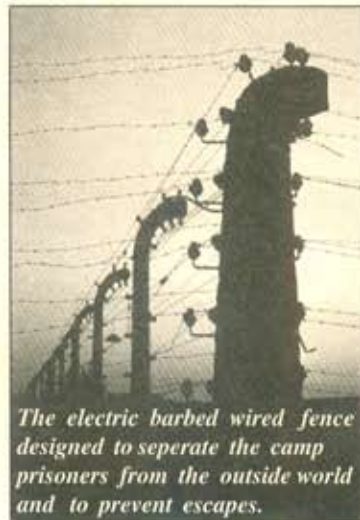




A Trip To Poland

This year's Global Feminisms project meeting took place from 23rd of June to 27th of June 2004 in Poland, at Krakow where Efka Women's Foundation's office is situated. This was a second level meeting to report and elaborate further work done in the project and also to show some clippings from further digital recordings done. Efka planned a lot of interesting activities including visiting Krakow's old city and the old Jewish district of Krakow along with the important task of doing the follow up on the Global Feminisms project. All the sites made some very interesting presentations. The Chinese presentations detailed many aspects of the country's history and women's scholarship and work for women. Particularly interesting was Liu Bohong's interview that had some valuable information on growing up in the development years of People's Republic of China. Liu Bohong, a Women's Studies researcher and scholar spoke about her growing up and what led her to choose Women's Studies. She says that her growth and that of the People's Republic of China happened almost simultaneously. The PRC was formed in 1949 and Liu Bohong was born in 1951. She grew up in a military family where her parents were away most of the time. The military's nursery, kindergarten and school took care of her growth. She says it was like growing up in a collective, in a revolutionary family. Her choice of Women's Studies also was a result of changes her country was going through. In 1986, the historical disaster of the Great Cultural Revolution was over and research scholars chose not to focus on reform of the political system, as there was an opposition to bourgeois liberalisation. They chose topics that had a historical aspect. Liu Bohong says that her choice of Women's Studies was also driven by historical circumstances. She puts it thus: "Under the political context of the time, I was not allowed to talk about humanitarianism, human nature, or human rights, but it was acceptable to talk about women and the rights and interests of women. Possibly this was because at the time, society did not think of women's issues as being very important.



The electric barbed wired fence designed to separate the camp prisoners from the outside world and to prevent escapes.

Women's issues would not bring about dangerous political thinking. Thus I had created a research space for myself...."

The interview with Malgorzata Tarasiewicz, activist in the Peace and Freedom Movement and chairperson of Network of East West Women Poland (NEWW), brought out many interesting aspects of making feminism a part of one's life. She also spoke about how after the Second World War there were no men in her family and the women members held the family together...." I think I need to start at the very beginning, or actually even earlier than when I was conceived, because my family is the kind of family,

Editors' Note

One more newsletter from us in which we share women's thoughts and actions and our work of recording and archiving them.

SNL has showcased this time two important women in the field of education and literature, Dr Shirin Kudchedkar and Varsha Adalja. We will continue to focus on these topics in the forthcoming SNL issues as well.

It may be the rains and the dismal reality of potholed roads and flooded subways, but we were tempted to go nostalgic about the Mumbai that was, through the perspective of women who grew up in the city in earlier times and who are so integral a part of Bombay's history and geography.

Taken for review in this issue is the book *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home and History in Colonial India* by Antoinette Burton. The arguments the book raises about oral testimony and memory are the very basis of our own set-up at SPARROW as an archival source and hence here is a book close to our hearts.

Do write to us when you have the time and the inclination at sparrow@bom3.vsnl.net.in

For more details about SPARROW projects visit our website: www.sparrowonline.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Profile of Dr Shirin Kudchedkar.....	P3
Voices in the City	P4
A recognised Gujrati Writer, Varsha Adalja.....	P6
Read the book review of <i>Dwelling in the Archive</i>	P7

which suffered tragically as a result of World War II... I was born already quite a while after the war, but nonetheless I felt the painful consequences of what had happened then. Well, on my mother's side, only women survived the war, since all the male family members were killed. And so my great-grandmother, grandmother and my mother came to Sopot. Sopot belongs to the so-called Regained Territories, which means that this is where after the World War II there was a huge migration of people who either moved from the east, from where they had been exiled or were coming here to the area unknown to them, because



The inscription "Work makes you free" surmounts the entrance gate to the first & oldest section of Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz.

they didn't want to live in the places they had lived during the war. And this was the case of women from my family, because to them Warsaw, where they came from was associated with such dramatic experiences that they wanted some change of place. And this way, these three women, my great-grandmother, grandmother, and mother, found themselves in this completely new world, where they had to reorganise their lives from scratch. And never again did any man find his way into the lives of my great-grandmother and grandmother..." Malgorzata says that this kind of surrounding had a tremendous impact on her as a person. Even her father was a fleeting figure in her life for he was never with them and she never saw him for more than ten years after her birth. And she says that in her spiritual and intellectual development also there was no male presence as such.

The visit to Poland was somehow dominated by the memories of the Second World War. After the conference some of us visited the State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau, established on the site of the largest

Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz. The Museum brochure describes this former camp as the largest cemetery in the world and a symbol of terror, genocide and the holocaust. It is today a memorial to the martyrdom of Jewish, Polish, Gypsy and other victims. The Museum and the history of the camp that it narrates is a warning against racism, xenophobia and war. As one came out one felt that it was a chilling experience to relive those days of horror but in these troubled days, it was an experience worth revisiting and reliving for historical memories are short and need to be renewed time and again.

—C S Lakshmi

A Space to Write From A Space to Be

Theatre has always been a powerful media for spreading awareness and making people conscious of certain subtle and sensitive issues regarding human existence. An interesting event took place at Valsad during the last week of May 2004 when several women writers from Gujarat stayed together for three days and scripted one-act plays based on selected short stories which suggested a feminist perspective.

Women Writers' Collective (a Gujarat based group of writers, theatre persons and activists) in association with Samarth Trust and Drishti Media Collective (Amadavad) organised this workshop. It was a challenging and rewarding experience. Each participant worked with zest, sincerity and intensity, and the atmosphere during the workshop was charged with positive synergy. The issues covered by the scripts ranged from domestic violence and women's struggle for space and justice to their aspirations to retain their identity and their search for self.

Ten one-act plays were the outcome of the workshop and they are about to be published as a book entitled *Naayikaa Pravesh!* Along with this publication, two collections of short stories on the theme of violence against women and about the experiences of the girl-child will also be published as a joint venture of these groups of writers, activist and people involved with theatre.

—Himanshi Shelat

Meeting Dr Shirin Kudchedkar

To teach and to learn—these inter-twined activities mark her true scholarship

SPARROW is in the process of recording interviews with academics and educationists—women who have in active if quiet ways, contributed to education. Among these has been Dr Shirin Kudchedkar whose commitment to teaching for nearly four decades has made her a guide, philosopher and friend to two generations of students.

It was almost inevitable that with both her parents—Mithan Choksi and Rustom Choksi—in the teaching profession, Shirin Kudchedkar should follow in their footsteps. All through the interview, her recall of her parents was warm and appreciative. Her father, professor of English at Wilson College—many of us still remember his sonorous voice as he recited Tennyson—was also the father who sat by his daughter's bedside, holding her hand when she had nightmares. And her mother, teacher at the newly founded nationalist school, New Era, experimented with teaching methodology and has been, one could

hold viable today. "What saddens me is the importance given to English. At New Era and at Wilson I felt that my contemporaries—bright people—but who hadn't had an English education were at a disadvantage. The poorer class who form the majority, the rural population, cannot speak the language of the elite and this widens the class divide." This opinion might seem anomalous coming from a teacher of English and from one who always spoke English at home with her parents. But 75 years earlier, Shirin's mother was heard making the same lament when she wrote of the time to come when Indian students would be able to write an essay on Chaucer but not on Tukaram.

What strikes many of us, is the fact that here is a teacher of many years' standing, but one who is always eager to learn more, even from her own students. This remarkable ability has been the reason for the number of courses that she has introduced at SNTD, including the hitherto unknown area of



“At one stroke after independence, we should have been studying through regional languages.”

feel from the interview, a tremendous influence upon her daughter. "Play was always very imaginative. We had a large library of books—one had to read one informative book, then one would be allowed to read a story book." Perhaps the greatest education that the daughter received from them was that "neither of them ever discriminated between me and my brother at all. Never was that feeling that because you were a girl you couldn't do this or that."

It was not a deliberate choice that led Shirin Kudchedkar to join the SNTD, after starting her teaching career at Wilson College from where she had graduated. Yet over a period of time, especially when she became the Head of the Postgraduate Department of English, she has been instrumental in introducing new courses, experimenting—as her mother had done in English language teaching—especially for students, who had come from non-English medium schools. She holds on to the view that "at one stroke after independence, we should have been studying through regional languages"—a view that very few academics

Canadian Literature, which many students took up for research under her guidance. Similarly, courses in Women's Studies and gendered teaching of texts brought winds of change into the old syllabi and one felt the intellectual energy emanating from this educationist even while she would read and research, learn and teach, write and travel, expanding thus her intellectual horizons. Her involvement with *Awaaz-E-Niswan*, her understanding of lesbianism, her sympathies for the political-left, her absolute commitment to secularism, mark her as a very progressive person.

"Do you follow no faith at all?"

"I have faith in humanity and that is my religion."

What remains with us is the feeling that here is a teacher who is always a learner. And so, though it may seem a contradiction, I would like to end quoting Chaucer:

"And gladly would [s]he learn and gladly teach."

—Roshan G Shahani

Voices in the City

With this piece, we begin an occasional series on the City, starting off with the Bombay that *was* and the Mumbai that *is*, based on the responses and reactions of the women whom SPARROW has been interviewing. Since our focus has been on septuagenarians and octogenarians and we have had a couple of women in thier nineties as well, a recurrent question that crops up is regarding the changes they have witnessed over these long years spanning the decades and the century as well—changes that are topographical and geographical, cultural and historic. Here are women who have been shaped by the city, even while in richly divergent ways they have shaped the city. The “Cities Within” get mapped and imprinted thereby in words and photographic impressions that reimage the past. For the generation of midnight’s children that followed these women, Bombay seems to have become almost an “imaginary homeland.” As for the present generation, the post of the post-colonial generation, Bombay’s past seemed almost ancient history. For instance, it came as a surprise to many of the younger SPARROWS that Kemp’s Corner was called so, because there stood at the corner the chemist shop Kemp & Co.

Location becomes of such paramount importance—childhood memories, educational years, nostalgia for what had been, critical distancing from the present, adjustments to the current moment, all these crowded into the consciousness of the women we have been interviewing.

Eighty-two year old Mithan Shroff, proprietress of Miniland School and Cymroza Art Gallery, both familiar sights at Breach Candy, recalls *her* mother’s recall of her courting days! “They used to sit on the benches at Wodehouse Bridge, that probably spanned Colaba Railway Station.”



Colaba Reclamation from Wodehouse Bridge, Bombay
Photograph given by Sharda Dwivedi

Professor Shirin Kudchedkar has vivid memories of childhood spent at Seven Bungalows at Andheri. “They were really bungalows then with marshlands around and

hills beyond.” She laments the gentrification of Parel—“I feel sad; the mill workers—three lakhs of people—you can’t just throw them out. Where have they gone? What has happened to them? Their chawls were certainly not perfect living conditions. But the answer to that would have been to improve those conditions—shopping malls and bowling alleys are not the answer.”

As with many veteran Bombayites, the name-change of streets arouses their fury. Mithan, who has fond memories of her girlhood home down Laburnum Road, next-door to the historic Mani Bhavan, laughs at the recollection of this obsession. “They thought Laburnum was the name of a British official. What would *they* know about flowers!” In great measure, Mithan has been instrumental in retaining, the best she can, the sea-front at Breach Candy, where she stays. Incidentally, her house, Hormuz Mansion, was vacated and sold to the Shroffs during Partition by a Muslim family. The children and grandchildren have visited this Mansion because for them it is a family and historical archive. Of course, the fact that many of the long-standing buildings at Breach Candy were built where bungalows and flowering gardens once stood, is yet another story. One is reminded of the Narlikar women in *Midnight’s Children* who represent the rapacious Bombay builders of the 1970s, changing almost overnight, the city’s facade. But, as some of our interviewees pointed out, this embourgeoisement of the city was replacing the Indian aristocracy and, of course, the colonial bastion.

Ninety-one year old Avabai Wadia, well known for her life-long commitment to planned parenthood, deplors with Mithan Shroff the disappearance of laburnums from Laburnum Road and the flowering trees from the city. “All those high-rise buildings—they are so unplanned—it’s all higgledy-piggledy with no consideration for symmetry or aesthetics—Bombay has been spoilt.” And then there was



Maneck Pavri
Outside St. Columba
School (1940s)

ninety-seven year old Maneek Pavri, a teacher of St. Columba School who, quite understandably, dwelt in the past, dismissing the present with a wave of her hand. Tennyson, her favorite poet, seemed to voice her nostalgia—“*There where the long street roars/hath been the stillness of the silent sea.*”

Eunice de Souza, belonging to a relatively younger generation, has been so long associated with Bombay’s St. Xavier’s college, that she is an integral part of that

institute. It is not so much nostalgia for the past as the bleakness of the present that comes through her conversation about the city and finds expression in her verse. In "Landscape" the persona wants her ashes flung "in the local creek," "the pungent air will suit my soul: /It will find its place among/ the plastic carrier bags and rags that float upstream..."

And yet Eunice, like all the other older women,



Wilson College - Senior BA English Honours Group 1925-26
Seated extreme left - Maneck Pavri, Mithan Banaaji & second from right - Rustom Choksi (Shirin's parents) Extreme right - Allan Gimi, the author's mother.

identifies with the city. In her case, "because it is familiar," In the case of some of the others for more emotional reasons. Avabai, Shirin, Maneck they all spoke very affirmatively about their city. "The city makes me feel I was old, that it was all unmanageable, that this was not the Bombay I had known," says Shirin. "But then I felt that this was the world in which I have lived and am going to spend the remainder of my days; so no point feeling uncomfortable about it and reacting to it and feeling hostile to it; and when I try to, I feel I *am* a part of this city to which I belong." Maneck Pavri's response, if far more emotional than Shirin's, was equally articulate. However, for her Bombay was her well-loved Wilson College where she had studied in the 1920s (she is the oldest living Wilsonian) and Columba School where she had taught. Those institutions are her geography, her history, her city.

Many of these women have been eye-witnesses to history in the making. Their personal experiences and narratives could form interesting archives of the city and often the location and the houses they occupied 'housed' these archives in every sense of the word. Neera Desai, a pioneer of Women's Studies in India, took the SPARROW crew to Khetwadi where her former home Maharaj Mansion



Maharaj Mansion at Khetwadi

is located. An important feature of the house was that it was located on the borderline between the Hindu and the Muslim locality. "Now this meant that during the pre-Partition riots one could palpably feel the tensions; at the same time, it was also the space for formative debates and political discourses." Perhaps in the metaphorical sense of the term, Neeraben occupied a borderline position as she had a certain perspective that would never have allowed a partisan attitude. Significantly, Raj Bhavan, the CPI commune and head quarters, was also located near Neeraben's house. She remembers how during the time of World War II, this building became the target of attack by some in the Congress because while the latter had taken up an anti-war position, the Communist Party had considered itself an ally when Russia entered the war. This was an eyewitness account of history in the making. But Neeraben was an activist too and was *making* history when not only was she present at Gowalia Tank at the historical Quit India Resolution of August 9, 1942 but a few months later, had courted arrest along with thousands of other nationalists.

On August 9, very close to what was going to be renamed August Kranti Maidan, yet another bit of history was being recorded. Mithan Shroff, 18 years old then, remembers a young fugitive pleading for temporary refuge in her parental house at Laburnum Road. Her father, an official of the British government was hesitant but her mother hid the man in one of the 'outhouses—the man was Y B Chavan.

Sepia tinted memories of Independence Day... all of them seemed to have converged at the High Court to witness the flag hoisting ... all of them remember the lights ... they also remember Partition and the refugees.

The narratives of these women like the photographs they showed us, have given the city's past a living, breathing quality. Their lives and the life of this city seem so interwoven, it would seem that while they inhabit the city, the city inhabits them.

—Roshan G Shahani

Varsha Adalja

✓ Forty years of creative writing and neither her ink nor her imagination have run dry

Varsha Adalja, a recognised Gujarati writer, has been writing for almost four decades. Starting with her first novel, *Shravan Tara Sarvada* in (1968), she has authored forty books, which include novels, collections of short stories and critical essays, plays and travelogues. She is an active member of the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad for the last thirty years.

She was born in April 1940 to a Nagar Brahmin family known for its unorthodox views. In fact, the family had been excommunicated from the caste in 1930 when her widower father had an inter-caste marriage. Varsha's father Gunvantrai Acharya was a well-known journalist and a writer. He wrote many adventurous novels on sea voyages. Varsha speaks very affectionately of her parents. The Acharya family shifted their residence quite often because Acharya was a freedom fighter and worked in many different newspapers. Her mother was an expert home manager. Whenever they shifted, she would set up a kitchen immediately and meals would be ready on time.

period of her life. Varsha never dreamt of becoming a writer. After Varsha's marriage, her parents shifted to Rajkot and theatre activities came to an end. Suddenly she experienced a social vacuum in her life but this very emptiness created an author in Varsha. One day her husband Mahendra bought a new parker pen and paper and encouraged her to write. Though hesitant in the beginning, Varsha says that once she began writing, it came naturally. After that she never looked back.

What is most impressive about her writing career is her self-imposed discipline. She would get up everyday at 4.00 a.m. and write till 7.00 a.m. using the kitchen platform for writing so that nobody would get disturbed. This schedule continued for fourteen years. Her pen did not stop even in the maternity home. For her picture serial in *Sudha* magazine, she wrote the script on the very second day of her second delivery. When her husband was admitted to the ICU of a hospital, she wrote a novel—*Mrityudand*—waiting outside the room in an uncomfortable plastic chair!

“ સર્વકને કોઈ જાતિ નથી હોતી, છતાં પુરુષ સર્વક અને સ્ત્રી સર્વકનો વિચાર કરો તો કોઈ પુરુષ સર્વક એમ નહીં કહે કે આજે ઘરે નોકર નથી એટલે હું નહીં આવી શકું કારણ કે એની પાછળ કોઈ સંભાળવાવાળું છે.”



“ A writer has no gender. But when you consider male and female writers, no male writer will ever say that he would not be able to make it because there was no servant at home. There is always someone to take care of things at home.”

Wherever they went, her mother would organise Mahila Mandals and conduct cultural events. A good singer herself, she encouraged her children to participate in the community cultural activities. And due to that, they had overcome stage-fear from childhood.

When the family shifted to Mumbai in 1953, Varsha's stage career flourished. Her father, one of the founder members of IPTA, wrote the script of *Allabeli* in which Varsha played an important role. When he left IPTA, along with Vishnubhai Vyas he launched *Rangmanch*—an amateur theatre group in Ghatkopar. Varsha participated in many lead roles in plays staged by *Rangmanch*, *Ranghbhoomi*, and other theatre groups. Even during her Ruia College days she participated in inter-collegiate drama competitions organised by Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan winning recognition and acclaim. Incidentally, quite a few of them were scripted by Lord Megnad Desai.

This decade of stage acting was an important

Varsha's prolific writing can be classified into three categories. There are her novels which are based on field work notes collected diligently. Her first novel, *Aatash*, was based on the suffering of innocent people during the Vietnam war. *Khari Padelo Tahuko* throws light on the delicate relationship of mother and disabled children. *Bandivan* describes widespread corruption prevalent in Indian jails while *Anasar* focuses on the life of leprosy patients. The second category takes up social issues, specifically women's issues, viewed from women's perspective. In the third category fall her mystery novels. Perhaps, her reading of Perry Mason in her childhood came in handy!

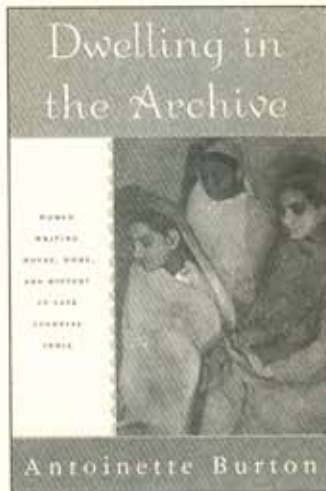
Varsha's plans for the near future—a novel with a broad social horizon; yet another on contemporary women; a couple of plays....

More power to her pen!

—Divya Pandey

Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home and History in Colonial India

by Antoinette Burton



Who should be considered the 'responsible' historian? Which archives should be considered 'reliable' material? Should these 'proper' sources be the standard against which all other evidence be measured? These are some of the questions that *Dwelling in the Archive* raises.

The book opens up tentacular possibilities in our reading of history with Burton's tentative approach to her subject and her pluralistic choice of genres; Janaki Agnes Penelope Mazumdar's "Family History" is an unpublished diary (Burton explains the fascinating way she got access to it). Cornelia Sorabji's *India Calling* and *India Recalled* are memoirs. And Attia Hosain's, *Sunlight on a Broken Column* is a novel. Besides, with their recourse to memory and oral history, these writers are seen, and see themselves, as unreliable narrators, not as authoritarian authors. Offering thus a counterpoint to the seamless, teleological discourse of dominant histories, these narratives, (Burton's included) point to the fact that the very nature of historiography cannot preclude ambiguities and contradictions; they need to be read in a questing—questioning manner.

Oral Histories have been dismissed as old-wives'-tales and memories presumed to be close to fiction, history close to truth. Hence oral testimony and memory as archival sources have been called into question. But, as Burton argues, "this reasoning is in danger of obscuring the historical processes through which 'facts' and evidence become the grounds for professional history."

The segregation between history and literature marks the former as a male domain whereas women have been traditionally relegated as the 'unhistorical other of history'. Picking on the word 'domain', not however, as conquered space, but as dwelling, brings us to the central trope of Burton's narrative and of the three narratives it contains. The domain of the house and home is the world all three women 'occupy'; all

three leave those dwellings only to return to them in memory—often as diasporic memory. The House then becomes the Archive, the repository of both materiality and memory for these women. Interestingly, 'archive' deriving from the greek *arkheion*, is the 'house of the superior magistrate' and this dwelling-place "marks the liminal space between public and private." In diverse, often contradictory ways, the three narratives configure the domestic zenana with the public world, personal stories with colonial-nationalist histories and the house with the archive. Their accounts house family memoirs and stories but by extension, they historicise those turbulent moments of colonial-nationalist encounters.

The architecture of home documents Janaki's "Family History" (1935). It archives the interior spaces of family life as well as her conflicted views of her father's political career. (W.C. Bonnerjee). In Janaki's version of this history, her father's public profile is effectively eclipsed by the drama of her mother's life. The mother tried to maintain her identity and a stable home in the face of public upheavals in which her husband was prominently involved. Janaki's narrative provides a counter narrative to the discourses about companionate marriages "that underpinned many of the arguments for Indian self-government by the Indian elite like Bonnerjee himself."

Cornelia Sorabji's writing offers a history of the same period from a different political position. She archives the interviews of the zenana which in her writing emerges as the quintessential emblem of a vast-vanishing culture. In the "Rhetoric of Ruins" that Cornelia produces, the zenana is cast as an architectural wonder, an archive for which "she fashions herself the perfect historian guide."

In *Sunlight on a Broken Column* the ancestral house *Ashiana* is enlisted in the service of history. Like many partition narratives, home emerges as the "telling place, through whose doors, windows and passageways people's pasts are glimpsed, in whose rooms life-stories are relived and consequently re-membered."

History dwells in these houses, houses must also dwell in history. This is what *Dwelling in the Archive*, an archive of archives, as it were, seems to tell us. Little wonder, then, that among our SPARROW archives, it occupies a special place.

—Roshan G Shahani

Writer and Rangoli Artist Yajnavathi K Kangen



Yajnavathi Keshava Kangen, a senior writer in Tulu language passed away recently. She was 69 years old. SPARROW had interviewed her for its Literature Leap project.

Yajnavathi was born in 1935 in Mangalore. She belonged to the family of Thingalaya who were freedom fighters and social reformers. She has written three Tulu books, *Moover Thingalayer*, *Sanskritika Tulunaad*, *Rangena Malemangena* and many articles on different subjects in both Tulu and Kannada. She received the *Rani Abbakkadevi* award for her contribution to Tulu Literature.

Yajnavathi K Kangen was an innovative rangoli artist, who used flower petals, seeds, pulses, leaves and straw as medium for her designs. Retaining the traditional patterns of rangoli, she had created more than 150 designs of her own. Her much appreciated rangolis have been exhibited at different places in Karnataka.

Writer Nirmalprabha Bordoloi



One of the greatest luminaries of Assam, Dr Nirmalprabha Bordoloi, passed away on June 1, 2004. Born on 20th June 1933, in Sibsagar in upper Assam, Nirmalprabha Bordoloi was an unusual woman in many ways. She was married at a very young age but when her in-laws failed to keep their promise to allow her to study till matriculation, she decided to stay with her parents as a single mother and continue her studies. Being a mother at such a young age didn't deter her from pursuing her goals. With the support of her family she completed her studies and took up a teaching career. Inspired by Gandhiji, she became a member of the Youth Congress.

Nirmalprabha has several literary awards to her credit including the Sahitya Academi Award (1983) for her collection of poems titled *Sudirgha Din aru Ritu* (Long Days and the Season). She was professor of Assamese at Guwahati University and the former president of Asom Sahitya Sabha.

Her autobiography, titled *Jeevan, Jeevan bor Anupam* (Life, Life is Beautiful) was recently serialised in *Prantik*, an Assamese language magazine.

During her lifetime she made an immense contribution to Assamese literature and culture. Her death has created a void in that area but the story of her life will continue to inspire generations of Assamese people.

Dr Indumati Parikh—An Eminent Social Worker and A Great Humanist



Social worker and humanist, Dr Indumati Parikh passed away on 17th June 2004. She was born on 8th March 1918 at Dhule in the family of freedom fighter Bhausaheb Ranadive, a day that was to be observed as World's Women's Day in future:

Even as a student at the B J Medical College, Pune, Indumati came under the influence of Manavendranath Roy, the eminent thinker and was actively involved in the humanist Roywadi Movement, where she met and married Dr Goverdhan Parikh.

The couple established a clinic at Matunga near the Labour Camp. She later set up at Prabhadevi, *Streehitakarini*, now 40 years old, which dedicated itself to the upliftment of women's health, education, and child welfare.

Dr Indumati Parikh believed in "simple living and high thinking." Her work for the underprivileged women has won her much admiration and affection.

Publication No. 41

Editors:

C S Lakshmi, Roshan G Shahani.

Design and Layout: Malavika, Yogesh Kashalkar

Printed at Mouj Prakashan Griha,
Khatau Wadi, Goregaonkar Lane,
Girgaum, Mumbai 400004 Phone: 23871050

Published by



SPARROW

Sound & Picture Archives for Research on Women
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Mumbai - 400061. Phone: 28245958, 28268575
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