



ZAPANJ



ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA & NEW JERSEY

Winter 2014 Newsletter

New Year 2014 Wishes to All!!

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2013-2015

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RELIGION CLASS RECAP...

Inclement Weather Reminder: During winter months, all our members are advised to follow the weather warnings in their areas and remember to check for any emails from ZAPANJ before leaving for the prayer class during inclement weather in case of class cancellation.

Behnaz & Cyrus Toorkey, Phiroza & Bruce Stoneback, Meher & Venky Krishnan, Havovi & Khushru Jokhi and Jennifer & Purazar Gowadia were our hosts for the November Class.

Due to inclement weather we had a shortened prayer class during the month of December. Thanks to Shenaz and Cyrus Bhote & Nergish and Noshir Karanjia for hosting this class.

The hosts for January were Freny & Syavux Patell, Hilla & Ammie Singh, Diana Dadachanji and Rupina & P.K. Prabhakar.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our religion class hosts for all the hard work in providing us with scrumptious meal after our religion class.

Some memorable moments from our recent classes.



Some of the youngest of us all(left and middle) with their teacher Anoo Sukhia and her helpers Pashna Munshi and Tashan Mistry. Freny Ranji (right) with her class.



Marazban Sarkari (left) and Cyrus Toorkey (right) teaching the older children.



Enjoying the delicious dinner prepared by the host families (left). Celebrating the Navjote of the Irani children (center) and the birthdays of Pochara and Deboo children (right).

SAVE THE DATE

Navroz Celebration

March 22, 2014 at Palace of Asia at 6pm.

ZAPANJ Picnic

June 21, 2014 at Marsh Creek State Park at 10am.

Kids Picnic

July 20, 2014 at Hershey's Park.

ZAPANJ will pay for all those kids who have attended at least 6 out of 9 religion classes for the Kids picnic at Hershey's Park. Kids who have not met the requirement are welcome to attend, however, ZAPANJ will not cover their costs

More details for all these events will follow soon!!

COMMUNITY NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



BIRTH

Jake, son of Feroza and Gil Nusbaum, Brother to Gev and grandson to Khorshed and Cyrus Mistry, was born on December 24, 2013.

Congratulations to the entire family and welcome to the little one!



NAVJOTE

Zachary, Sam and Nicole Irani, children of Zena and Jhangir Irani, Grandchildren of Roshan and Jimmy Bharucha and Arnavaz and Gustad Irani (FL) completed their Navjotes on December 18, 2013 at the Saher Agiary in Mumbai. We wish them the best as they embark upon life with Good Thoughts - Good Words - Good Deeds!



SPECIAL OCCASSION

β **Freny Ranji** celebrated her 80th Birthday on January 16, 2014.

β **Taruna Tehsildar** celebrated her 70th birthday on January 29, 2014.

We wish them both many more joyful birthdays full of cherished memories with their near and dear ones!



SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT

At the recent awards luncheon for the Merrylegs Horse Competition Series our very own **Lauren Ranji** took home 3 first place ribbons (Open Equitation, Open Hunter, Open Classic) and one second place ribbon (Baby Greens) in competition for four different events. She also took home an award of a silver plate for the Best Young Junior Rider.

She would have also been the champion of the Baby Greens event since she was the leading rider with the most points going into the last competition but found out that a friend of hers, who was in second place, had never ever been a champion before. So Lauren chose not to compete in that last event just so her friend could win. Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds!!!

Congratulations Lauren!! We are all proud of your success and your deeds and wish you many more future victories!!



RETURN TO ROOTS PROGRAM

-Semira Jahanian

The Return To Roots trip, in a nutshell, was a once in a lifetime experience. I honestly, had no idea what to expect with this trip. I am an Iranian-Zoroastrian who has never been to India. From the moment I arrived every experience, smell, culture experience was just priceless.

I have made 20 life-long friends from around the world. It is amazing how we all bonded by just having Zoroastrianism in common. This experience taught me so much about how special it is to be a Zoroastrian and what impact the Zoroastrians have on India.

Some of the places we visited that I really enjoyed were The Taj Mahal hotel and the Tata Boardroom. We also had a heritage tour, we visited Atash Behrams, Bank of River Varoli where the Zoroastrians first landed in India. We also went to an orphanage, which really left a special place in my heart. For the first time in my life, when the trip was over, I was at peace. I have never felt so grateful. I am really proud to be Zoroastrian and am privileged to be a pioneer in the Return to Roots program.

If you would like to share in my experience, please get more information at <http://zororoots.org/>.



INDIAN CURRENCY NOTES

Source: Economic Times

-Shared by Noshir Karanjia

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday advised that after March 31, 2014, it will completely withdraw from circulation all banknotes issued prior to 2005.

"From April 1, 2014, the public will be required to approach banks for exchanging these notes. Banks will provide exchange facility for these notes until further communication," a press release by the central bank said.

The Reserve Bank further stated that public can easily identify the notes to be withdrawn .. as the notes issued before 2005 do not have on them the year of printing on the reverse side.

The Reserve Bank has also clarified that the notes issued before 2005 will continue to be legal tender. This would mean that banks are required to exchange the notes for their customers as well as for non-customers.

"From July 01, 2014, however, to exchange more than 10 pieces of Rs 500 and Rs 1000 notes, non-customers will have to furnish proof of identity and residence to the bank branch in which she/he wants to exchange the notes," said RBI.

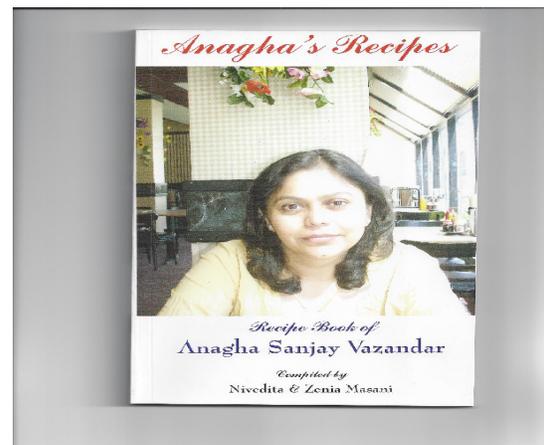
The Reserve Bank has appealed to the public not to panic. "They are requested to actively cooperate in the withdrawal process," said RBI.

STAMP OF INDIA -Shared by Anoo Sukhia



ANAGHA'S RECIPIES

Our very own Zenia Masani published a recipe book in memory of her aunt, Anagha Sanjay Vazandar, in December 2013. The book is a compilation of recipes collected by Zenia's aunt from family and friends over the years. The book has over 200 recipes, some of which were translated from Konkani and Marathi. Zenia helped her mom Nivedita in typing up the recipes.



ZAGNY NEWS

Below is an email from ZAGNY member and Dasturji, Rohinton Madon. Rohinton has been involved with the Young Rathestar group for many years as have other members of our community here. If you need more info or would like to discuss this in detail, please contact Rohinton at madon@pgbank.com

Dear Friends,

The Young Rathestars, an organization based in Mumbai runs solely on the largess of friends and well-wishers like you. The purpose of this organization is to aid and assist poor Zarthustis in Mumbai and in the remote villages in and around Udvada, Navsari, Surat, Braoch, where a lot of our Zarthusti brethren live in abject poverty. We have the means to make a difference in the lives of these unfortunate folk and so, once again, I am reaching out to you for your support and contributions. Your dollars go a very long way in making the life of a struggling Zarthosti bearable.

For the past several years, I have been collecting funds from our community here in the Tri-State area and donating it to the Young Rathestars to help our poor Zoroastrian families in India. The Young Rathestars is a small organization and does not have Tax Exemption to collect foreign donations. I have opened a separate bank account jointly with my son Kaizad to collect funds for Young Rathestars. Every penny collected is transferred to ICICI Bank in Mumbai and a check for the entire amount collected is disbursed to The Young Rathestars via check and individual receipts obtained from them.

If you would like to help, please send your donations to me at **87 Hyde Court in Bedminster, NJ 07921**. The check should be made out to Kaizad or Rohinton Madon with a remark for The Young Rathestars in the memo field. I will be visiting India in January 2014 and would appreciate any help you could provide for this very worthy cause.

The attached annual report shows the amount collected and donated to The Young Rathestars for distribution to the poor Zoroastrian families in India. Please feel free to contact any member from the Young Rathestars if you have any questions, or concerns. Their names and addresses are in the report.

Thanks to all of you who continue to support this effort.

A few quotes to ponder, they are enlightening.

"We are not rich by what we possess but by what we can do without."

- Immanuel Kant

"We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give"

- Winston Churchill

Thank you, and May Ahura Mazda's gaze always be on you.

Sincerely,

Rohinton Madon

Download Young Rathestar Annual Report 2012-13 - <http://bit.ly/MqhWkD>

Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY) is proud to present...

The Power of Cultural Influences and Inspirations for Success.

In celebration of 40 years, ZAGNY has invited an elite group of prominent Zoroastrians who are innovators, leaders and trail-blazers in their respective field of Music, Academics, Social Change, Culinary Arts and Finance. These leaders will come together to share their stories of struggle and success for one special, thought-provoking evening.

Join us and learn how their cultural background influenced their careers. Come draw inspiration from a common place and listen to the words of these creative pioneers as they give their advice to future generations.

Speakers

Zubin Mehta: Co-chairman of the Mehli Mehta Music Foundation & Music Director for Life of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra

Dr. Jamshed Bharucha: President, The Cooper Union

Dinyar Devitre: Chairman, Pratham USA

Jehangir Mehta: Chef Owner . Graffiti . Mehtaphor . Me and You

Navroz Udawadia: CEO & Co-Founder, Falcon Edge Capital

Moderators: Anahaita N. Kotval & Shanaya Deboo

Date: Friday, March 14, 2014

Time: 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Venue: Fredrick P. Rose Auditorium, The Cooper Union, 41 Cooper Square (Third Ave between 6th and 7th Street) New York, NY 10003

Refreshments prepared by Chef Jehangir Mehta.

Register: \$50.00 per person for advance registration OR \$70.00 per person at the door (subject to space availability). Cash Only payments will be accepted. Seats are limited so click on the below link and register now!

<http://zagny.org/event-the-power-of-cultural-influences-and-inspirations-for-success/>

ZOROASTRIAN SPORTS COMMITTEE

The Zoroastrian Sports Committee (ZSC) cordially invites you to join us for the **14th Zoroastrian Games in Los Angeles, California from July 2 - July 6, 2014**. We look forward to seeing you for yet another memorable event of sports, competition, socializing and meeting with new and old friends beginning on July 2nd through July 6th in sunny Los Angeles. Details of registration will be coming your way soon.

If you have questions, please contact : ZSC@FEZANA.org

STATUS OF WOMEN CONFERENCE – EMPOWERING WOMEN

Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America
presents

EMPOWERING WOMEN

to break away
from the vicious
circle of poverty



**A panel event at the Commission on the
Status of Women Conference at the United Nations**

Monday, March 10th, 2014
2:30 pm to 4:00 pm
Church Centre, Drew Room,
777 United Nations Plaza,
New York, NY



Contact Afreed Mistry
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WORLD ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS - *December 27-30, 2013*

-USHAO Winter Edition 2013-14

The 10th World Zoroastrian Congress was held in Mumbai from 27-30 December 2013. Approximately 1000 Zarathushtis and other academics from across the world came together to celebrate Zarathushti history and culture and discuss the issues faced by the community. The theme of the conference was 'Zoroastrianism in the 21st Century: Nurturing Growth and Affirming Identity'. Two world leaders, President Pranab Mukherjee of India and President Hassan Rouhani of Iran, spoke of the impact the message and followers of Zarathushtra have had on their respective countries.

The Congress was inaugurated by the President of India, Pranab Mukherjee, at National Sports Club of India in Worli Friday. At the inauguration, Mukherjee said, "I reiterate the fact that whether it is in the world of business and industry or art and letters, leading our defence forces or breaking new frontiers in the field of advanced science and technology, the Zoroastrian community in India has always extended itself and reached the highest echelons of achievement and success."

Mukherjee acknowledged the contributions of various eminent Parsis, both philanthropic and otherwise, including Dr Homi Babha — the first Chairman of the Atomic Energy Conservation, JRD Tata — founder of India's first commercial airline, Field Marshall Sam Manekshaw for leading the Army in the 1971 war and Jamshedji Tata for his contribution in India's industrial rise.

Mukherjee said, "Why is that today the community has come to a crossroads where it feels threatened with extinction?" He spoke about the Jiyo Parsi scheme, the four-year-plan launched by the Centre to stabilize the Parsi population and increase the number of Parsis in the country by adopting scientific protocols.

He concluded by welcoming the Parsis from abroad and reminded them that for Parsis worldwide, India will always be home. The crowd rose as one to give him a standing ovation.

On his official website and through his Twitter account, President Hassan Rouhani in a message to the 10th International Zoroastrians Congress said all divine faiths will benefit from safeguarding the true essence of religion which they share. The message pointed out that Iran is birthplace of Zarathushtra, messenger of goodness, and the first homeland of the Zarathushtis.

Dr. Rouhani stated that holding such events was an honor not only for the followers of the great Zarathushtra, but all Muslims and Iranians as well. President also said the congress will help highlight intercultural and intercivilizational commonalities which are beneficial for all. He further termed the notion of 'Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds' as valuable teachings which would channel man's thought and behavior into divine direction and spirituality. Today's world is more in need of coexistence among various faiths, he said, contending that solidarity and understanding among faiths is a necessity for neutralizing the evil efforts aimed at inciting sectarian strife. He called on the followers of all the religions to stand united and shun divisions.

ARTS APPRECIATED

The 10th World Zoroastrian Congress in Mumbai was also a forum for literature and arts. Arzan on the Parsi Khabar website reported on the session at which several books were launched.

"Ashdin Lilaowalla's wonderful book titled *Threads of Continuity* about the art of Kasti Weaving in India was launched by Lord Karan Billimoria.

This was followed by a series of anecdotes from a forthcoming book by Brigadier (Retd.) Behram and Zenobia Panthaki on the life of India's greatest soldier, Field Marshall Sam Manekshaw. They shared stories from the times when Behram served as the ADC to the Field Marshall.

The last book to be released was Keki Daruwala's book *Fire Alter*." In a report on the Congress by Bachi Karkaria, she mentioned Keki Daruwala's recitation from the book. "And in a prolonged moment of chilling prophecy, the cawing of an insistent crow accompanied Daruwala's reading out his lines on "we thinning Parsis/thinning into thin air"."

A book of photographs, *Udvada Town*, was also released at the Congress in the presence of Pervez Damania, who initiated the project, and Shantanu Das, the photographer.

Exhibitions

On the occasion of the Tenth World Zoroastrian Congress the Bombay Parsi Punchayet and National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai, presented two exhibitions that bring to the citizens of Mumbai two aspects of the Parsis.

ACROSS OCEANS AND FLOWING SILKS : FROM CANTON TO BOMBAY 18TH -20TH CENTURIES curated by Pheroza J. Godrej and Firoza Punthakey Mistree traced the extraordinary evolution of the Parsis trading with Canton, China – their shipbuilding, trading and banking activities in Bombay, as well as their association with the Portuguese, English, Dutch, and French East India Companies and the free trading houses of the West.

Trade with China exposed Parsi merchants to new lifestyles and widened their perspective on the cut and thrust of international business. They initiated changes in the arena of education, issues concerning women, social and labour reform and health care. Parsi sethias after the China trade, impelled by the exigencies of the times, set up textile mills, banks, chambers of commerce, steel factories as well as the stock exchange often in partnership with European and local communities. Influenced by western thinking and lifestyles, Parsis built palatial homes in Bombay filled with art objects, carved furniture, chandeliers as well as objets d'art brought home from China, such as ivory carvings, portraits painted by Chinese and European artists, porcelain and Chinese silks.

As philanthropists, they set up the social infrastructure of Bombay of the 19th century, establishing schools, higher education institutions, hospitals, and building housing for the needy, water tanks, roads and bridges. They shaped Bombay city into an international financial hub and played a key role in India as nation builders.

NO PARSI IS AN ISLAND, curated by Ranjit Hoskote & Nancy Adajania with Pheroza J. Godrej traced the work of Parsi artists from the late colonial period to the present. Parsi artists have participated actively in the domain of modern and contemporary art since the second half of the 19th century. The section begins with artists such as Pestonji Bomanji, M F Pithawalla and his son Sorab Pithawalla, then moves to 20th century painters such as Shiavax Chavda and Jehangir Sabavala, as well as sculptors Adi Davierwalla and Pилоo Pochkhanawala. This section concludes with works by contemporary artists such as Mehlli Gobhai and Gieve Patel.

ZOROASTRIANS AND BOMBAY - By Nadir Godrej (at the 10th World Zoroastrian Congress)

-Shared by Anoo Sukhia

Today we're used to say Mumbai
It wasn't quite that way
So please forgive if I don't try
And stick with old Bombay.

Though somewhat shrouded in a
mist
The roots of both are same
Bombay has a Portuguese twist
Mumbai's the original name.

By any name these seven isles
Did not amount to much.
The Portuguese with all their
guiles
Could see no future as such.

But Parsis came in the early days
And helped the Portuguese,
Began to learn European ways
And learnt to sail the seas.

Now Charles was looking for a
Queen.
A wedding was in the works
From Portugal came Catherine
And one of many perks

The British gained from the deal
Were the isles of Bombay.
In retrospect one might feel
That they would rue the day

They gave away all those mud flats
But what imagination
Could have foreseen a city that's
The power of a nation?

And Parsis right from the start
With the Portuguese came in

And on their own they played a
part
In a military win.

Now shortly after the British came
A plague made them withdraw.
Bombay looked like easy game
But Parsis came to the fore.

They bravely fought the rowdy
raiders,
Held on with determination,
Drove away the fierce invaders
And rose in the estimation

Of the British, when they
returned.
Perhaps it was their gratitude
Or the respect the Parsis earned
Or enterprising attitude.

The reason might be all of these
The facts are very clear
Everywhere one sees Parsis
While others don't come near.

The British brought the rule of law
Which made the Parsis strive.
They seized the chances they saw
And they began to thrive.

They started off as go-betweens
Dubash, Dalal or Shroff.
But soon became men of means
But critics would often scoff

That Parsis were just compradors.
But they traded on their own
And quickly reached far off shores.
And soon the trade had grown

And spread quite wide both East
and West.

And often they succeeded
But China was by far the best.
Much offered, little needed

The Chinese then had it all.
But you must take and give
We then got them in Opium's
thrall.
We should have let them live.

Though this indeed was quite a
blot
Much charity ensued.
No matter how the gains were got
Good progress was pursued

And Canton's loss was Bombay's
gain
As hospitals were built
And causeways spared commuter
pain.
They gave not from their guilt

But feelings of Noblesse oblige.
Asceticism was disdained
Their storied wealth gave them
prestige
But only if they deigned

To share their wealth for public
good
To satisfy a need.

Their wealth, they always
understood
Was not for private greed.

Zoroastrians were always taught

That for the good they stood,
In a cosmic battle that is fought
Between the bad and good.

And education was a cause
Dear to the Parsi's heart.
New institutes without a pause
Played a major part

In ensuring that our nation
Would ultimately rise.
Parsi's then led in education
And nobody denies

For years they had the major
share
Of degrees in every field.
The explanation would lie there
For the influence they wield.

They gave their money and their
time
And no example's better
Than the one I celebrate in rhyme
Sir Pheroza Mehta.

From Lincoln's inn to the bar
He quickly honed his skills.
As a lawyer he went very far
But then gave up those thrills.

In politics he played a role
He chose the middle road.
Freedom then was not his goal
But all the same he'd goad

The British to allow self rule
As Mayor he played his part.
He was astute and no fool
Saw through the British art

Of keeping Parsi's on their side
With excessive praise
And claiming there's a big divide

With Parsi and Indian ways.

Sure some Parsis were allured
And believed in this divide.
But there were others who
ensured
That India would keep her pride.
Madame Cama comes to mind,
The first to raise our flag.
No greater patriot one could find
Quite safely we can brag.

There is the moderate patriot
school
That saw some British good.
They merely sought dominion rule
By that they understood

On local matters we would vote
Within Imperial sway.
It is important that we note
This was the British way.

Now Canada went that way
And then Australia too.
And Naoroji was the first to say
Something that's very true

The British didn't walk the talk
And had Unbritish rule.
They talked of cheese but gave us
chalk
And always tried to fool.

The next Parsi to be MP
In the British Parliament.
Sir Muncherjee Bhownaagree
Would readily assent.

The benefit of doubt, you see,
The British got from him.
They called him, "Sir Bow and
Agree!"
But he wasn't quite so dim.

So army spending was protested
And the Africa campaign.
While Science training was
suggested
He often did complain

That economic exploitation
Made India very weak.
His defence of our nation
Shows he wasn't meek!

Both these MPs worked with the
Shah
For brethren in Iran.
Their efforts went very far
The Jizya saw a ban.
And thanks to them Iranis came
And brought us fine Cafés.
They added to Zoroastrian fame
And do as well these days.
I welcome all from our homeland
And the diaspora as well.
And governments from any land
Where we are treated well.

And some might think that we
would claim
Back our ancestral land.
But that we're sure is not our aim
For Bombay's in our hand.

In 1900 six percent
Of Bombay were our tribe.
We punched above our weight,
that meant
That almost every scribe

Who wrote a piece about Bombay
Would laud our contribution
But now this is a different day
We look for a solution.

Our share in Bombay took a drop-

Much less than one percent.
We fear we may reach a full stop
But our Government is bent

On well ensuring our survival.
Do learn what they propose.
Can we hope then for a revival
Only Ahura Mazda knows!

Two ways have often been
proposed
And you can take your pick.
The traditionalists have supposed
That we should only stick

To partners found within our fold
And quickly start to breed.
The other camp, now I am told,
Believes that what we need

Is to accept many more
Into the Parsi pool.
Of course, it is hard, to be sure,
Deciding on a rule.

Now should our pool be shallow

and wide
Or narrow but quite deep?
And can we bravely turn the tide
Or let the water seep?

Maybe we are destined to last.
Or maybe we'll disappear.
But we can glory in our past
And hope the world will cheer

Our contribution to mankind
Whether we're here or not.
Our influence you'll always find
We will not be forgot.

In museums we will be preserved
And you can have a look
At the many ways we have served
In both the aisles and book.

So come and visit NGMA
And CSMVS
The first has something new each
day
The second I have to guess

My Parsi audience will be lost.
I'll call it Prince of Wales!
Please visit both at any cost
And understand the trails

That Zoroastrians left far and wide
But Bombay was the hub.
To this city we are tied
And that to me's the nub.

In Bombay, Parsi thoughts were
made
And Parsis then gave back.
Much was gained and dues were
paid
And I have tried to track

The linkages between the two
And much has now been told.
Much more could be said, it's true
But now it's time I fold.

I'm sure that you will all agree
Bombay's a special place
To hold this WZC.
And so I rest my case.