

# RAJ CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter and Contact Maker

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## 1947 and 47 years on....

1947 saw the end of British rule in the Indian sub-continent. Most of the non-Indian residents went off to find or to make new lives for themselves in other parts of the Empire and the rest of the world. This experience was unique in that there were, in a few short years, so many migrants from one country to so many different ones. The result was that many of us, perhaps even the majority, lost contact with cherished friends.

On a recent re-visit to India and my old school, St Mary's Mount Abu, (1941-1946) our group, consisting of my wife, sister and two friends, were most fortunate in making contact with another old-school boy, Roger "Podgy" Lesser, who is now a priest and works from Udaipur.

Roger is due to visit England in 1995 and would like to meet as many of you as possible. Your connection with India, - or for that matter, Pakistan, Bangladesh or any of the new countries of the sub-continent, because they were and probably will always remain, in our minds.... "INDIA" - and/or the Irish Christian Brothers Schools, be they as a pupil, or as a spouse, brother, sister, parent, child, relative or friend of former pupils, has prompted this letter.

Did you, or anyone you know, go to a Lawrence Military College, La Martinere, Bishop Cotton's, or any of the convents or other missionary schools in India? We would like to form a contact-point or association of all of you and, from time-to-time, perhaps even to arrange social events. We are a fast-declining group of people who remember or have been told of the days of the Raj, and of the way things used to be. In a few years' time it will be too late and almost impossible to trace one another.

### **Now is the time to make contact.**

If you are interested, please get in touch with me. If you have news of, addresses, telephone numbers or contacts with anyone who might be interested in using such an association, please communicate that information to me so that I can get in touch with them.

While the group remains within manageable proportions, **no financial contribution or cost is sought or required**. Although, it is likely that at some future stage, I will almost certainly require some "muscle power" in the business of communicating with all of you.

In the meantime, I hope to produce the occasional newsletter, such as this, with names of people who want to make contact with past friends. Your own stories, anecdotes and news items would be most welcome and will, if you so wish, be used in future issues.

Please remember, however, that what we need most of all at this time is more names and addresses, or 'phone numbers. **This newsletter has come to you because someone passed your contact information on to us.**

### **Don't be shy.**

Raj Connections is just what it says - "The Newsletter and Contact Maker". You don't have to feel that because you did not become the Maharaja or Maharanee of Kooch Parwanay or, because you were not honoured by the Empress of India, you will be any less welcome to communicate with us, or that the friends of your youth will have any less respect for you. Success in Life means different things to different people: It is not always measured by the size of your bank account, your status on the world stage, or the range of your worldly accomplishments. In any case, for most of us it is too late for that sort of charisma. But please do tell us about the things you would like us to know. Tell us about your experiences, your sorrows and smiles, your families and so on, and what you are doing as you enter retirement - for surely many of you have already done so, or are due to retire shortly.

In the short period - just six weeks or so - that I have been engaged in this effort to try to regain contact with the many friends and people who I knew as a youth, I have heard from or been in contact with about twelve people. I have met one who I last saw 31 years ago and who I first met in 1942. It was great to hear his news and to share a jug and a meal with him. - At this rate we could have scores of contacts by the end of 1994 !!

Three of my friends have died - all in their fifties. One of them was indeed one of my best friends in school and I did not get to see him since we were in India. I kick myself that this search for re-unions was not started four or five years ago. But, as they say, "Better late than Never".

Another was ill for many years before he too passed away. I am in touch with his widow, though we have never met, and she has been the source of other leads to past pupils of St. Mary's.

**Don't be shy** if you are ill or invalid; there are certainly many of your old friends who would at least like to talk to you on the telephone or drop you a line.

**Don't be shy** if life seems to have passed you by or you feel that it has been one heck of a "cock-up". You still have many friends out there who don't give a damn, but who would just like to contact you again for old times' sake.

**Don't be shy** if you did not go to St. Mary's. We want all of you to join in this re-union romp.

**Sincerest good wishes to All, and may 1994 be a year of  
Success, Health, Wealth and Happiness.**