



THE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER
FEBRUARY '23

AMHS CONNECT





Editorial

We are back after a brief hiatus with the first issue of AMHS Connect in 2023. The most notable news for us MHS girls in the last year was that our beloved school entered its Platinum Year. Last December many of us met at the annual all-batch reunion – Modernite 2022. In the previous two years, Modernite had been a lot subdued due to the restrictions imposed by Covid. The reunion this year was thus extra special.



We screened a film made by an old girl commemorating the 70-year journey of MHS, we put up a dance performance that was conceptualized and presented by several old girls of various batches, and the committee members of the alumni association sang a medley of popular old songs that brought back a rush of memories for one and all.

The advantage of being a member of the working committee is that the fun starts way before the actual event. Those long discussion sessions in the school shed took us back to our pony-tailed school girl days (and probably sounded like that too, as our voices soon hit the roof). If we start writing about all the meetings in the previous months, the brainstorming, digitizing old records, the dance and song practices in various places, and the tea and snacks that accompanied it all, it will fill several volumes. Instead, in this issue of the Connect, we present to you various pictures from the actual day, and reminiscences from those who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to bring together the entire event. We hope you can relive Modernite 2022 through these pieces. For those who missed the event this time, we hope this issue of the Connect inspires you to start making your travel plans for 2023 so that you may attend the next reunion.

Wishing all Modernites the very best of health, prosperity, and happiness this year.

Sayantani Sen
Class of 2005



From the Principal's desk

On the 17th of December 2022, the beautiful garden of MHS was aglow with the sparkling fairy lights, the aesthetically crafted hanging lanterns and screens, the colourful food stalls, and the excitement of a special “all batch” gathering marking Modernite 2022 as the concluding celebration of the School’s Platinum Jubilee.



This was my first experience of attending a Modernite, and I was enchanted by the warmth of the alums catching up with their teachers (it was so thoughtful of AMHS to have invited all the retired teachers), the very recent mingling happily with the more seniors – bonding through the joys of shared nostalgia that not only skipped decades but also generations!

The tale of the school narrated by the Peepul tree as ideated by Mrs Kar and put together by the talented alums in a special movie brought tears to my eyes. The frames not only told the story of our school in the last 70 years, it also portrayed an ethos that while adapting to functioning changes as demanded by the flow of time, has remained steadfast in its core. The dance recital conceptualised and led by the three well known dancers and performed with their mixed- batch troop was evocative, and certainly the high point of the evening.

The present committee and members of AMHS have been tireless in their endeavour to make this evening special and it was evident from the moment one stepped into the garden and was enveloped by the welcoming smiles. Not to be forgotten is the sumptuous “high tea” that was superbly curated and served.

May this camaraderie always infuse Modernite every year and may AMHS continue to create “memories and more” for the entire MHS family.

Damayanti Mukherjee
Principal
Modern High School for Girls



That we may ever serve thee in grace and virtue too

The success of any institution can also be measured by the contribution and strength of its alumni. Like branches of a tree, our lives grow in different directions yet our roots remain as one.

We all take different paths in life but no matter where we go, we take a little bit of each other everywhere. It's also true that an Alumni Association means a great deal to an institution and it is this mutual feeling which makes our Alumni Association of MHS flourish.



With immense gratitude and love towards my Alma Mater, I feel honoured and proud to serve as the President of AMHS. I urge my Modernite friends to come forward and contribute in making our Alumni Association more popular and stronger. Believe me, it's the best place to continue belonging to the very same place you once belonged to in your growing up years! A trip to nostalgia now and then, is good for the spirit...and with this thought, the AMHS COMMITTEE takes great pride in hosting the mega all batch reunion Modernite (memories and more..) since 2017.

This is our biggest signature event and right from conceptualising the content, flow, the designing, decor, refreshments, technical support, dynamics of the finances involved, memorabilia, invites and of course plugging the last minute glitches...all of this is handled by the very able and enthusiastic Working Committee. The cooperation provided by School makes it possible for us to deliver our very best and then the success solely depends on the participation of maximum Modernites across all batches from all over the globe! Do come forward and help us do better by sharing your time, expertise and finding sponsors for our major events.

The other most popular and unique event hosted by us is The Alumni Idol - which is an inter alumni singing competition. This is a well conducted and much appreciated event each year. We need a lot of support from you all in making it the very best inter alumni event in Kolkata!

There is a lot which needs to be done and a lot which Modernites can do to make our own Alumni Association grow with the times.

Sushma Mimani Nevatia
President AMHS
Class of 1989



A Filmmaker's Notes

Prologue: A phone call from a batchmate, followed by an exchange of numbers, followed by a phone call to Dr. De, followed by a mail to her with my resume and links to my films, and a reply asking me to attend a conference call.

Chapter 1: The film emerged out of quite a few Google Meets. The course of action and deadlines were decided at first, with an estimated budget, which was promptly turned down. I still remember the disappointment with which Dr. De informed us of the maximum possible budget, and we quickly changed our plans from a film to slide project using stills only.

Chapter 2: The script was the easy part, and was finalised in 3 meetings, with the most important participant turning out to be Mrs Prasad, with her inimitable style of narrating anecdotes and detailed fact checking. Supriya Newar had some excellent inputs, and her voice is the one you don't hear in the film.



The filming and background sounds were easier. 500+ photographs shot over two afternoons at school and what a trip down time and memories it turned out to be. The background sound track was ready by middle of December and then the voice over had to be redone as the two old girl voices did not sound old enough (ha ha...both young at hearts were well ensconced in their middle age), and then the lockdown extended!

The copy work was completed at a less breakneck pace! 17 years of Lotus Buds magically landed at the filmmaker's door thanks to Sushma Nevatia!

Photographs, and signatures, and permission to include them were smoothly orchestrated by the small band of enthusiasts too, with Sushma and Mrs. Prasad, Dr. De and Supriya Newar reaching out to everyone.

Actual prints right from 1968, well organised and documented, and in good condition accessed from Dr. De reminded me of the meticulousness with which our practical files were prepared.

Chapter 3: School shut down and remained so, barring exams and reopened only in March.

Chapter 4: The film found a long time for postproduction. Finally, we submitted it in April and it was approved with minor corrections, only 3 if I remember correctly. Even Mrs. Kar became actively involved in the process and I think she liked the result, but was diplomatically tight-lipped about it.

Chapter 5: In the process, 5 old girls became friends and shared some fond moments, and learnt a little more about each other. It was screened as part of the Modernite celebrations on December 17th 2022.

Epilogue: The small little token of love for their alma mater would probably reach culmination if the 8-minute-long nostalgic overdose could be shared widely by all alumni over social media so that the old girls, and young ones can share the experience wherever they are.

Oindrila Hazra
Class of 1991



The River

One fine day in September 2021 Mrs Kar called me and informed me of the forthcoming 70 years celebrations of Modern High School on 3rd January 2022. I was thrilled and honoured that she wanted a small film with some ex-students who are dancers. This gave me the wonderful opportunity to connect and bond with my Guru and mentor Smt Alokanda Roy, Momm Ganguly, Bimbavati Devi and later with the members of the alumni. It was under the impeccable direction of Alokanda Di that the film 'THE RIVER' took shape.



Her choice of music was perfect and somehow everything set in beautifully with her filming her part at the Alipore Jail and us at the banks of the Hooghly and at Prinsep Ghat. Our concept was to convey that our school is like the river, constantly flowing and enriching so many of us. Modern High School has given us more than an education. Our teachers have given us rich values, taught us to be better human beings and taught us to excel in whatever we may choose to be. And most importantly, to have the strength and grit to face all challenges that may come our way.

As we came closer to 3rd January 2022, the Omicron wave hit us, and unfortunately the celebrations had to be deferred. Finally, it was in autumn of 2022 that the situation improved and the celebrations were to be held on December 17th of 2022.

Again, we ex-students came together and this time with a live performance of The River with almost 21 members of the alumni. That was a wonderful and nostalgic experience too. Meetings and rehearsals in the shed, and finally on the stage. Our dances were not about perfection at all. It was all about the joy of dancing together and not worrying about the left or the right foot. It was about the camaraderie and nostalgia and of course the jhal moorie.

A wonderful bond was made. I know that I definitely made one with my group of 7 enthusiastic dancers and we have decided to be in touch always.

Each one of us will cherish this experience forever and I know that I definitely will.

Thank you MHS.

Priti Patel
Class of 1979



Yesterday once more

"Let's start at the very beginning, a very good place to start..."

A song we learnt in childhood and sung straight from the heart!

The Alumni Committee members
Decided to sing a few numbers

To bring back memories of old school days

And unite friends who had gone different ways.

The school garden looked like fairyland
As old and young alums danced hand in hand

To the rhythm and beats of songs of yore,

Yes indeed, "it was yesterday once more"

Rajeshwari De
Class of 1968





As we go on, we remember all the good times we had together..

It's 16th August, 2022. My friend Joyita tells me that "AMHS is organising a meeting to discuss Modernite '22, why don't you join in?" I am a little apprehensive, because I happen to know that the alumni committee is run by women who are much senior to me, and I am not sure if I can vibe with them. Initially, I sit quietly listening to everyone and gauging the essence of Modernite and the amount of hard work that is put into every detail of it, as this is the first time ever that I am attending a committee meeting, I have never even attended any edition of Modernite earlier, and before I know it, I am deeply involved.

It has truly been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life to be such an integral part of Modernite'22.



I was more than glad to put in the hard work throughout the planning of Modernite and become the face of it through my designs. When my work started receiving appreciation from my seniors, it gave me a little confidence to start pitching in my ideas for the other aspects of Modernite as well and I soon found a comfortable spot in the working committee. From designing various creatives for Modernite, to working for this AMHS connect issue, it swells my heart with pride to be able to give back to my Alma Mater in this way, and I definitely wish to continue this for the future. I came in unsure of what to expect, and I walked out with deep bonds forged, and I can not thank the committee enough for welcoming me in this way. Despite the age gap with most of the members, we became friends, and it strengthened my belief that no matter which batch we are from, every Modernite's roots will always be intertwined. We sing the same songs, have the same values, and the same desire in us to do something for the institution that made us who we are today.

The icing on the cake for me is that I celebrated my 25th birthday on 17th December at school, the same place where I have earlier celebrated 18 birthdays. But this time it was so much more special as I cut a cake with the working committee in the presence of my closest school friends, parents and teachers who shaped me into who I am today. The memories are etched in my heart forever.

I urge each and every young alum to come forward and join hands with us as we try to give back to our school - I ensure you it will be one of the most exhilarating and promising experiences of your life.

Let's keep creating memories & more!

Shruti Bhartiya
Class of 2016



HERE ARE A FEW GLIMPSES OF **Modernite** 2022 Memories & More





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Memories & More





ALUMNI OF MHS MEMBERSHIP DETAILS

Fee: Rs. 4500 (for life membership)
Website: <https://mhsalumni.in>

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FEEDBACK CORNER

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best ones in our next edition.**

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amhsconnect@gmail.com**

TEAM CONNECT

Rajeshwari De - Class of 1968 | Sushma Nevatia - Class of 1989
Ritu Singhania - Class of 1989 | Sayantani Sen - Class of 2005
Shruti Bhartiya - Class of 2016

