



# AMHS CONNECT

NOVEMBER '20



# FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Modernites,

As I write this note, several European countries are going into a long lockdown again. In India, we seem to be faring a tad better as far as both fresh cases and recoveries go. But as they say, the numbers are only statistical until it happens to you, after which it is a tragedy. Hence, the reminder once again to be cautious during festivities and to make the face mask a necessary accessory that stays correctly wrapped around, every time we're out. And speaking of festivities, let us go easy on firecrackers around Diwali and Kali Puja as the pollution they'll cause will only strengthen the virus and help it expand its damaging footprint.

Meanwhile, do soak in the lovely blue, Hemant ritu sky. It never fails to quietly reassure and make the afternoon tea all the more enjoyable.

Happy Diwali and Kali Pujo!

- Supriya Newar  
Batch of 1994



The dazzle of lights,  
Colours of festivity,  
Pleasing taste of sweets,  
Happiness of togetherness,  
The spirit of celebrations.  
By the grace of the Almighty,  
Gratitude and prayers,  
May we light up within  
And exude the warmth.  
Spreading cheer and love,  
Never forgetting to share,  
So that joys are complete  
And blessings are pure.

Sushma Mimani Nevatia  
Batch of '89



# STILL A SCHOOL GIRL

After my class 10 boards I came to Ahmedabad and my life took a 360 degree turn. Along with my school, everything else changed as well but what never changed till date is that I still get dreams of Modern High. My school has given me so much that I feel indebted.

Wherever I go, whatever I do I feel my school within me. I never knew that the culture, the knowledge, the love that I got from my school would mother me in the most uncanny, subtle ways. The sound of the piano till rings in my ears. I remember how I used to creep near the piano during tiffin breaks and though I did not know how to play it, I would still fiddle with it and from nowhere Miss Biswas would appear. She never scolded me but her one look was enough for me to understand that we should leave the piano alone! I had never seen such a magnanimous personality before. I wanted to be like her and today even after 25 years since I left school I feel her grace, her elegance and her discipline still shaping me.

Theatre is my passion and I have been working with children and theatre in education since 2004. Children's theatre was like a dream come true but now when I think, I feel that if I am able to make kids aware of our values and culture through theatre, it's because that is what I inherited from my school. My cherished time - sitting on a rock under the Peepal tree during school days makes me introspect now that why I used to feel that these trees will recognize me even when they see me after ages! That connection brought me closer to school and to my own being.

Every year I celebrate Saraswati Puja at my art school and unintentionally I end up recreating a small Modern High out there. Donning a sari, I feel like a 12yr old back in school.

**- Vedika Bayanwal**  
Batch of 1999



# SHARPEN YOUR AXE

"Give me 6 hours to cut down a tree, and I'll spend 4 hours sharpening the axe." - Words by Abraham Lincoln that give invaluable advice.

This reminds me of a story of two lumberjacks named Bob and Rob, who were given the task of cutting the maximum number of woods in a day.

Starting at sunrise, Rob began chopping wood relentlessly, swinging strong throughout the day. While Bob chopped, sat in between, then chopped again, sat down again and repeated.

Every time the sound of chopping trees would stop, Rob felt motivated with a feeling of getting one step closer to victory.

At sunset, when the competition ended Bob had double the amount woods cut, finely chopped and organized than did Rob. Out of curiosity Rob questioned Bob. To which Bob calmly replied with something similar to what Lincoln had said - "Every time I stopped work, while you were still chopping down trees, I spent time to rest and sharpen my axe."

Dr Steven Covey, who popularized this term believed 'Sharpening the saw,' is one of the 7 Habits of highly effective people. It means preserving and enhancing the greatest asset you have. That is You. A simple intellectual investment on four aspects of our life - physical, emotional, mental and spiritual goes a long way.

While the entire nation is struggling with COVID pandemic and is put under lockdown, it has led us high and dry.

Remember, we can't delegate the task of sharpening ourselves to others. The only person responsible for building our knowledge, health, relationship or confidence is us. Choosing to sharpen the axe daily may eventually bring us everything we've ever dreamt about.

So regardless of your goal, take the time to sharpen your skills and productivity by daily self-care. A sharpened saw is more effective. Why struggle with a blunt saw?

**- Harshita Ajitsaria Gupta**  
Batch of 2010





# A HERITAGE HIGH



Mukul Agarwal  
Batch of 1981



## ALUMNI OF MHS MEMBERSHIP DETAILS

Fee: Rs 4500  
(for life membership)

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Looking back, I can say without a doubt that some of my life's happiest days have been as a student of Modern High. I was captain of Gulmohur House, a Prefect, and was adjudged the 'Best Girl' of the week in the assembly, as my house marks totalled 8! Besides there was all the singing, dancing, sports and oh, how can I forget the ice-skating!

After completing my Higher Secondary, I went on to study architecture at the School of Architecture, CEPT in Ahmedabad. I returned with my degree to get married and subsequently mothered two lovely children. In 1999, I started my entrepreneurial venture - 'The Address', a one-of-its-kind lifestyle store which also doubled as a studio for my practice as an interior - architect.

A few years ago I decided to address a long pending calling - an urge to give back to my city, to my country. And thus was birthed 'Calcutta Heritage Collective,' at a crumbling but stunningly beautiful building in North Calcutta. We made it our mission to 'Respect, Restore and Reuse.'

Calcutta Heritage Collective is a voluntary citizen's initiative. It was formed with the objective of restoring, reviving and reusing the city's rich, historic, urban landscape. An inclusive citizen's initiative, CHC as it is called, involves students, home owners, senior citizens, professionals, entrepreneurs, architects, artists, event planners, heritage experts, developers, photographers and concerned citizens - all united by a love for Calcutta.

Working towards this vision, over the last two years, CHC has organised several heritage walks, panel discussions, quizzes and more. We believe that by partnering with other groups, we will multiply our outreach. Therefore CHC has collaborated with the Kolkata Port Trust, Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival, Ladies Study Group and Victoria Memorial Hall for its initiatives.

We have, a long long way to go.

There are so many aspects of conservation that one has to look at. CHC has identified and started work on some of them. We have also started our education drive, for property owners and contractors. During these days of the pandemic, CHC has been working with notable heritage clubs of Calcutta and presenting their glorious history virtually. We have also been conducting the first CHC Heritage Inter-School Quiz series which has seen a most enthusiastic participation from leading schools across the city.

CHC asks every fellow Modernite to think how is it that she would like her city to be? She must take a call on how she wants to see her city's heritage - destroyed, dilapidated and eventually disappearing? Or, as a living testimony to a magnificent and impressive past; connecting its today and tomorrow with its roots.

CHC urges every Modernite to make that informed choice!

Reach out to us at:  
[www.calcuttaheritagecollective.com](http://www.calcuttaheritagecollective.com)





Friends from all over the world decided to usher in Durga Puja this year in a unique way. To beat the coronaesque blues our choreographer Kamalika Banerjee (Chemistry Professor in Delhi, a Bangla folk and neoclassical dancer specializing in Bharat Natyam) taught us steps of an Agomoni Dance, on zoom

That session inspired everyone into learning the moves, recording and sending me the video clips so that I could make a video of the complete dance.

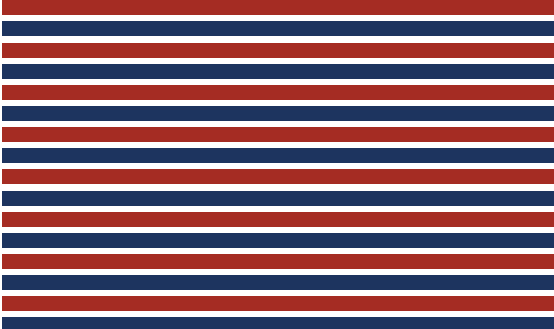
It gave all of us an opportunity to come out of the drab 'work from home' and lockdown look and don our neglected finery. Also many of us connected and bonded like never before. As diverse and as multitasking as the deity in question, we the girls of Modern High School made time and effort to be a part of this labour of love.

It was such a pleasure to have been able to interact with everybody and also edit the dance video.

Beauty and a fountainhead of talent - that's what a Modernite epitomises.



Dipika Goenka Periwal  
Batch of 1988



# FEEDBACK CORNER

Enjoying the Alumni monthly newsletter? Share your feedback and comments and we'll publish the best ones in our next edition. Write to us at [amhsconnect@gmail.com](mailto:amhsconnect@gmail.com)



Hello friends,

We are now looking forward to our annual reunion and as we all know, Modernite '20 shall have to be a virtual event. It will be held on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> December '20. Please join in to make it successful. We are calling all batches to volunteer and plan their participation. You may send a video of a group performance which may be a recitation, a skit, a musical, a song, a dance or any other medley, (maximum 5 mins duration) from your batch. Allocation shall be done on a first come basis.

We shall string together such participations for Modernite'20 and in this way we Modernites shall connect across all batches and across the globe.

We are also looking for sponsors beginning from value of 5000/- INR. Their ads shall be run in between the performances.

The last date for submission of videos shall be 10<sup>th</sup> December'20.

For queries and participation, please contact-

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Looking forward to creating memories and more...

Regards  
Sushma Nevatia (Hony Secretary AMHS)