 'Naps', she says, is not as direct as one would think. She does look back fondly on her days as a student at her alma mater, but the institution she cites as her main influence in her young life is the foundation upon which NGHS was built, the Presbyterian Church.

Her family, 'staunch' Presbyterians, were very active in the Susamachar Presbyterian church, the patron church of NGHS. She began her education at the La Retraite Prep school and went straight on to NGHS in the 1950s during which time she studied music with the Walters family. One of her defining moments at NGHS, however, was in Form Three when called upon to perform in front of her class. She sang

'Home on the Range' and remembers receiving lustrous applause. She describes this as her 'first concert experience' and an important moment in her development as a vocalist. Early encouragement in music came from Ms. Gladys Nancoo an organist at the church. Ms. Boodhram later left to study in England, and though her intention



Ms. Sonabai Boodhram

was to study the Montessori method in the UK, her passion for music won out. Thus, she obtained three diplomas while abroad: two in teaching and one in vocal performance.

Being a music teacher at NGHS was the period of her life which affected her the most. 'Scary' is the word she uses to describe having to teach teenagers. Her record at Naps, however, proves her to be a resounding success! With Ms. Boodhram at the helm, NGHS took music festivals by storm and several musicals were produced under her guidance. Her music classes were entertaining, to put it mildly. Under her guidance, all Naps girls know how to sing the National Anthem correctly and how to 'breathe' as one sings. "Stop! Stop! Stop!" was what you heard if a note was wrong in assembly. This lady's life always seems 'unfettered' by the mainstream stresses of life. Her passion for living is a lesson for all. Her compassion for animals is another. Retired now, she is a constant and comforting presence at school functions, and new generations of Naps girls will sing the NGHS Centenary Song (which she has composed) to commemorate the school's centenary celebrations.



Featuring NGHS past student:

Julliette Banks Laing

Published: 2011-12-11, Trinidad Guardian

Everyone in San Fernando knows about those absolutely delicious pastries and cakes from Puff 'n' Stuff bakery; a household name in South Trinidad

NGHS Celebrates 100 Years of Passion

(continued)

and also throughout Trinidad and Tobago. One of the Directors of this successful business is Mrs. Juliette Banks-Laing, past student of the Naparima Girls' High School. Mrs. Banks-Laing graduated from Naparima Girls' in 1980. Her mother and her two sisters are graduates of the institution, so she followed the family tradition by attending Naps. She was also drawn to the school because of the many different extra-curricular activities offered to the students. Banks-Laing was a member of the Junior and Senior choirs and the steel pan orchestra throughout her time there. Indeed, one of her most memorable experiences was when the school choir travelled to Canada to perform at high schools there and they introduced the steel pan to them.



Juliette Banks Laing

After secondary school, she was given the choice of either going to university or co-founding the second franchise of Puff n Stuff on Circular Road, San Fernando. Although her family preferred that she furthered her education, she made the tough decision to enter the demanding world of business entrepreneurship. Her days were very long, with some starting at 5 am and not finishing until late at night. Still, she attributes her discipline and strong work ethic to her alma mater, as these values were instilled in her from her school days at Naps. Her Principal, Miss Meghu, was a strong disciplinarian; students had no choice but to be disciplined themselves. She also credits teachers like Mrs. Mona Jamadar, Mrs. Mavis LeeWah and the late Mrs. Razia Edoo with being true motivating and encouraging forces throughout her school life.

Mrs. Banks-Laing said, "At Naps, I met people from all walks of life, different cultures, religions and social backgrounds. We were all taught to co-exist and respect each other's differences and this in turn helped me to accept the strengths and limitations of

my co-workers and employees. Understanding and motivating are two key instruments we all need to help us along life's challenges." Her other business ventures include the Tradewinds Hotel in St. Joseph Village and the Renaissance Suites, which provides accommodation for the expatriate market. Mrs. Banks-Liang has not taken her success for granted and applies the 'give back' philosophy by being involved in several avenues of charitable work. From 2005 to 2010 she was the Secretary for the Cancer Support Group of Trinidad and Tobago. She also continues to be part of Naparima Girls' High School as a member of the school's Alumni. As a wife, mother and successful businesswoman, her advice to all young women is "to try and live a balanced life, and keep everything in perspective".



Featuring NGHS past students:

The Tilluckdharry Sisters

Published: 2011-12-04, Trinidad Guardian

Meet three young women - Lisa, Nicole and Lynda Tilluckdharry - sisters, physicians and graduates of Naparima Girls' High School. They unanimously say, "It is not about what we have achieved but more about where we started."

For them, the legacy of Naparima Girls' High School (NGHS) has spanned three generations in their family. Stories of the days when their paternal grandmother, Liliias Mona Tilluckdharry, boarded at La Pique and spoke fondly of the friendships and liberties that were afforded to the young women, stoked their yearning to follow in her footsteps. The threads of the Presbyterian Church and the tradition of female educators, as exemplified by their aunts, also solidified their foundations "on the hill" and provided a backdrop for their spiritual and disciplined upbringing. Such is the legacy of NGHS.

Singing the uplifting words of the school hymn, "Youth Undaunted" at the inspirational morning assembly held under the shade of the tamarind tree, is part of their collective memory. Each can recall what it felt like to stand in front of the school body to lead the assembly during their individual year as a head girl. Imagine three sisters, each becoming a head girl and each having an opportunity to serve their school.

NGHS Celebrates 100 Years of Passion

(continued)

"Naps" has long been a body of girls from diverse backgrounds, multiple ethnicities, religions and cultural experiences, brought together based on academic achievement. It is here that they are encouraged, nurtured and supported by a faculty of genuinely invested teachers, who help to identify and develop individual talents and abilities. For these girls, their love of teaching and organisation, plus leadership, social and diplomatic skills were fostered at Naps. They also developed their passion for community and giving back. To fulfil this personal mission, they routinely gave of their time to free medical clinics, teaching and supporting church activities.

The discipline and expectations of NGHS provided the foundations for academic achievement in their medical careers. They are now specialist consultants in the fields of Pulmonology/Critical Care, Endocrinology and Rheumatology. Their spiritual grounding supported them through the challenges of living, studying and working overseas. The multicultural exposure allowed them



The Tilluckdharry Sisters (from left: Lynda, Nicole, Lisa)

to understand and easily embrace new experiences and bridge cultural gaps. The friendships that were started two decades ago continue to sustain and support the girls to this day. The accomplishments of the inspiring and dedicated women who have served and trained at NGHS continue to motivate these young women to strive for excellence, service and humility in all they do – not only as physicians, but also as wives, mothers and daughters.

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News from NGHS

Naparima Girls' High School celebrated its hundredth anniversary on January 12th, 2012. A special thanksgiving service was held in the school's auditorium followed by the ceremonial cutting of an anniversary cake on the lawn tennis court.

The function was attended by the patron, Her Excellency Dr. Jean, Ramjohn -Richards, First Lady of Trinidad and Tobago, Moderator, the Rt. Rev. Brenda Bullock, past administrators, staff and students, as well as representatives of all stakeholders and members of the community.

Principal, Mrs. Patricia Ramgoolam, in her prayer of thanksgiving, expressed gratitude to the Canadian Missionaries who established the institution 100 years ago and all those who over the years continued to build on the strong foundation that was laid by the Missionaries.

Rev. Bullock, emphasised the influence of God in shaping the school and as a result the lives of hundreds of young ladies who had the opportunity to attend this prestigious school.

Past Principal, Mrs Jean Bahadur, had the audience smiling with her entertaining reflections of life "up on the Hill".

A special birthday cake was cut by her Excellency and the Principal. One hundred coloured balloons were released and students sang lustily 'Happy birthday', Stevie Wonder style. The excitement was further heightened as they were showered with confetti.

Condolences

PARAY RAMNARINE,

Former teacher

at Naparima College

departed this life on

Wednesday 21st March, 2012.

News from T & T Schools

At the **NGHS Speech Day and Awards Ceremony** held last October, the following presentations were made:

The NAAC Meghu/Scrimgeour Literary Award (C\$200) in the Upper School went to **Asabi Rawlins**
NAAC Bursary of C\$500 was awarded to **Renisha Bisnath**

NAAC Book Award for Excellence at CSE/GCE was presented to **Arhona Pariag**

The NAAC Citizenship Award went to **Nirmala Bridgelalsingh**

SAGHS also held Graduation Exercises last October and the NAAC bursary and awards went to:

Christine Boodoo - NAAC Bursary for Higher Education

Lauralee Burgess - Literary Award

Kimberly Cudjoe - Book Award

Maya Ramesar - Book Award

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Dancing To Forget

by Ruthven C. Vince Foster (1943-2009)

On nights when the moon
has the ears of the damned
and whispers for blood

he feels the urge
to rend his clothes
gnash his teeth
and howl at woes

shriek, chant
moan, weep
rave and rant
then curse at sleep

whimper wail
scream beg
dance to still the spastic leg

gnaw the lip
taste the stain
rail at hope
and welcome pain

beat and claw
the knotted face
babbling joylessly
jerk away from god's embrace
and smirk with glee

in surreal gloom
stumble home
to hopeless rooms
peacefully

Dancer With One Leg

by Ruthven C. Vince Foster (1943-2009)

A man
one leg cut off at the knee
sat with his back to the bar
in a riotous fete
and watched as
all around him
tireless revelers
danced through the night

to the early dawn

In the early morning
a young woman
supple, moving, swaying
reached out and took his hands
in invitation

With hands on her shoulders
on his good leg and hers
they danced
perfectly.

When he sat again
I shook his hand
and praised his heart.
Leaning over, he touched
his forehead to mine
in a silent embrace
a sharing

Best Wishes

To: *Clarence Madhosingh*

From: All of us

We hope that your recovery after heart by-pass
surgery is becoming less painful.

Keep in touch.

Good news from *Kathy Sammy*.

We are so pleased to hear that her doctors
used the "R" word to describe her status after
her last checkup. Remission! We are looking
forward to seeing you soon at the AGM.

NAAC Canadian Bursary Guidelines

The Naparima Alumni Association of Canada (Toronto) is pleased to announce its 20th annual Canadian Bursary Program. A maximum of five bursaries, each valued at a minimum of \$200 will be offered to successful applicants.



The following are the guidelines under which the program is administered:

1. Each applicant must be a graduate of an Ontario high school and must be enrolled as a full-time student in first year studies at an accredited Canadian post-secondary educational institution.
2. Each applicant must have been a NAAC Student Member for at least the last two consecutive calendar years, that is, 2010 and 2011.
3. Each application submitted must include:
 - a. A completed NAAC Bursary Application form. (See next page)
 - b. Proof of graduation from an Ontario high school. Obtain a copy of your graduation diploma.
 - c. An official transcript of the applicant's Grade 12 academic record. The transcript must indicate final marks, not interim marks.
 - d. Proof of full-time enrolment in first year studies at an accredited Canadian post-secondary, **University, College or Vocational institution**. Obtain a confirmation letter from the Registrar's Office.
 - e. A covering letter, outlining the applicant's relevant interests and accomplishments. Because credit is given for the applicant's participation in school, community and/or NAAC activities, documentation to support such involvement should be included. Documentation may take the form of letters from teachers or organization officials, news articles, copies of awards etc.
4. All applicants will be evaluated based on the following criteria: Academic performance (grades), participation in school activities, participation in community and/or NAAC activities from a leadership perspective.
Financial need will be considered as a further criterion if a statement of need is included in the applicant's documentation. Consideration in this category will be over and above that given for academic performance and participation in school, community and NAAC activities.
Any information submitted regarding financial need will be kept strictly confidential.
5. All requests for information about eligibility, criteria and other related matters should be directed to the Secretary.

Secretary, NAAC Bridlewood Mall Postal Outlet
P. O. Box 92175 2900 Warden Avenue
Scarborough, ON
M1W 3Y9

NAAC Bursary Applications
Must be received no later than
Friday November 16, 2012.
Application Form may be downloaded
from the NAAC website:
www.naactoronto.ca



Tuesday 7th March, 2012

Naparima College

PO Box 39

Independence Avenue,

San Fernando

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

In order to acknowledge and celebrate the success of Naparima College over a hundred years, an Editorial Committee has been established to publish a book, Naparima College- An Anthology. Because of your experience at Naparima College and as a member of the Naparima Fraternity, the Editorial Committee will be happy to accept an offer of help in the collection of data and other forms of relevant input in the book. In particular, the Editorial Committee is seeking any paraphernalia about Naparima College that you may consider significant.

The members of the Committee are keen to endorse a plethora of perspectives and experiences. Your input will be utilized and valued. You are therefore invited to contact Naparima College directly or a member of the Editorial Committee. Please find attached contact information for a selection of members of the Committee and a detailed Plan for the book.

Thank you in advance for your kind cooperation in this meaningful venture.

Yours Respectfully,

Dr. Michael Dowlath

Principal

Naparima College



Naparima College

- An Anthology Objective List

CHAPTER 1: THE GENESIS OF NAPARIMA COLLEGE

- To establish a historical account of the Canadian Missionaries' presence and work in Trinidad with a particular focus on the San Fernando area.
- To explore motive and reason for establishing Presbyterian Institutions, particularly educational institutions and the role in the life of the rural student.
- The start of Naparima as well as a thorough, progressive account of the developmental years.
- Identifying and evaluating significant emblems and motifs of the College; providing the analysis of the changes of Naparima over the years.

CHAPTER 2: THE ROLE OF NAPARIMA COLLEGE IN EDUCATION

- To create a premise of general educational trends in Trinidad during the Mission time period.
- To investigate and analyse the Presbyterian involvement in education; the teaching of religion and ethics in all aspects of the school's curriculum.
- To evaluate Naparima's adaptation to the changing role of education.
- To analyse and present challenges facing the education system in Naparima; both past and present.
- To evaluate the impact of female students (H.S.C Girls) on the Pedagogy and educational trends at Naparima.

CHAPTER 3: THE CURRICULUM

- To provide a full scope of the academic curriculum from establishment to present and reasons for any significant changes.
- To evaluate Naparima's co and extra-curricular activities and the underlying value system contribution towards holistic development.

CHAPTER 4: THE NAPARIMA STAFF

- To highlight the work and contribution of significant Naparima administrators, educators and contributors to the Naparima culture.
- To identify and evaluate changes in the Naparima staff; an evolution of dynamism geared toward contextual relevance in education (youth in staff, women in staff).

CHAPTER 5: NAPARIMA SPORTING GLORY, CULTURE AND ETHOS

- To identify and recount major sporting achievements since the establishment of Naparima and the continued sporting excellence.

- To recall major carriers of the Naparima Spirit; The Blue Circle Network, House System, Dormitory Days, the cultural and religious diversity of Naparima, the creation of Doubles.

CHAPTER 6: NAPARIMA; THE REGIONAL AND GLOBAL IMPACT

- To highlight significant areas in which Naparima graduates made global impact; Drama and Literary Arts, Music, Entrepreneurship, Politics, Medicine, Law and Humanitarian Effort.

CHAPTER 7: THE CONTINUED NAPARIMA COLLEGE PRESBYTERIAN TRADITION

- To highlight Presbyterian Ministers who were Naparima College graduates
- To discover how Naparima College has propelled these graduates into Ministry
- To highlight the progress and impact of the continued Presbyterian traditions including the continued major impact of the St. Andrew's Theological College on students today.

CHAPTER 8: THE WAY FORWARD

- To project the path for Naparima College as it aims to achieve greater levels of holistic development of its students so as to produce better citizens and continued reformation on a local, regional and international level.

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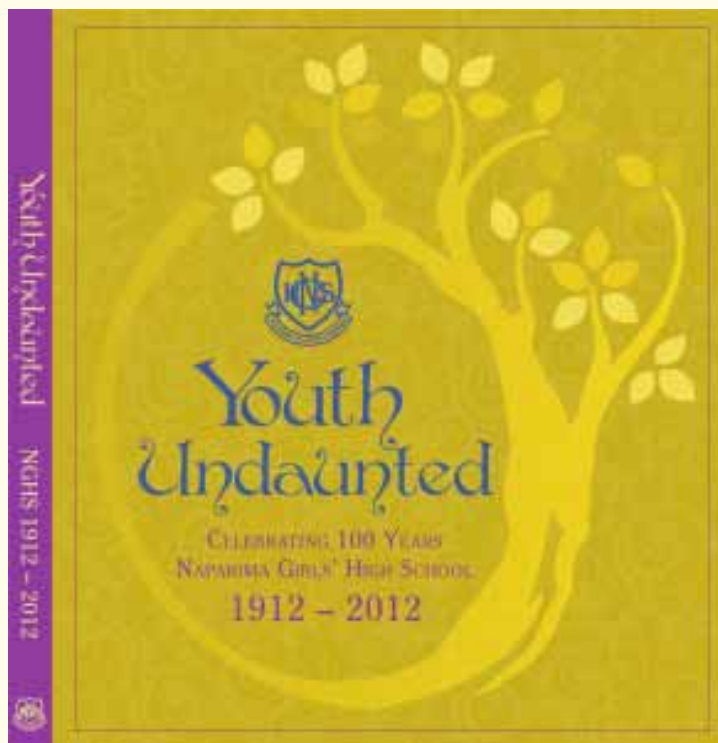
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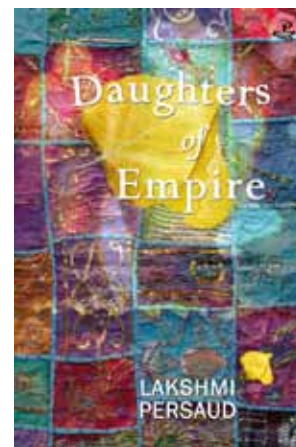
Order via email from NGHS at
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Book Launch of
Daughters of Empire

by Lakshmi Persaud (St. Augustine Girls' Alumna)

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A sweeping saga of migration and the challenges it presents one family, this is a story about sisters Ishani, who stays in Trinidad with the family business, and Amira, who migrates with her family to England. Ishani, the older sister full of bluff certainty, is a good-hearted manipulator determined to extend her influence across the seas. An examination of education, class, and race, this novel provides a unique look at Caribbean Diaspora.



NAAC Christmas Dinner and Dance 2011 - Smiling Faces

