



## **“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. XXXVIII No. 2

Spring 2015

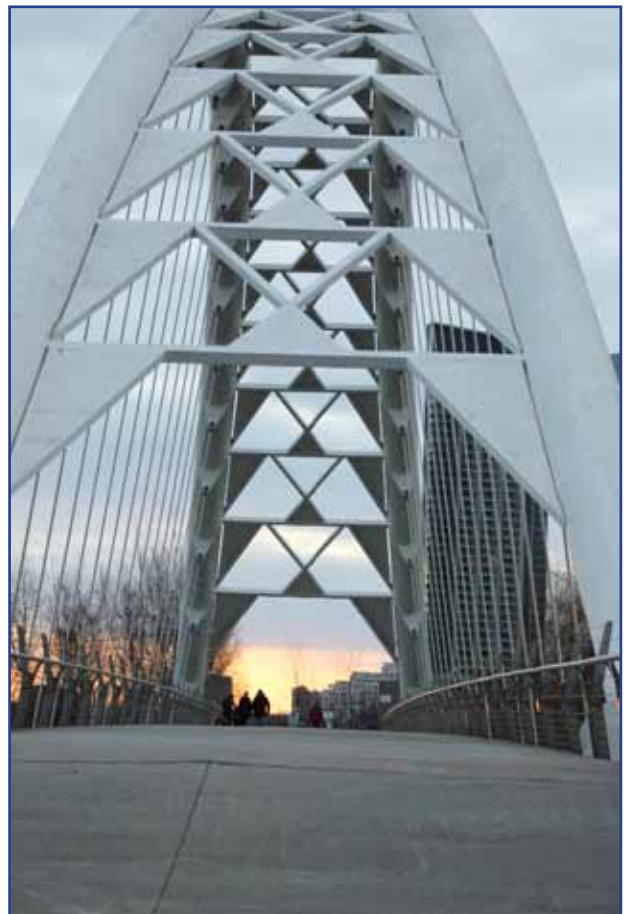
# **Hillview College celebrates its 60th Anniversary, 1955-2015**



**“NOTHING CONCERNING HUMANITY IS ALIEN TO ME”**



Photography  
by  
Michele Comeau



*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.*

## 2014-15 NAAC Executive

President	Cynthia Ramdeen	416-499-7357	cynthia.ramdeen@gmail.com
1st VP	Ian Ramdial	905-844-1254	ian.ramdial09@gmail.com
Treasurer	Norma Ramsahai	416-283-0675	npramsahai@rogers.com
Secretary	Vilma Ramcharan	416-284-5198	viram@rogers.com
Asst Sec	Colin Ramdeen	647-802-4250	colin.ramdeen@gmail.com
Exec Member	Wendy Rostant	905-542-3548	twrostant@gmail.com
Exec Member	Richard Jaikaran	905-708-6267	RichardJNAAC@gmail.com
Past President	Merle Ramdial	905-844-1254	merle.ramdial@gmail.com

## CONTENTS

President's Message .....	2	\$15M extension for Hillview College .....	14
From the Editor's Desk... ..	3	Hillview College Today.....	15
Notice of General Meeting.....	3	The Capture of German Submariners .....	16-17
Finance Report .....	4	UWI dedicates law building to Hassanali .....	18
Membership Report .....	4	New NGHS Building & Donor Plaque .....	19
Social Report.....	5	Mahal – the walking legend .....	20-21
Communications Report.....	6	Obituary: Florence Carol Gupte (nee Goberdhan).....	22
Steelband Report .....	7	Condolences.....	22
A Firsttimers' View from the Float.....	8	Indo-Caribbean feminism.....	23
Mohan Bissoondial .....	9-11	News from the T & T schools .....	24
A Brief History of Hillview College .....	12-13	Photography by Michele Comeau .....	Inside Front Cover
Hillview Honours Panman Pat .....	13	2014 Christmas Dinner & Dance .....	Back Cover

## CREDITS

**“Broadcast”** is the newsletter of the Naparima Alumni Association of Canada, Toronto Unit and is published twice a year. The views expressed in articles published are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Executive or of the Association unless specifically stated as such.

Editor: Merle Ramdial

Advertising: Ras Shreeram • 416-743-1331

Layout & Printing: Bluetree Publishing & Design 416-878-5218

Contributions and Correspondence should be forwarded to:

The Editor, “broadcast”, NAAC, Bridlewood Mall Postal Outlet

P.O. Box 92175, 2900 Warden Avenue, Scarborough, ON M1W 3Y9

Web Site: [www.naactoronto.ca](http://www.naactoronto.ca)



---

## President's Message

*This year three of the Naparima schools in Trinidad celebrate the founding of their schools. St. Augustine Girls High School founded in 1950 at Austin Street in St. Augustine then moved to the Evans St. location in 1952, celebrates its SIXTY FIFTH Year.*

*Hillview College founded at Tunapuna and moved to its new school building in El Dorado celebrates its SIXTIETH Year.*

*Iere High School founded at Siparia celebrates its SIXTIETH year.*

**Naparima Alumni Association of Canada** congratulate these schools for the outstanding success that prevails from the time they were founded to the present. The Naparima High Schools in Trinidad began as beacons that continue to shine in Trinidad. Some of the principals and teachers at these schools are graduates of NAPS schools. They are putting their hearts and souls into the teaching career and are giving back to the schools by being devoted teachers who are determined to help their schools continue to excel to the max. Students of these schools are blessed that they were given the opportunity to attend the BEST SCHOOLS OF ALL.

We did not leave the treasured memories of our school life behind. Graduates of Naparima College who migrated to Canada yearned to get together to continue the camaraderie that they enjoyed during their school days. A few of the graduates of Naparima Boys College decided to form an Association in 1976. Later on the girls insisted that they wanted to be part of the Association too. Naparima Old Boys Association agreed that it was time to form what is now known as NAPARIMA

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF CANADA. At the Inauguration about 70 members came from far and wide across Canada to enjoy a gala evening. An event that will never be forgotten.

Some of the first members of the NAAC are still with us. Some have passed on. Others can only support us since they cannot be as active as before because of ill- health. Some, because of distance are unable to attend any of our events but still show great interest in the Alumni. Now with email and Skype it is easier to make contact with these great friends. We are fortunate to be able to use networking as a great way to keep in contact with our NAPS friends. When we go down to Trinidad it is always an exciting time to meet with some of our classmates and reminisce about the good old days at school. If only it was possible for us to continue to meet more often to enjoy each other's company but distance, time, personal commitments and none the less at certain times of the year –the weather, keeps us from doing the things that we would longingly wish. The year 2015 has started off with weather conditions that disallow us to arrange events which we thought would bring us together more often.

The Executive Committee continues to discuss and plan via emails or telephone conference calls during the coldest winter that we have experienced in a long time. For this, I wish to thank our very dedicated members who continue to hold NAAC very dear to them.

My greatest wish is to see Knox Presbyterian Church Hall filled with an attendance just as at our Dinner and Dance. Please put this special date on your calendar –NAAC Annual General Meeting on Saturday May 30<sup>th</sup>. 2015

*Cynthia Ramdeen*

---

## ADVERTISEMENTS

*If you wish to place an ad in the next issue of Broadcast*

*Contact: [rasras@rogers.com](mailto:rasras@rogers.com) or Tel: 416-743-1331*

## From the Editor's Desk...

Things I did not know:

That although you sign the back of your driver's license as an organ donor, there is no guarantee that your organs will be reaped to benefit anyone. That's why I was so pleased when Ramabai Espinet agreed to interview Mohan Bissoondial of **Be A Donor** to straighten this situation out for the rest of us. (pg 9)

A few of the "true, true stories" that I was told as a child concerning Trinidad's part in WW II, now have me second-guessing my parents' veracity. See Clarence Madhosingh's story, "The Capture of German Submariners" on pg 14.

On a more personal note, I have known Michele Comeau from Panache for at least eight years and although I was aware that she is a teacher, plays the triple cellos, alto, bass and some percussion, when needed, I had no idea that she had a deep interest in photography. How many more talented persons have I missed from among the Panache players? I should start interviewing them. If you are interested in looking at Michele's photo collection online, I'm sure she would love to hear from you at [mcomeau44@gmail.com](mailto:mcomeau44@gmail.com)

Francine Donaldson, who is relatively new to Panache, had an opportunity to play with the band at the Annual Etobicoke Santa Claus parade. She was pleased to pen a short piece about her experience. (pg. 8).

I am indebted to G. Desmond Teelucksingh for all the years that he has volunteered to be our photographer at NAAC events. Thanks for giving of your time and expertise.

With the AGM coming up in May, one never knows who will be the next Editor, so I am taking this opportunity to thank Ras Shreeram for being on my team and Rajiv Persaud of Bluetree Publishing & Design, for making our magazine look very professional.

I received a lovely note with a cheque enclosed from Life Member Phyllis Ramjattansingh. Thanks Phyllis for your kind words about *Broadcast*.

Remember to send your comments about this issue of *Broadcast* to me at [merle.ramdial@gmail.com](mailto:merle.ramdial@gmail.com)

**Please read the letter that is inserted with this issue of *Broadcast* and remember to respond by the date specified, August 30, 2015.**

Thank you,

*Merle Ramdial*



**NOTICE OF  
NAAC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Saturday, May 30, 2015 • 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Knox Presbyterian Church  
4156 Sheppard Avenue East, Scarborough, ON**

*Refreshments will be served at Noon*

---

## Finance Report

This report reflects the Association's financial information as at February, 2015. Annual Financial Statements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2015 will be presented at the Annual General Meeting.

### BINGO ACCOUNT

Bank of Nova Scotia	\$4,331.00
---------------------	------------

### GENERAL ACCOUNT

Bank of Nova Scotia	\$22,101.00
---------------------	-------------

<b>TOTAL BANK ACCOUNTS</b>	<b>\$26,432.00</b>
----------------------------	--------------------

### NAAC INVESTMENTS

Bank of Nova Scotia – Term Deposit

-Balance at December 31, 2014	\$ 1,211.00
-------------------------------	-------------

Investment Planning Counsel – Inter Pipeline Fund

*1600 Units – B.V. per unit \$10.00	\$16,000.00
-------------------------------------	-------------

(M.V. \$53,120.00)

**Dividends earned – Sept/14 – Feb/15	\$ 1,104.00
---------------------------------------	-------------

\*\*Riocan Real Estate Inv T/U

(M.V. \$24,001.00)	\$22,516.00
--------------------	-------------

820 units - B.V. per unit \$27.46

<b>TOTAL INVESTMENTS</b>	<b><u>\$40,831.00</u></b>
--------------------------	---------------------------

\*Market value of the Inter Pipeline Fund as at February, 2015 was \$33.20 per unit. This reflects an increase of 232% over book value. The fund continues to earn dividends at the rate of \$196 per month which translates to a return of 14.7% per annum.

\*\*Market value of Riocan REIT as at February, 2015 was \$29.27 per unit, an increase of 6.6% over book value. Dividends from Riocan REIT are approx. \$88 per month which shows a 4.7% return.

The Association decided to reduce its financial commitments to the schools in Trinidad by \$500 which represents the amount that was intended for schools supplies. The total amount of \$3,760 was remitted in September, 2014. This is the sum of the following amounts to each of the five schools: NGHS, Iere, & SAGHS in the amount of \$820

each, Naparima College in the amount of \$620 and Hillview College in the amount of \$680.

Our biggest fundraiser for this fiscal year was our Christmas dinner and dance which was held on November 28, 2014. The net profit from this event was \$3,671.86 which will be used to help fund the bursaries for the schools in Trinidad.

Respectfully submitted

**Merle Ramdial** for

**Norma Ramsahai**, Treasurer

---

## Membership Report

It is with pleasure that we welcome our newest members to NAAC , Listra Samuel, Deonarine Seegobin, Ernest Lee Mook, Ashton Rivas and Caidan Ramdeen. We also thank all those who have renewed their memberships for 2015.

We have discussed many ideas for transforming and evolving and we are poised to act on some of these plans. So look for updates when your feedback is needed.

We are discussing at the Executive level if and how the association wants to re-shape itself to appeal to all age groups, lifestyles and changing needs.

I would encourage all to attend the upcoming Annual General Meeting where we may wish to solidify plans to incorporate certain programs that should appeal to our members' evolving needs.

Some of the topics that are under discussion include:

- Implementation of Membership Cards
- Re-designed website to enable more active member engagement
- Use of email newsletters to increase communication.

**For more information and to find out how to become a NAAC Member or volunteer, please contact:**

**Colin Ramdeen**

Chair, Membership Committee

Colin.ramdeen@gmail.com • 647-802-4250

## Social Report

It seems like it has been a long cold winter but we are ready to come out of hibernation with a line-up of exciting events and activities for all to enjoy.

Our Annual Christmas Dinner and Dance was held on November 29th at the Elite Banquet Hall, and was an almost sold-out event. Many thanks to Nino Warda of Elite, for his incredible attention to every detail and ensuring that any special accommodation requested was attended to.

It was with great pleasure that I presented the NAAC Bursary to Emily Jaikaran (see photo on back cover). Emily is attending University in the U.S. where she is a Dance Major.

As we work towards the planning of this year's grand finale, please email us at [events@naactoronto.ca](mailto:events@naactoronto.ca) with comments or interest in helping with the event planning as part of the Social Committee.

One of the goals of the Social Committee this year has been to introduce ways of creating 'member-driven event programming'.

The following programming strategy will be discussed at our next Executive meeting:

- An NAAC Social Newsletter (online)
- Member-driven Programming
- Membership Cards
- Volunteer Drive
- Alumni Meet-ups

**The following list is a brainstorm of ideas for events and activities.**

- Cooking Classes and Tasting Events
- Wine Tours, Casino Trips
- Island Cruises

If you would be interested in any of these or would like to suggest an activity, please send an email to [events@naactoronto.ca](mailto:events@naactoronto.ca)

School's out... now it's time to come out to play.

Submitted by

**Colin Ramdeen**

Chair, Social Committee



## NAPARIMA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION QUEBEC INC.



### Summer Gala Dinner/Dance

**SATURDAY, JUNE 13TH, 2015**

**@ THE ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION  
7771 BOUVIER ST., LA SALLE, QC H8N 2G6  
(CORNER SHEVCHENKO)**

**TIME: 6:00 P.M.**

**MUSIC BY:**

**TICKETS:**

**DINNER: 7:00 P.M.**

**DJ 610**

**\$35.00**

**SUMPTUOUS (INDO-CARIBBEAN) FOOD, GREAT MUSIC, GOOD VIBES, PLEASANT FOLKS,  
CASH BAR, DOOR PRIZES, RAFFLE. (DRESS: ELEGANTLY CASUAL)**

Tickets @ Marché Colonnade; 4850 René Emard, Pierrefonds, QC – Tel.: 514-624-7689  
Or call: 514-696-2516 West Island; 450-691-3319 Chateauguay;  
450-672-8501 South Shore; 514-363-3580 La Salle



## Communications Report

This is a plea to all members to heed the **insert letter** that most probably fell out when you opened this issue of *Broadcast*. Retrieve it and respond so as not to miss out on the contents of future issues of *Broadcast*.

For the past ten years, your NAAC membership fees have not covered the costs of printing and mailing two issues per year. And though we raised the annual membership fees from \$10 to \$15, and we get monies from

advertisers and special donors, NAAC still has to subsidize the publication of *Broadcast*.

We need to know how many copies to print and mail and how many email alerts to send out when the new issue is ready and uploaded to our NAAC website.

**Please respond with your choice.**

Submitted by  
**Merle Ramdial,**  
*Chair, Communications*



**“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. XXXVIII No. 2

Spring 2015

☐ Continue to receive a **print copy**

**OR**

☐ To receive an alert via email when the latest **e-copy** is posted to our website.

Please reply with your choice **by August 31st, 2015**  
via email to: merle.ramdial@gmail.com or by regular mail  
to the NAAC address or by Tel: 905 844 1254

**REMEMBER TO  
LET US KNOW  
YOUR PREFERENCE.  
FILL OUT  
ENCLOSED FORM.**



## Steelband Report

The unbearably cold and miserable weather over this past winter left many people feeling like icicles after work and school. That took its toll on attendance at steelband classes at both West Humber Collegiate Institute and Cedarbrae Collegiate Institute. However, there were enough players who braved the elements to keep the program running. Many thanks to Winston Poon for looking after the Beginner class and most of the Panache practice sessions.

Thanks also to David Lee Kim for collecting class fees and NAAC membership fees from Panache players and for keeping the records. The same is true for Fred Debidin at Cedarbrae C.I.

Classes at Cedarbrae will end for this school year at the end of March.

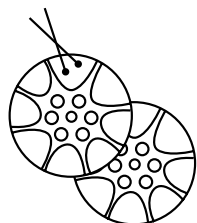
Panache had three gigs prior to the Christmas break, which included the yearly invitation to participate in the Etobicoke Santa Claus Parade.

Panache has six gigs booked for February to June this year, two of which are public gigs, the Peel Community Open House in Mississauga on Saturday, May 23 and the Mt. Sinai NICU Picnic at High Park, Toronto on Sunday June 14. Please feel free to come out and lend your support.

## — REMINDER — NAAC MEMBERSHIP

*Please remember  
to renew  
your NAAC  
Membership.*

*The membership  
year runs  
from  
January to December.*



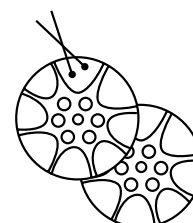
## NOTICE: Steelband Classes 2014/2015 Season

***Cedarbrae Collegiate Institute • Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.***

Contact: Randolph Karamath • Tel: 416-283-4152  
email: ramachez@hotmail.com

***West Humber Collegiate Institute • Time: 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.***

Contact: Ian Ramdial • Tel: 905-844-1254  
email: ian.ramdial09@gmail.com



---

# *A Firsttimers' View from the Float*

*By Francine Donaldson*

Although I have been a member of Panache for a number of years, 2014 was the first time I was able to participate in the band's annual Christmas tradition at the Etobicoke Santa Claus Parade. On December 6, 2014, members of Panache loaded their pans and drums and Christmas Spirit onto the back of a flatbed truck and prepared to entertain the crowds



gathered waiting to see Santa. Christmas music played on steel pans filled the air as we “floated” down the parade route.

Friday morning the flatbed was parked so members of Panache could prepare our float. We needed to decorate the truck and set up the pan stands, securing them to the base with many screws and zip-ties. Many hands make light work and in short time the truck was ready to go, festively attired and draped in Christmas colours.

Saturday morning dawned, mild and cloudy with the promise of sunshine for later in the day. A perfect day for a parade. Once the pans were loaded up, the band decked out in our Santa hats and cheery red scarves, we were all set to enjoy the views as we waited for our cue to go. The top of a truck is a great vantage point from which to see

all of the other participants assembling to join the parade.

Finally it was our turn and with a **BUMP** we were off. We could hear the sounds of the crowds lining the streets even before we turned the first corner. And once we pulled out onto the road and started to play the noise was electric! Children screaming and dancing, happy crowds cheering the sounds of Panache, and a few dancing policemen to round out the tableau.

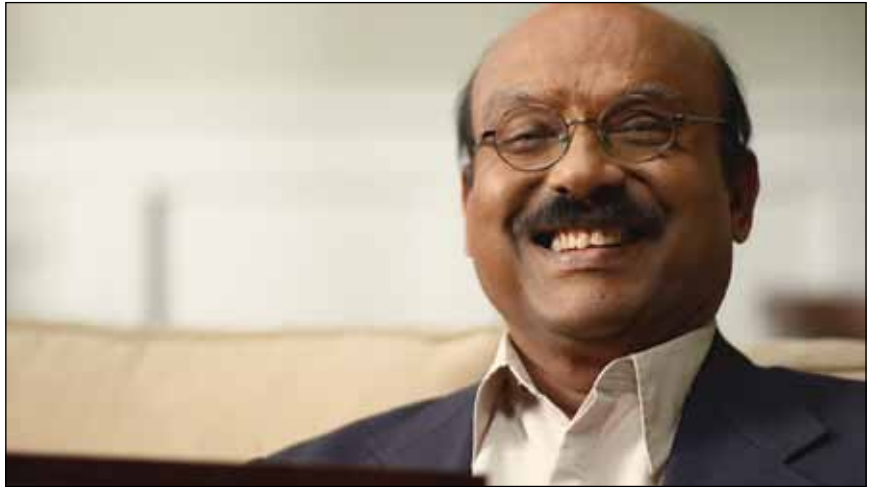
I have no idea how long we played, or how long the parade route was. From where I stood it all went by too quickly. I was enjoying the atmosphere too much to notice. I do remember that it was highly entertaining. And I know that I look forward to playing this event again this year and for many years to come.



---

# Mohan Bissoondial

*Mohan Bissoondial talks to Ramabai Espinet about his work in “Organ and Tissue Donation.”*



**RE:** Mohan, I congratulate you on the dedicated work you are doing to raise the awareness of Torontonians regarding organ and tissue donations. I gather that, apart from your own philanthropic inclinations, you also have a personal stake in the matter, having had two corneal transplants yourself. Would you share with us something about this experience?

**\*\* MB:** My first transplant was in 1971 and I approached it initially with a combination of fear, uncertainty and doubt, but after doing my own due diligence and speaking with someone who had the same transplant, my confidence grew and this changed to hope and trust in God that the transplant was going to be a success, which it was.

**RE:** Clearly, these transplants transformed your vision and impacted your life positively on a personal level. Too often, people are content with showing gratitude for such beneficence and it ends there. But you took it to the next level – finding ways to engage with the community in this project of social awareness so that they would be impelled to donate organs and tissues. Tell us how you got involved in this.

**\*\* MB:** After both transplants were successful, I felt that I had a moral obligation to “give back” in some way, since it was not sufficient to thank the anonymous donors who had given so much to me by enabling me to live a full life. After I retired from working at IBM for forty years, I decided that I had to move to the next level of keeping my promise to “give back” and I started volunteering with Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN), which is the Ontario Provincial agency charged with the mandate of managing organ and tissue donation. There are 1500 people on the waiting list today for a life-saving organ

transplant. I started by helping to host information tables at various events, handing out brochures and doing some public speaking.

**RE:** Give us a sense of the existing network in the city and how the local connects to the central – is this the case?

**\*\* MB:** The central organization is TGLN which is province wide. In the GTA area and across the province there are independent volunteer organizations organized by interested local people who tend to be recipients of organ and tissue transplants, donor families and supporters. After I had been volunteering for TGLN for a few years, I realized that the registration rate in Scarborough was about 9% and among the lowest in Ontario. The average rate in the province was about 22% at that time. I decided that I should focus my efforts in Scarborough where I have lived for over fifty years. I convinced a few fellow recipients and friends to form a local organization in Scarborough to promote education and awareness of the great need for organ and tissue donation and registration. The name of the local organization is Scarborough Gift of Life Association and I am the Coordinator and Chair of the group. We are an informal group and we work in partnership with TGLN who provides us with various support materials, help and guidance.

*(Continued on next page)*

---

## **Mohan Bissoondial**

*(Continued from previous page)*

**RE:** Tell us about your strategies and the success rates.

**\*\*MB:** We have engaged with leaders in political, religious and charitable communities such as MPs, MPPs and councilors; also in churches, mandirs and Rotary Clubs. We attend community BBQs, Health Fairs, Ribfests and the like. We volunteer at Service Ontario at Cedarbrae Mall for two full days per month. We do speaking engagements when invited to do so. In 2014, we attended about 50 events and connected with over 50,000 people and improved our registration rate from 9% a few years ago to 11%. Still, we have a big job to do to catch up to the GTA rate of 14% and the Provincial rate of 24%.

**RE:** Reaching diverse communities must be a challenge especially because of the multiplicity of beliefs –religious and otherwise– which might work against the concept of donating parts of one's body. Have you found this to be an obstacle? Tell us how you deal with this. Perhaps you can think of some examples?

**\*\*MB:** This is definitely an issue that we handle with sensitivity and education. There are myths about organ and tissue donation that we try to dispel through awareness and education and by presenting facts. TGLN provides us with brochures that are in several languages and address various religious groups such as Catholics, Jews, Muslims and Hindus and their positions on organ and tissue donation. All of the world's major religious denominations support organ and tissue donation. We also encourage interested persons to talk with their doctor and religious advisor if they need further advice. TGLN's registration website <http://www.giftoflife.on.ca> has a wealth of information, and questions and answers to assist potential donors to make a decision.

**RE:** What's the procedure for registering as an organ donor?

**\*\*MB:** The process has been simplified. If you are 16 years or older, and have a photo I.D. health card or red and white health card, you can register your

consent online in two minutes at BeADonor.ca, or by visiting your local ServiceOntario centre. If you have previously registered a decision of "Yes" to donate organs and tissue with Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP), you do not need to re-register. If you cannot register online, there are two options: visit any Service Ontario location and register in person, or download a form from [www.beadonor.ca](http://www.beadonor.ca) and mail in the completed form. It is critical to share your decision with your family so they can understand, support and respect your decision in the future.

**RE:** What if, after death, the family withdraws consent? Is this possible? How can the donor's wishes be safeguarded and carried out, even in the face of the family's opposition?

**\*\*MB:** After death, the family can change your consent decision. The family has the final decision. That is why it is critically important that you should speak to your family about your consent decision so it can be respected and honoured when you die.

**RE:** What do you know about the situation in Trinidad and Tobago regarding organ and tissue donation?

**\*\*MB:** I understand that in Trinidad people can register on a National Organ Transplant Registry by calling a phone number or by signing a National Organ Donor Card which must be carried at all times – similar to the old process in Ontario. It seems that they are only accepting kidneys and corneas based on the greatest need at this time and presumably based on medical skills and equipment.

**RE:** How can the Naparima community get involved? Any suggestions? Talk to us about the necessity for widening the pool of donors.

**\*\*MB:** The Naparima community can get involved by (1) personally registering at BeADonor.ca (2) asking their family and friends to also register (3) considering becoming a volunteer at a local organization where they live, to help promote awareness and education of the need for organ and tissue donation. They can contact me if they are interested.

*(Continued on next page)*



## Mohan Bissoondial

(Continued from previous page)

**RE:** You are the face of this consciousness-raising project in many different hospitals across the city – in entranceways and lobbies, encouraging people to move beyond their pre-ordained boundaries and register to become organ donors. Quite unexpectedly, I saw your photo near the doorway at a hospital in Mississauga and stopped short, exclaiming to my companions: “That is Mohan!” It felt good to see a familiar face doing the persuasion for such an important cause. Congratulations, Mohan. We are all very proud of your selfless efforts in this regard.

**\*\*MB:** Thank you for these kind words. As a recipient and beneficiary of two corneal transplants, I consider my volunteer efforts in raising awareness about the great need for organ and tissue donation to be the least that I can do to “give back” to society. There are 1500 people on the waiting list for an organ donation today and if I can help in saving just one life, I believe that my efforts will be worthwhile.

**RE:** Recognition of one’s efforts is always gratifying, and you have been recognized by none other than the Queen by being awarded a Diamond Jubilee Medal. More congratulations are due to you, Mohan. The greatest rewards are probably your own sense of fulfilment and well-being, and your meaningful engagement with the community at large. The public recognition of your philanthropic work is

one that we are all proud of. How did you react to the knowledge that this medal was being presented to you? And tell us some more about your other community and volunteer activities, beyond that of your work in organ and tissue donation, since this honour clearly acknowledges a lifetime involvement in community service.

**\*\*MB:** Receiving the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Medal came as a surprise to me since I was not aware that I was being nominated. I’ve done volunteer work in education serving on various School Councils, and serving as the Chair of the TD Canada Trust Friends of the Environment Foundation (Scarborough-Markham Chapter). At present, I spend a lot of time serving as Coordinator and Chair of the Scarborough Gift of Life Association. Right now in my life, giving back is my priority. It is an honour to receive the Diamond Jubilee Medal and I am grateful for the acknowledgement of my efforts. But the real satisfaction is in the work itself and the privilege of being of service to the community. None of this would be possible without the support of my wife, Phyllis, to whom I am most grateful.

**RE:** Thank you very much, Mohan, for sharing your thoughts and experiences with us.

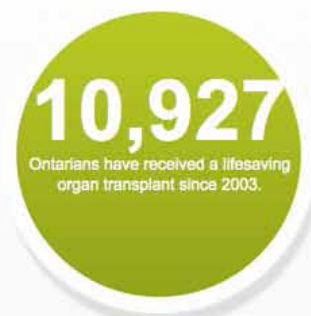
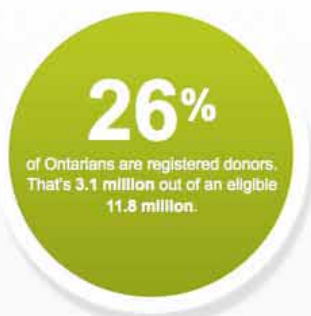
Mohan Bissoondial attended Naparima College in the years 1956 to 1962. He graduated from the University of Manitoba in 1965 with a B.Sc., and from the University of Toronto in 1967 with an MBA.

He can be reached at [mohanbissoondial@hotmail.com](mailto:mohanbissoondial@hotmail.com)

### THE NEED FOR ORGAN DONORS IN ONTARIO.

Currently, over 1500 people in Ontario are waiting for a life-saving organ transplant. And though most of us believe that organ donation is a good thing, only a quarter of us are registered as donors. Some great strides have been made in Ontario over the past year, but still more needs to be done. You can

[Spread the Word](#) by encouraging your friends and family to register their consent to become organ and tissue donors.





---

# A Brief History of Hillview College

In July 1951 the Official Board of the Aramalaya Presbyterian Church appealed to the Presbytery of the Canadian Mission Church for a Boys' Secondary School to be sited on Sheriff Street, Tunapuna.

Two years later the Naparima College Board, which was governing only the Canadian missionary Secondary Boys' School in the country at the time, was instructed by the Presbytery to proceed with plans for a programme of secondary school expansion, giving priority to the oilfield area and the area in the vicinity of Tunapuna.

A committee of missionaries agreed to release buildings on Sheriff Street for use and on 27 September 1954 application was made to the Colonial Government for the recognition of a Provisional Assisted Secondary School in Tunapuna.

On Monday, 17 January 1955 the school was opened under the principalship of Rev. H. F. Swann. It was called Naparima College, Tunapuna Branch, with an enrollment of 44 students and two teachers. The church hall on Sheriff Street was used as the classroom and the portion of the grounds and cowshed were used for games.

Naparima College, Tunapuna Branch remained



*Former Principal, Stephen Seepersad standing in front of original school on Sheriff Street, Tunapuna*

on this site until September 1957. In this year the Principal, staff and students entered the present site at the top of El Dorado Road. In November 1957 the government granted the college Permanent Status as a Government Assisted Secondary School and in 1962 the next principal, Dr. Stephen Moosai-Maharaj, renamed the school to Hillview College and gave it its motto and composed the words for the college song.

In 1959 the science laboratories were built and the





number of classrooms increased. In 1967 the main hall was extended to accommodate the increased number of staff, and an extension was made in 1996 to create offices for the administration and clerical staff. In 1986 a library was built and named in honour of Mr. Stephen R. Seepersad (Principal 1975-1988). In 1993 a 6th Form block was built, and in 1999 a pavilion was constructed and named in honour of

Mr. Richard Kokaram (Principal 1989-1999).

In 2005 Hillview College won the President's Gold Medal for the fourth time. Hillview also obtained scholarship places in CXC CSEC examinations.

Hillview College became the first North East Zone school to win the PowerGen Secondary Schools Cricket League and swept all other major competitions.

## ***Hillview Honours Panman Pat***

*Panman Pat in Trinidad for his Conferral of the HOBA Award on Saturday 10 January 2015 for Dedicated Service to Country and College*

Mr. Michael Lashley, former T&T Consul-General to Toronto during an address said that Panman Pat is a great patriot/exemplar of T&T who excelled as a Calypsonian Monarch twice, supreme pannist, performer, writer and cultural activist eminently worthy of the many accolades that he received both here and in Canada.



*Panman Pat with Professor Dyer Narinesingh, another Honoree*



---

# ***\$15M extension for Hillview College***

*By Miranda La Rose Tuesday, January 20 2015*

**WORK on a \$15 million extension to Hillview College to better accommodate its students, is set to begin next month according to Education Minister Dr Tim Gopeesingh.**

Gopeesingh, who yesterday addressed the students prior to turning the sod to mark the start of construction at the all-male school in Tunapuna, said that the extension will include a new auditorium, an extended fifth form block and a staff room.

The school was first established as an extension to Naparima College by the Presbyterian Church in 1955 with 44 students and two teachers. The school now has 800 students on roll.

Gopeesingh noted that similar works, due to be carried out on Hillview College, have already been done at other schools including Naparima College. Works are also set to continue at others including the construction of an auditorium and a science laboratory among other facilities at St Augustine Girls' Secondary also at a cost of \$15 million.

In terms of internet connectivity for schools, he announced that Government was moving to provide 25 megabites for primary schools and 50 megabites for secondary schools. The contract for that, he said should be awarded shortly and work should start in all schools by February. This will enable students to connect to the internet in any part of the school, he said.

In addition, Government, he said, was moving to train 600 teachers in the art of infusing Information Communication Technology in the schools' curriculum with the assistance of Harvard University and the Organisation of American States.

In an address interspersed with loud rounds of applause, Gopeesingh related his life's experience as a student in which education was not free, and a number of facilities, including free transportation, was not available to them. If he could have achieved



under adverse circumstances, he said, students can do better under much improved conditions that are available to them.

Also speaking about the need for students to be more rounded, he related his days as a student playing cricket for the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, for Trinidad and Tobago in regional tournaments, and later as the first medical doctor to play in a test match.

As a medical student, he said he spent three and a half hours playing cricket and jogging in the afternoons while his colleagues would spend six to seven hours studying. He took about three hours of study each day to pass the same examinations as his colleagues.

"My reason for telling you this," he said, "is to tell you to manage your time well and you can participate in sport. If you manage your time you can become physically stronger and more mentally alert." If he could have done it, he said, "You can do it. You can participate in sports, music and extra curricular activities." Congratulating the school on celebrating its 60th anniversary, he said that Hillview College remains rooted in academic excellence. Its achievements, he said, reflects the history of the country's education system and the shared determination of the people to attain an education where even a cowpen was considered a site of learning amidst the discriminatory practices of colonialism.

---

## *Hillview College Today*



---

# *The Capture of German Submariners from “Odds and Ends” (2012)*

*by Clarence Madhosingh*

When WWII started in 1939, we were living in the little village of Brazil in central Trinidad. However, later that year my father was transferred to the village of Blanchisseuse on the north Caribbean coast of Trinidad, across the Northern Range of mountains.

By 1941 I often witnessed convoys of ships, including many oil tankers and navy ships, preparing for their voyage across the Atlantic Ocean, northeast towards Europe. I also saw events of military action on these seas. On one occasion, with other onlookers on a cliff in the village, I witnessed a torpedo released from a submarine, likely a U-boat, missed its target ship. We saw the torpedo hurtling through the water and heard it explode on the coast about two miles away from where we were. The submarine disappeared underwater and this was followed by a series of loud explosions and huge geysers of water, possibly from depth charges, in the area of the ships.

In this little fishing village, it was usual at the end of a working day, when the sun is near setting, when it becomes cooler in the short tropic twilight, that the local men - the gardeners, woodcutters and fishermen - would gather informally at a “parlour” for a soft drink like the local “mauby” or “ginger beer” or just for casual conversation, catching up with the current village events and gossips.

On this particular evening, an elderly gardener described his unusual experience that day. He had “cleared a spot” of government forest land about one-half mile east of the village along the coast. There he worked daily growing vegetables for his own consumption and for sale. As he foraged for a small animal for meat that day, he encountered *“plenty white man in khaki short pants, some no wearin no shirt. Dey had wood fire. Dey cooking, eating, drinking beer and laughing, like hell.”* Apparently they were not deterred or concerned by his appearance and

invited him to eat and drink with them. He declined but he did converse with one for a while.

He continued his story in the local dialect: *“Here in the middle of nowhere, the white man wid lite hair showing me half tickets from Globe teater in Port-of-Spain. He tell me he know Port-of-Spain better than me. Then he ask me to catch wild meat and bring it tomorrow and he will pay me wid good Trinidad money. Den he laf an show me a handful of dollars.”*

Coincidentally, one of the local off-duty constabulary was present at this little gathering and he became quite curious about this unusual story told naively by the elderly gardener. Blond white men were not a common sight in these parts. The constable took him to the Police Station and had him recount his story to the Corporal who advised him not to discuss this meeting with anyone.

The Corporal informed the U.S. military lookout station at the 12-mile post located at Morne Bleu at the top of the mountain range on the Arima - Blanchisseuse road. The Americans met with the gardener early next morning, provided him with the fresh carcass of a deer and told him to take it to the white men just as they had arranged. They told him that they will be close behind him and that he did not have to worry.

As the gardener approached the men in the forest the next day, they seemed to have sensed that all was not right. They scrambled towards the sea and to a submarine lying close to land in a narrow inlet. Shots were fired from both sides. The submarine escaped with most of its crew but three German crewmen were taken prisoners.

Being prisoners of the British colony, they were marched through the length of the village to be incarcerated temporarily in the local Police Station located at the west end of the village. The procession consisted of the local constabulary in full dress on horseback followed by the three prisoners in

*(Continued on next page)*



---

(Continued from previous page)

handcuffs, wearing boots, short khaki pants and without shirts. They were followed by a chauffeured U.S. jeep with an officer in full uniform, followed by two U.S. Army trucks with armed soldiers.

The villagers along the way were quiet in their consternation. This parade down the “main street”, a dirt road, of the village must have appeared to some of them as a victory march and the end of the war. But most were concerned and there were ever more whispers now among the villagers: *Indeed, the Germans are planning to invade the island. The submarine came to check out the location for the big landing. The Germans will start their invasion right here in our little village.*

Sure enough, less than a week later, flares lit the night sky and the entire village was as bright as day. Dozens of villagers who witnessed the flares ran from their homes on the coast to the hills and the forests. Many left in their night clothes which may not have been much on those hot tropical nights. They were sure that the invasion by the Germans was about to begin.

The next day the police got word around that the flares were dropped by U.S. reconnaissance patrol planes searching the many coves and inlets on the north coast for German submarines. These planes, part of the U.S. 1st Reconnaissance Squadron (formerly, the 1st Bombardment Squadron), were stationed at the Waller Field air base on the island from October 1941 to the end of the war in 1945 [[www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq67-3](http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq67-3)].

These patrols took place frequently both at night and during the day since the capture of the German submariners up the coast. The patrol planes flew quite low just off the coastal cliffs and oftentimes during the day flights, the pilots would return our anxious shouts and waving from the school grounds by waving themselves or by a gentle roll of the wings of their planes.

This in no way allayed the primal fears of many in the village. Many who had retreated to the forests remained there for extended periods, living in temporary makeshift timber structures

covered with leaves. They visited the village only occasionally to gather essentials but always slept in the forests.

One wonders whether the hosts of poisonous snakes in those forests were not a greater immediate threat than the prospect of a German invasion!! Fear pervaded the somnolent village and the villagers did not know what to expect next. U.S. jeeps and trucks with armed soldiers patrolled the roads frequently and the village never again returned to its former quaintness and quiet. The villagers, who had never ventured into the world outside their small village, now had the adventurers of the outside world thrust upon them.

Searching the internet recently, I found an archive of WWII stories, gathered by the BBC and placed on the website: [www.bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar/Trinidadwar](http://www.bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar/Trinidadwar). In it there is an article (#A4167731), a letter written by Nellie Joan Carrington about some of her wartime experiences in north Trinidad. She mentions that “*Trinidad, which was always a mixture of all races of people, was full of spies. I knew one or two at our Country Club and around the place, before they were apprehended and removed.*” She and her girl friend took a Red Cross First Aid Course and were able to assist hundreds of seamen who came ashore on the island from allied ships sunk by German submarines in the Trinidad neighbourhood.

She wrote, “*I saw a ship sink. I was on holiday with friends on the north coast. We could look across to the island of Tobago.*” She continued that they saw “*a lone cargo ship on the horizon*” and that soon afterwards, “*...the same ship, as I was watching, had its bow thrown up high above the sea and then the stern came up the same way at the opposite end. It had broken in half in the middle. Later on in the evening, we saw the survivors (they were Greek) waiting in the school room for a bus.*”

There were no reports of these events in the local newspapers at that time. From where we lived in the village, Tobago was easily visible in the north-east and would have been close to where the girls were located.

# *UWI dedicates law building to Hassanali*

*by Rachael Espinet, Published: Thursday, January 22, 2015*

To honour the legal legacy of former president Noor Hassanali, the University of the West Indies (UWI), St Augustine campus Law Faculty officially named their main auditorium after the late president on Tuesday.

Campus principal Prof Clement Sankat said the naming of the building holds great significance to UWI.

“It reinforces in the minds of the people of our country, region and the world that Noor Hassanali has achieved prominence in the field of law, both locally and abroad, and has contributed significantly to the UWI and to the development of Trinidad and Tobago and by extension the Caribbean region.”

Hassanali was previously honoured by UWI in 1989 when the university conferred him with an honorary doctorate.

Sankat said now the physical structure of the building will ensure that students and staff of UWI will always remember Hassanali.

The Noor Hassanali Auditorium was completed two years ago, but was not officially named until yesterday.

Sankat said UWI’s Naming Committee unanimously agreed on naming the building after Hassanali because he was considered a “legal luminary.”

“It is my hope that our new Faculty of Law would live up to these principles, and to the high standard which our former president His Excellency Noor Hassanali strictly adhered to.

“I look forward to our Faculty of Law to be the beacon of light for our society, and that it would contribute to nation-building at the highest level,” Sankat said.

Sankat described Hassanali as a diverse and well-rounded president who believed in education and helping others become educated.

“His Excellency Noor Hassanali was known as a ‘President for all,’ one who demonstrated the qualities of impartiality, objectivity and fairness. And this is what law is about. It is a rubric that governs the behaviour of our society, it transcends boundaries and ultimately through our Constitution allows us to realise our aspirations for the kind of society to which we aspire, and to which we must build,” Sankat said.

Soon UWI St Augustine South Campus in Penal/Debe will be opened, and Sankat said that campus will be the primary facility for the Law Faculty.



*Zalayhar Hassanali unveils the plaque for the Noor Hassanali Auditorium, UWI, St Augustine campus on Monday evening.*

*Looking on are pro vice chancellor and campus principal Clement Sankat and dean of the Faculty of Law Rose-Marie Belle Antoine. PHOTO: MARCUS GONZALES*

The expansion of the Law Faculty, Sankat said, was of great importance to the country’s students because the LLB degree (Bachelors of Law) will be accessible to all students.

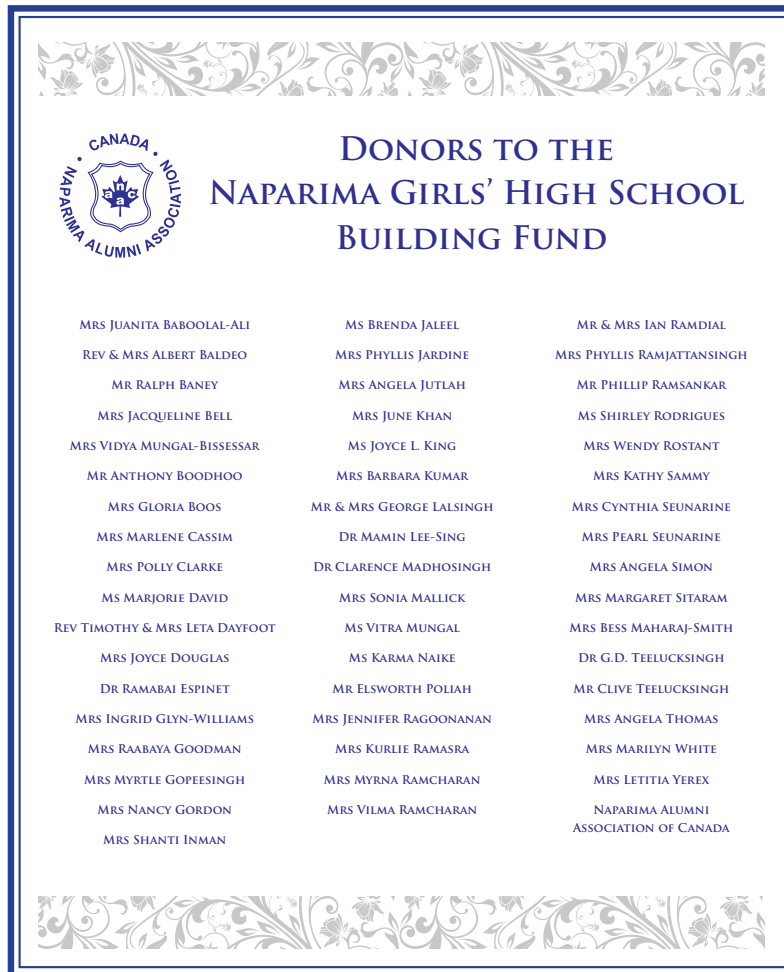
Previously students from T&T who wanted to study Law in UWI had to go to the Cave Hill campus in Barbados to do so. On average more than 1,000 students would apply to the Law Faculty, but Cave Hill could only take in 40-50 students annually. This new faculty now allows for more local students to study law.

“The establishment of a Faculty of Law right here at the UWI St Augustine Campus therefore means that many students from very humble backgrounds can now aspire to one of the noblest professions, whereas for more than four decades such an avenue might have been closed to them because of the cost of studying and living outside of Trinidad and Tobago,” Sankat said.

Last year, 86 students graduated from UWI St Augustine’s LLB (Bachelors of Law) programme, and Sankat hopes that in the years to come the Law Faculty from St Augustine will expand exponentially.

Hassanali’s family, including his wife Zalayhar Hassanali, were present for the naming ceremony where Zalayhar unveiled the commemorative plaque on the building.

# New NGHS Building



*This is a representation of the plaque to be hung  
at NGHS recognizing the NAAC donors.*

---

# *Mahal – the walking legend*

Our Heritage with Al Ramsawack (*Newsday*, Tuesday, March 2, 2015)

**How did he ever escape the Guinness Book of World Records, is yet to be known. There is little doubt that no other man, outside of the stone-age, had ever walked a total mileage comparable to the legendary Mahal of Trinidad.**

To most old timers recalling the period of the 1930s through to the early 1960s, the name Mahal was enough to conjure up pictures of a lone “pedestrian-motorist”, if there is such a term to describe one who mimes or pretends to drive a car, while he, in fact, walks, trots or runs.

For miles and miles, the man Mahal walked barefooted and untiring, from village to village, small towns and through the city of Port-of-Spain.

The Creole-Spanish man, or ‘cocoa pahyorl’, wore an old, weather-beaten police cap on his head, long pants with legs rolled up to just under his knees unveiling sinuous calves. Around his waist he wore a thick, broad leather belt like that of the cocoa workers of that period, and across his shoulders hung a ham sack with a hand-stick or baton and other unknown objects.

With one hand clutched to an imaginary steering wheel, the man was ready to begin his long journey.

The free hand played the gear lever into the first gear position. He released the hand brake and jerked off to a start. “Beep! Beep!” he voiced the warning horn.

Again the free hand geared up to the second and third gears. Mahal was on his way, to where, no one could predict. So precise and true his act appeared, that to him, there was no doubt that he was in fact, driving a car.

He was viewed with suspicion, as the most unusual and questionable character in this country.

Long before World War II, people stared curiously out of windows from little houses, big houses and barracks throughout the country to see Mahal as he “drove” past, along the roads.

Schoolchildren gaped with curiosity and fear as the “driver” went by, making appropriate hand signals and blowing horns as a true motorist.

It was early in the 20th century, when dirt roads cut through forests, dark cocoa and coffee plantations and open sugarcane fields; the period when motorcars were few, monstrous curiosities, and when children hid under beds and sugar bags at the noisy approach of a car.

It was a time when drivers were hailed as heroes and masters of the moving machines or horseless buggies. There was at that time a little boy called Hose Gonzales of humble parentage in Siparia.

He was passionate with the dream of becoming a car or bus driver, and so, he often shied away from school, intent on fulfilling his ambition. He frequently wandered around a bus garage, whiling away his time in daydreaming; seeing himself as a bus driver. In those far-off days the bus owners gave their buses names. One of the buses in that garage was named, “Taj Mahal,” after which, he was supposedly nicknamed.

He played car, as he went on errands for his mother. Up and down George Street in Siparia, he babbled his lips to the sound of the engine, as he trotted along, toggling at his imagined steering wheel and changing gears while on his errand to the parlour and back home

At the early age of ten years, he started “driving” away from home. As he grew up, he expanded his route out to De Gannes Village, then further away to Syne Village, Charlo Village and Penal in one direction.

And gaining confidence, he later “drove” through villages in the opposite direction as far South as Erin.

As a young man he added more miles exploring new destinations beyond the then borough of San Fernando.

For many days and nights he stayed away from home until the time came when being at home, was unusual. His mother missed Hose, who was by that time, well known as Mahal the driver.

From then on, there was no stopping, as he drove along roads and tracks to scattered places across the

*(Continued on next page)*

---

*(Continued from previous page)*

island. He was seen driving in places as far apart as Port-of-Spain, Arima, Sangre Grande, Manzanilla, Mayaro, Guayaguayare, Rio Claro Princes Town, Tamana, Cumuto, Blanchisseuse, La Brea and Cedros. A woman of Sangre Grande claimed to have seen Mahal driving through the streets of Caracas in Venezuela.

Some folks from south Trinidad related how Mahal was encouraged to enter a walking race from Charlie King Junction in Fyzabad to San Fernando, one Easter Sunday. He recalled:

“Dat morning wen Mahal line up foh de walking race in Fyzabad, well dat was de best ting foh ah long time. We fool him an’ tell him dat it was ah car race. Man Ah tell yuh! Fellahs betting big, big money orn de great Mahal, because dey know dat he is de best walker in de whole island. Wen dey buss de pistol so, Mahal screech out like de bullet from de pistol. By de time de odder fellahs mek t’ree corners, de ole Mahal done goin’ up Tito Hill in Oropouche, bat-outa-hell!

“Ah fellah who bet orn he, t’row ah bucket ah water to cool dong Mahal. Well Mahal mash he brakes one time. He watch de fellah cross-eye and bawl, ‘why de hell yuh t’row water orn mih car foh! Yuh want to flood mih cabaratah o’ wha!’ He put he mout’ one side so, and start to chug chug like he goin to shut dong. Soon after, he pick-up speed again.”

A crowd of supporters followed on foot and on bicycles urging the man to the winning post. On reaching the middle of the Mosquito Creek, Mahal began to limp and bounce, soon coming to an abrupt stop. He scooped the sweat off his forehead. He pulled up his hand brake, opened the car door and walked out; and throwing up his hands in despair, he said,

“Oh shucks fellahs! Is like ah get ah flat tyre! It go tek about two hours to patch up de chube!” Of course, that was a regrettable loss; not only to Mahal, but to the scores of angry men who had so faithfully placed their bets on him as their winner.

In another interesting incident, an old, bearded fish vendor from Princes Town related,

“Mahal drive into Princes Town cool, cool, one

day. He park up he car near mih fish cyart and buy ah long king fish from me. He open de trunk orf his car and pelt de fish inside, den he close de trunk and drive off. Buh he really leave de fish orn de road, because he ent really have no darm car atorl! As he bend de corner, Ah tek back mih fish and sell it. I wish he come and buy fish from me every day!”

The continuing drama occurred in far-off Sangre Grande, when Mahal steamed into Cunapo. An old timer recalled with a broad grin,

“Mahal drive he imaginary car an’ park it up in front ah Marlay shop in Cunapo. Everybody crowd roun to see Mahal open he car door an’ come out. He gone in de back ah de shop in Marlay sweet drink factory to drink ah sweet. W’en he come back, he see ah mash-and-leggo Ford car park up on top ah he good car. Boy, well hell roll dat day! Mahal tek out he big stick from he hamsack, an, start to beat up de man car an’ cuss! Man, Ah nevah see ah mash-and-leggo tek off so fas’ yet!”

There is, however, yet, another intriguing slant to the Mahal story which stands as a challenge to the international world, and the question of believing or not. If the legendary Mahal had carried an odometer to record the total mileage of his driving (walking) career, it would have registered a mileage of approximately 163,800 miles. If it were possible for a person to travel around the earth on a continuous road along the circumference, which is approximately, 24,902 miles, Mahal’s mileage would have been the equivalent of a conservative six and a half trips around. Or if a path were stretched out in a straight road to the moon, (238,857 miles) he would have travelled more than half the journey to that planet.

The humble Mahal, however, had never won a medal for his country, or a reward for himself. He never heard the thundering applause for his feat; singular and unparallel in the history of walking. Instead, he departed silently, and as a pauper, was laid to rest without a verse or an inscribed headstone. But maybe some day, our values will change and his neglected grave may be sought and written as an historical monument, Mahal the Walking Legend of Trinidad and Tobago.



*Obituary:*  
***Florence Carol Gupte (nee Goberdhan)***

A dedicated teacher and administrator for many years, Mrs. Florence Gupte passed away on November 6, 2014. The funeral service was held on November 11, 2014 at Susamachar Presbyterian Church, San Fernando, Trinidad.

In 1946, upon graduation from Naparima Girls' High School, Carol Goberdhan began her career as a teacher at the Naparima Kindergarten School in San Fernando. Two years later, she attended the Naparima Boys' College where she obtained her Cambridge University Higher School Certificate. She subsequently received her Bachelor of Arts Degree from United College (University of Winnipeg) in Manitoba, Canada.

Carol returned to San Fernando where she resumed her teaching career at the Naparima Girls' High School, and later as a lecturer in Mathematics, Psychology and English Literature at the Naparima Training College for Teachers.

In 1956, a visit from the Indian Cricket Team changed Carol's life. At one social event she met and later married Subhash Gupte, a world-renowned Indian cricketer. Carol and Subhash lived in Bombay, India for five years, during which time their son Anil and daughter Carolyn were born. Anil is presently a medical doctor; Carolyn is a graduate of the London School of Journalism.

In 1962, the Gupte family decided to make Trinidad their home. In 1972, in San Fernando, Carol established a private elementary school which she named "The A.C. Goberdhan Memorial School" in memory of her father, a well-known educator. Carol served as teacher and administrator of the school until her retirement in the early 2000s.

Carol Gupte dedicated many years to her profession and as both teacher and administrator, she helped to further the education and careers of many graduates. During her lifetime, she touched the lives of many students and teachers, and she is fondly remembered today for her influence and many contributions to education in San Fernando.

*(Editor's note: Carol is sister of Letitia Yerex, NAAC Life Member).*



## **Condolences**

*Condolences to the family of Carol Gupte who passed away in Trinidad on November 6, 2014.*

*Carol attended Naparima Girls' High School and taught there for many years. She also taught at the Teachers' Training College in San Fernando. Carol has two surviving sisters, Letitia Yerex, NAAC Life Member and Zadell Thackoor.*

*Vashti Charles' brother and Christopher Charles' uncle, Krishna Narinesingh, passed away in December in Trinidad.*

*Winston Packnin Look Foe and June Look Foe on the sudden death of their middle daughter, Natalie. Christine Arjoonlal on the passing of her father in Ottawa on November 26th.*

---

# Indo-Caribbean feminism

By Joy Mahabir (Trinidad Express, Mar 19, 2015)

International Women's Day was celebrated globally on March 8, and some countries devote the entire month of March to highlight the accomplishments of girls and women.

On March 23, 1868, an indentured labourer from Iere Village, Kunjah, sent his two daughters, Mungari and Subharti, with their brother, to learn to read. Their classroom was the doorstep of the house across from theirs where Presbyterian missionaries John and Sarah Morton lived. At ages 5 and 7, the girls were already engaged to be married according to traditional Hindu custom, but Kunjah sent them to be educated because he was adamant that his children would never be part of the exploitative system of indentureship.

In the Naparima region there were many estate strikes. The question for indentureds was how to radically transform labour relations. For indentured women, the path was education. After 1868, so many indentured women wanted their daughters to be educated in the new Canadian Mission schools that the first girls' high school, catering primarily though not exclusively to Indo-Trinidadians, was started in 1912. The first class at Naparima Girls' High School was made up of Christian, Hindu and Muslim girls whose grandparents and parents, many still indentured, scraped together the school fees. The demand for education was so great that a dormitory had to be opened so that girls from places like Woodbrook, Fyzabad, Guaico and Ecclesville could attend. To indentured women, education was revolutionary praxis.

From Jamaica to Guyana there are many Indo-Caribbean feminist traditions. In all of these, one consistent element is the deep desire for knowledge and the reverence for intellectual development that indentured women passed on to their daughters. In some cases it was difficult for men to come to terms with the new female independence unfolding before their eyes. In her novel *Jahajin*, Peggy Mohan tells the poignant story of Ajie, who came home from boarding school at NGHS, delighted to show her father that she had come first in her Hindi class. Her excitement was cut short when she saw the wedding tent that she knew was for her. Realising that she would have to

stop school, she started to cry.

Schools in the Naparima educational system were different from other schools on the island because they were not established for the children of the planter classes. Of course girls read Chaucer, Shakespeare and Keats, but they were encouraged to articulate a Caribbean identity true to their social and historical experiences, and inclusive of all cultures in Trinidad. It's not surprising that so many female writers have emerged from the Naparima system of education including but not limited to Dionne Brand, Madeline Coopsammy, Ramabai Espinet, Patricia Mohammed, Peggy Mohan, Shani Mootoo, Fawzia Muradali-Kane and Rajandaye Ramkissoon-Chen.

To see the late Rajandaye Ramkissoon-Chen read her poetry was always a moving experience. Her poem "When the Hindu Woman Sings Calypso" traces the journey of women from kitchen to matikor circle to national stage. Whether this national stage was in the arena of culture, science or politics, Ramkissoon-Chen says, "the whole country listens" when Indo-Trinidadian women dare to lift their voices.

The girls Mungari and Subharti who sat on the wooden doorstep learning to read were the aunts of my grandmother, Rose Kunjah. In her historical account of this period, Sarah Morton misrepresents the history of the Kunjah family, claiming that Rose's father, John, died in 1868 when he fell off a cane cart. In fact it was John's friend, Doman, who fell off a cart in the Malgretoute estate, dying as a result.

In her novel, *The Swinging Bridge*, Ramabai Espinet, one of Rose Kunjah's granddaughters, would echo what girls in the Naparima system were told every day: "Girls, remember that you can be anything-I repeat anything-you want to be. Just aim at the stars and study like hell." Today, Caribbean girls need to hear these inspirational words. Indentured women knew that through education their daughters would be one step closer to the goals of freedom and equality so intrinsic to all Caribbean feminisms.

Dr. Joy Mahabir is Associate Professor of English at the State University of New York and a former student of NGHS. E-mail: mahabij@sunysuffolk.edu

---

## *News from the T & T schools*

### **Top students honoured by President**

*by Rachael Espinet, Saturday, January 10, 2015*

“I still don’t feel like an over achiever. I just feel like a regular Jane. I hope when I go away to university, I will be able to make my parents proud again,” said Soliel Sachi Baldeosingh, one of this year’s President Medal winners. She was among six students honoured by President Anthony Carmona for their achievement in the national examinations yesterday at the President’s Medal presentation ceremony at the National Academy for the Performing Arts (NAPA), Port-of-Spain.

Addressing the students, Carmona called on the awardees and all those from their generation to rise above the example set by the older citizens and be true patriots of the country who does selfless, good deeds. “When you are engaged in the business of goodness, goodness has no reciprocity,” Carmona said. Baldeosingh and Sandeep Maharajh were presented with the President’s Medal Gold in Caribbean Advance Proficiency Examination (CAPE).

Baldeosingh was a student of St Augustine Girls High School (**SAGHS**) while Maharajh was a former student of Presentation College, Chaguanas. Baldeosingh would begin reading for a degree in law at the London School of Economics. Though she has achieved praise for her achievement in CAPE, Baldeosingh said she never believed that she was the type of person to win the President’s Medal, but now that she has, she knows that she must continue to work hard.

“I feel nervous,” Baldeosingh told T&T Guardian. “Going off to England is the beginning of something new, and I hope that I can make it at the university level. I hope I can live up to this.” Maharajh’s family and schoolmates were there to celebrate his achievement.

“It feels great of course to be able to attend this function. Last year I was here and I saw one of my friends receive the award and now I am here. I am proud that I am able to continue my school’s tradition of excellence. I feel honoured to join this

elite group of President Medal winners,” Maharajh said. Maharajh is now a medical student at the University of the West Indies (UWI). However, his experience has not been ideal.

“I started UWI in September and the work is building and getting harder. I don’t want to sound controversial, but I wish that the infrastructure of the UWI campus could reflect the high level of scholars in the institution,” Maharajh said. The President said more students need role models at every level and decided to extend the President’s Medal to students writing the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate (CSEC) and Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) Examination.

This is the second year students outside of the CAPE degree were honoured for their achievements in their exams.

### **OTHER TOP ACHIEVERS**

Rajeev Ram, a Lower Six student from **Naparima College**, San Fernando was named the most outstanding student at CSEC. He sat the examinations for 16 subjects in Form Five and earned 13 distinctions and three “normal ones.”

“I want to be a doctor, but so much more. I have always been different and curious about so many things, so I also want to have my own business. I want to go into different fields. All these different subjects will help me focus on my dreams,” Ram said. Ram was honoured alongside Jesse Ramkhalawan, from **SAGHS**.

Ramkhalawan earned eleven distinctions, winning her the President’s Medal silver. Ramkhalawan said she wants to study Quantum Mathematics and work for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

Shivanna Chatoor, the first place winner in SEA was also honoured. Now attending **Naparima Girls’ High School**, San Fernando Chatoor won the President’s Medal gold for primary education. Her classmate and Cameel Juman, originally from **Grant Memorial Presbyterian School**, San Fernando was given the President’s Medal silver.

Your experience begins at  
Expedia CruiseShipCenters



**Expedia®  
cruiseshipcenters®**

TICO Ontario Registration No. 4640140

aeroplan

EARN, REDEEM,  
& EARN AGAIN

At Expedia CruiseShipCenters, we are navigators of spectacular vacation experiences. As part of the number one brand in travel this is our promise to you:

- Advice you can trust • The best choice and prices
- Expedia Extras • More than Cruises
- Always there

Please visit my website and register for a chance to win a free cruise:

[www.cruiseshipcenters.ca/glendaramsahai](http://www.cruiseshipcenters.ca/glendaramsahai)

**Glenda Ramsahai**

Cruise and Vacation Specialist

6465 Millcreek Drive, Mississauga, ON L5N 5R3

**Bus: (905) 821-7447 / Cell: (416) 575-8996**

E-mail: [gramsahai@cruiseshipcenters.com](mailto:gramsahai@cruiseshipcenters.com)

**RE/MAX**  
Realty Specialists Inc., Brokerage  
Independently Owned And Operated

**416.939.2999**

*Beths  
Suepaul*  
Broker, M.A.



Make **YOUR**  
Buying Investing



Selling  
A REALITY!



Office: 416.939.2999

email: [beths@bethssuepaul.com](mailto:beths@bethssuepaul.com)

**BethsSuepaul.com**



## THE BEST ROTIS AND DOUBLES IN TOWN

**WE DID IT! ROTI ROTI DID IT!!!**

**WE CREATED THE WORLDS LARGEST**

**Bus-up-Shot, Dhal Puri & Doubles at the Albion Islington Festival 2009**

(check out [www.rotirotirestaurant.com](http://www.rotirotirestaurant.com) or on Youtube: Worlds Largest Paratha)



**PARATHA or DHAL PURI single**

Still only

**\$2.50\***  
Each

**WEDDING SIZE PARATHA** (\*feeds up to 12 people)

Still only

**\$10.99\***  
Each

**DOUBLES WORLD'S LARGEST**

Still only

**\$1.50\***  
Each

**BUY 5 &  
GET 1 FREE**

**MINI ROTIS** (your choice of Boneless chicken, goat, beef, shrimp or veggies)

**2 For \$7.00\***

**WEEKEND BUFFET BREAKFAST**

(sada roti, fry bake, Paratha, plantain, saltfish & tomatoes, bhaji, roast bigan choka, carilly, channa & alloo and lots more) FREE COFFEE OR TEA OR OVALTINE

**ONLY**

**\$7.99\***  
per person

**\*PLUS TAX**

**ROTI**

**ROTI**

**Restaurant**

**WE ARE 20 YEARS OLD!!! (established 1994)  
COME CELEBRATE WITH US !!**



**979 Albion Road, Etobicoke,  
(1 block east of Islington Ave)**

**Call Mr. Roti Roti today  
416-745-9208**

**"WHERE ABSOLUTELY NO ROTI IS COOKED BEFORE ITS TIME"®**



## *2014 Christmas Dinner & Dance*



*Photos by: G.D. Teelucksingh*