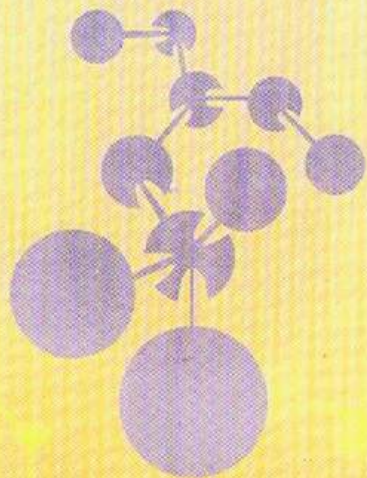




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Newsletter

Vol. 4, Issue 1, September 2010

President's Message



Dear Friends,

One more year has gone by and a few more feathers have been added to the RCAA Cap. The prestigious JEWEL OF RUIA Awards function, held in December 2009, was well attended as usual and highly appreciated. The two Jewels - Dr. Narendra Jadhav and Pt. Vidyadhar Vyas went nostalgic, recalling their student days in Ruia.

In the month of February, 2010, the RCAA had an informal get together of the members, which turned out to be a very pleasant evening. Three of our alumni-Ananya Bhowmick, Alap Bhagwat and Priyanka Bhat, regaled the audience with some evergreen Hindi Film songs of the 50s and 60s. The programme was thoroughly enjoyed by a packed audience, who, a la Oliver Twist, kept asking for more! This was followed by a lip smacking Chaat Party-all on the House (no, no ladders were required, even though the eats were on the House!)

During your next trip to the College, do take a look at the RCAA HALL which was formally inaugurated in the month of April, 2010 (situated on the premises formerly given to the IDBI Bank). It has a seating capacity of about 50 and has all the modern amenities.

The year 2011-12 will be an important year for the college. 75 years of glorious existence is a landmark achievement in the life of any Institution and we at RCAA plan to celebrate it on a grand scale. If you have suggestions regarding the programmes, please mail them to our Editor on kalpagam.raghuraman@gmail.com and we shall get in touch with you. And talking of achievements, we wish to congratulate our alumnus - Justice Hemant G Gokhale, who till recently was a judge of the High Court of Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Allahabad, Lucknow and Chennai and now has the enviable distinction of being the judge of the Supreme Court! May you win many more laurels in future, Hemant!

All of which just shows-

'SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE ACHIEVE IN SPITE OF, NOT IN THE ABSENCE OF PROBLEMS!'

Let us say cheers to that!

RITA DOCTOR - PRESIDENT-RCAA

Congratulations!

**RCAA congratulates
JUSTICE HEMANT GOKHALE
on being appointed
a Judge of the Supreme Court**



From the Editor's Desk

Dear Ruiaites,

Our college undoubtedly enjoys the reputation of being one of the topmost colleges in Mumbai and probably in the country as well. Our achievements are enviable in curricular, co curricular and extra curricular fields as well as in sports. This year too we bagged the prestigious Intercollegiate Overall Championship in Cultural Activities for the fifth consecutive year. This year two foremost education and research bodies in the country-the University Grants Commission and Department of Science and Technology have respectively awarded Ruia college-**College with Potential for Excellence Status** and a grant of **Rs.50 lacs under the FIST**(Funds for Improvement of Science and Technology Infrastructure) programme. Truly this augurs well for the college as it marches towards the Platinum jubilee celebrations.

The college results at the University examination, as always, were excellent- TYBA 87.50% and TYBSc 85.64%.

This year also, the Alumni Association will conduct the Medical Camp for the students and will cover the FY, TY and MSc students. I take this opportunity to once again appeal to all of you to contribute to the Medical Endowment Fund created specially for this purpose.

This year we had to bid farewell to two of our distinguished alumni and past faculty - Dr. K. Pakrasi (English Department) and Dr. K.D. Deodhar (Chemistry Department) Our tribute to the departed, appears in this issue. We will surely miss their presence in the portals of Ruia College.

Looking forward to your feedback, this is your Editor signing off.....

Kalpagam Raghuraman

Kalpagam Raghuraman

Pune Chapter

The RCAA Pune chapter was launched in November 2008 and was well attended by sixty Ruiaites. Prof. Jyotsna Baichwal welcomed the gathering. Mr. Lalit Chadha - Past President RCAA and convenor - Pune chapter addressed the gathering and enumerated the objectives for the Pune chapter in line with those of the parent body. Principal Dr. Suhas Pednekar addressed the gathering. His power point presentation highlighted the achievements of the college and his vision for the future. He appealed to the members to actively contribute towards the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of Ruia college not only through donations but also with their expertise and experiences. Prof. Ms. Baichwal expressed gratitude to Dr. Ms. Meera Paranjpe for being magnanimous in offering space to the RCAA Pune Chapter, in her nursing home at Shivaji Nagar.

As both the Chairperson, Prof. Ms. Baichwal and Ms. Neelima Gundi, expressed their desire to step down, a new Managing Committee was selected for a period of two years from April 2010, with the following office bearers:

- Mr. Rajiv Dandekar - Chairperson
- Mr. Vinayak Bhide - Seceretary
- Ms. Anupama Barve - Vice-Chairperson
- Mr. Subodh Abhyankar - Treasurer

The managing Committee met on three occasions and identified the following:

- 1) To increase the Membership from 30 to 100
- 2) To increase the Corpus to Rs. 1.0 lakh by way of Membership Fees or donations.
- 3) To have a Gala Get-together on 13th Nov 2010.

I, on behalf of RCAA wish the Pune Chapter all Success!

Lalit Chadha
Past President, RCAA & Convenor Pune Chapter

EVENTS AT A GLANCE

One More Feather in the RCAA Cap!



RCAA Hall – All set to 'open up'



Principal Dr. Suhas Padnekar, Secretary – RCAA - Milind Kamik, IPP – Lalit Chadha, Chief Guest – Dr. Mukund Joshi, President – Ms. Rita Doctor, Guest of Honour – Dr. Ajit Phadke at the Inaugural function



Invitees listening intently at the Inaugural function

Come, Let us 'Chaat'!



Three alumni regaling the audience with some foot tapping numbers at the RCAA get-together function

We Care at RCAA



A routine blood test is on

The Jewels of Ruia – 2009



Pt. Vidyadhar Vyas happily receiving the Jewel of Ruia trophy from the Chief Guest – Prof. Rupa Shah, while 'Jewel' Dr. Narendra Jadhav and President Ms. Rita Doctor applaud



Dignitaries on the dais listening to the citation being read by Secretary - Milind Kamik



A section of the elite audience at the Jewel of Ruia awards function



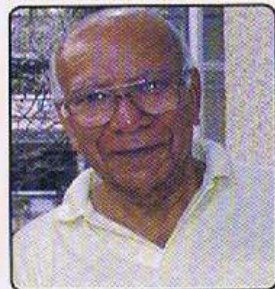
'Jewel' Dr. Narendra Jadhav proudly displays the coveted RCAA trophy while the Chief Guest applauds

OUR HEARTFELT

Prof. (Dr.) Kashinath Pakrasi

It was with a sense of shock and disbelief that we heard the news that Dr. Pakrasi was no more. He passed away on 4th April 2010 at San Jose, California that was his home since the mid-80s.

Dr. Pakrasi was one of Ruia's evergreen, much-loved, respected professors who was admired by all who were privileged to know him either as a colleague or as a professor. A part and parcel of the Ruia Campus, he was Ruia's prized (meritorious) student, ace footballer, dedicated NCC officer, a brilliant teacher and a mentor par excellence.



He was the mainstay of the English Department of Ruia, a specialist in Victorian Literature, Literary History and Chaucer. A very serious student of literature, endowed with an instinctive eloquence, sharp critical and analytical skills, he unravelled the beauty and timelessness of literature so gently and effortlessly, that his students were, to quote the poet Keats, "held in a thrall". Never locked up in an ivory tower, he wore his scholarship very lightly on his shoulders. Blessed with a terrific sense of humour and a cheerful disposition, he reached out to his students in his inimitable impish way, laughing at himself, joking, and at the same time, drawing his brood closer to the insights and mysteries of literature.

A chalk and duster teacher, he never befriended modern technology; it was alien to him. He loved writing letters, wrote wonderful letters in long hand or thumped them away on his typewriter. But he stayed away from the computer.

The intellectually stimulating ambience of the Ruia Professors' Common Room was further invigorated by Dr. Pakrasi's affable and pointed contributions. He was quite the life and soul of the Tea Room; even the Lipton Green label tea tasted different when he was there! Yet, all the while, he was unassuming, kind, accommodating and to use the current buzz word, very inclusive.

I am tempted to call him an "ajatshatru", one who befriended all and stayed connected to everyone. There was never a barrier between him and us. To students, colleagues, non-teaching staff, peons, janitors, watchmen, Dr. Pakrasi was always, "one of us", "apla manooos" one who shared a greeting, a joke, a cup of chai or a smoke. Small wonder then that Ruia missed him sorely after he migrated to the US in the mid-80s.

With his lovely wife, Sheela, he continued to visit India at regular intervals. An inveterate traveller, he visited rare tourist destinations that were steeped in history and natural beauty. His itinerary would be framed in such a way that he would combine his holiday with his India visit. A good photographer, he would then show us the photographs along with a detailed account of his visit, the history of the place and its people, like a seasoned photojournalist.

Family get-togethers were high on his India agenda as he had very close ties with his siblings and was a very devoted brother to his sisters. As soon as he arrived in Mumbai, jet lag or no jet lag, he would make his way to the Ruia Naka, then to the Professors' Common Room, and then he would walk across the quadrangle and visit all the Departments, the Office Staff, the Library and of course the Gymkhana where he had honed his sporting skills.

Dr. Kashinath Pakrasi epitomised the spirit of liberal humanism, possessed the social graces and strong values of a bygone era; he will always be a role model and a source of inspiration to those of us who were fortunate to have known him and have been positively influenced by him.

His last gesture too was very much in character. As one who always gave and enriched the lives of others, he donated his body to Stanford University for research. Dr. Pakrasi, May your soul rest in Peace and Bliss.

Prof. Lalita V. Paranjape
Former Head, Dept. of English

TRIBUTE TO

Prof. (Dr.) K.D. Deodhar

K. D. Deodhar passed away on June 16th 2010, after an illness that appeared to retract but came back with a vengeance to devour him. That happened so suddenly at such an accelerated pace - two days of hospitalization-one day in ICU and the next day - we were left devastated.



This is neither an obituary nor a column recording the details. It is an expression giving free reign to one's emotions. It took some time for the numbness to ease out before I could pen my tribute to a truly gentleman soul.

I have known Dr. Deodhar for almost three and a half decades-initially as a teacher, later briefly as a research advisor and finally as someone you could always depend, under any circumstances.

I can recall the innumerable years he used to come from IIT on Saturday afternoons to coach our students for the IIT entrance test. Such was his devotion to his alma mater. Any activity involving students or teachers-be it a seminar competition, refresher courses, workshops - you just had to ask him for help and he would oblige. He was so unassuming, he would never reveal the inconveniences he would have had to face to help a cause.

I recollect an occasion (when he couldn't keep his commitment due to some sickness) followed by another event about three weeks later-he attended the event for the entire day and never told us about his health. We knew about his sickness only after he was hospitalized within a week and had his first chemotherapy.

Dr. Deodhar was a father figure for students, teachers and researchers of Organic Chemistry alike. The teaching community has undoubtedly suffered an irreparable loss. I take this opportunity to share one incident, an acquaintance of mine was registered for research and the problem given by his research guide never seemed to take off. Repeated requests to the guide were of no avail. I casually approached Dr. Deodhar with the impasse and he took over the problem. He literally took the student under his wings, convinced the guide, provided an alternative problem allowed the student to use the facilities of his own lab and over and above funded him with a stipend by allowing him to work on a project. All this with the knowledge that the final credit would go the guide! I am sure that be it a student, teacher or a researcher, everyone would have a story to tell.

A gentleman to the core, an excellent teacher, a patient listener, unassuming and ever helpful, a person treating everyone with dignity, a brilliant academician and above all a very compassionate person. In the words of a junior colleague of mine - 'Such products are not made these days'!

Dr. P. A. Sathe
Department of Chemistry