



“You cannot buy the revolution. You cannot make the revolution. You can only be the revolution. It is in your spirit, or it is nowhere.”

-Ursula K. Le Guin

Dear Readers,

As we come closer to the 60th year of the News & Views, our readership stands at a new crossroads of thinking and writing.

After confronting the initial overwhelm of finally reaching the front page of this newsletter, we realized that it has made a home in our hearts after years of effort, dedication and commitment. We are daunted by the realization that at this crossroads, the onus lies on us to carry this esteemed newsletter into the next era, while also retaining its original traditions and customs.

In creating our first issue as Editors-in-Chief, we — like the editors before us — continue to revere the power of the written word. The cynic in all of us would love to argue that in this dark feast of a vulturous world today, any word and more specifically ours does not matter. However, detaching ourselves from this pessimism lies a world full of possibilities. From the French to the Internet revolution, from the Quit India Movement to the Tiananmen Square Protest, it has been us — the idealistic students— who have carried their spirit of revolution into the dawn of a new future.

It is these acts of writing and transmitting knowledge through language which have been venerated as the holiest form of human passion since the invention of the first sharp tool. Primary sources of history and archaeology — diaries, manuscripts, journals, scraps of paper — hold foremost importance and credibility when historians imagine what the world was like in its past. The first signs of tyranny appear when written communication — newspapers, newsletters, posters— is snuffed out; such is the power of the written word.

To say that the fate of the human condition has forever been intertwined with the written word is no overstatement. Etched on this fabric exists *Smarika*, as a celebration of language and knowledge at the time of this issue’s release. Honing this spirit, we invite our readers to engage with burning ideas, opinions and facts and etch new words onto the fabric of our uncertain future, in pursuit of a revolution of the spirit — the brick in the wall of humanity.

**In praise of prose,
Yatika Singh and Avika P. Mantri
Editors-in-Chief**

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The *Buntification* of Men

Inside Indian homes, a phenomenon that I call ‘Buntification’ is a relentless occurrence. Mothers (also known as mummy jis) are obsessed with feeding their little boys right up till adolescence, continuing through adulthood, and even after they have married and started a family - at which point, she consistently visits her ‘little’ boy’s home (whom hereafter is referred to as Bunty) to ensure that his wife is doing this ‘feeding’ correctly.



Mummy ji’s feeding instinct does not wear off even when Bunty has andropausal and his pate shows through sparse patches. Daughters and daughters-in-law (especially the daughters-in-law) can presumably take charge of their own meals — but Bunty needs someone to fuss around him. Everyone must tiptoe around the likes, dislike, and pet peeves of mummy ji’s beloved Bunty. Consequently, Buntys are growing more rotund and more entitled by the day. They love mummy’s hot puffed chapati that is dropped onto their plate straight from the tava before it loses its critical heat. Buntys are also either notoriously picky eaters, or suddenly morph into such habits upon the arrival of their mummy ji. Only masala *bhindi* and *aloo ki sabji*, no pesky greens like *matar* allowed. Mummy ji solves this conundrum

by secretly pureeing some greens and mixing them into his dal. This ingenious trick keeps ‘Bunty’ well-fed, round and on top of his game.

Mummy ji will move heaven and earth to ensure that the best chapatis (with light brown beauty spurts) are served to their precious zygotes. It is obvious that patriarchy fuels the epicurean pleasure that Buntys enjoy across the length and breadth of this subcontinent. Inside Mummy ji’s brain is entrenched years of neglect, derision and victimhood. She has been shamed for not learning anything well in her parents home, for not stirring up the right flavour on demand, and boldly trying creative new recipes. Scared, mummy ji has realized that to maintain a stronghold in her husband’s home she must control the kitchen — slogging, sweating, grinding and frying, she has finally established her fiefdom.

Then, when little Bunty arrives in mummy ji’s life, she whirrs and grows ballistic. She uses ghee to anoint little Bunty’s ego. Bunty grows like a tumor, undisciplined and self-centred (of course, it’s all appropriately so). His mood swings must be buffered. He believes ‘family [only his own] is everything,’ and ‘marriage is an important institution’, and some more of such vacuous truths. He holds a corporate job and respects women (according to all the applicable HR guidelines) at his work-place. At home, he is fed and indulged in and sees nothing wrong with it. At parties and social gatherings too, his wife ‘looks after’ him.

Slow, insidious changes and independent women are a threat to Buntydom. What will become of him? Will he rise to the challenge and change? He must, if he doesn’t want to go the dinosaur way. Bunty can and should look at other options of existence. His daughters are watching and taking note... his wife is tired and might leave. And above all, times have changed and spermabots are ascending on the horizon.

Ms. Richa Joshi Pant

Alexander Dugin: Putin's "Brain"?

Darya Dugina, the daughter of the most well-known ideological architect of Russia's expansionism, died by a car bomb on her way back from an art festival in the outskirts of Moscow in August last year. However, many believe that the intended target of the bomb was her father, Alexander Dugin.






Alexander Dugin, the Russian ultranationalist who faced sanctions from the United States in 2015 for "intellectual activity that breaks no laws" has been the leading advocate of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. His magnum opus and most notorious work, *The Foundations of Geopolitics* (reportedly featured in the Russian Army's reading lists) sets out his vision of Russia as the leader of a 'Eurasian Empire'. Thus, he continues to defy Western decadence and moves his hard-line ideas to merge fascist and communist rhetoric from the fringes into Russia's political mainstream.

Although the extent of the influence of his political doctrine, Neo-Eurasianism (which sees Russia as the centre of a rival empire to the Atlanticist West) has been the subject of heated debate, many believe that he has major influence over Vladimir Putin, often branding him as the 'Fascist Prophet' or 'Putin's Rasputin'. While Dugin is dismissed by many as belonging to a long, dismal line of political theorists, inventing a glorious past to explain a declining present, he is also widely credited with shaping Putin's worldview and called 'Putin's Philosopher'.






The killing of Dugin's daughter, a pro-Kremlin journalist, has shocked and horrified the upper echelons of Russian society, bringing back grim memories of the turbulent 1990s when car bombings were commonplace; an era that Putin's presidency vowed to end. This incident, however, undermined that narrative. Nonetheless, the rising popularity of Dugin as the new prophet for Russian right-wing ideology, even outside of Russia, demonstrates the power and influence of his ideas, even though his portrayal as Putin's "brain" may be a hyperbolic attempt.

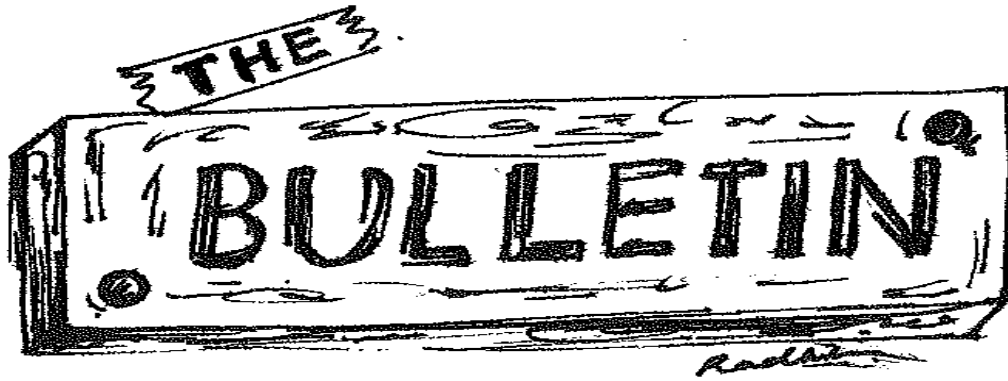
Amiya Walia
Class 12

Roses

-  Two fresh and dewy white roses to Ms Rekha Uniyal and Ms Anima Singh for a relaxful, joyous and peaceful retirement.
-  A bouquet of yellow roses to all the new additions to the Welham family. New staff and students, we're very happy to have you here!
-  Pink and yellow dewy roses to Mrs Brar for her enthralling talk which made us understand and truly believe in the 'Welham Ethos'.
-  A ribbon-tied bunch of white roses to the schools participating in *Smarika*. We wish you good luck and a pleasant stay at our school!
-  A library of digital techni-colour roses to everyone behind the new e-Resource centres!

Raspberries

-  A basket of putrid, gross raspberries to the school administration who not only shuffle classes unsolicitedly, but also floors.
-  A tray of maggot-infested raspberries to Ms. Neena Aggarwal and Ms. Sarika Dubey for not starting social service.
-  A massive, radioactive, foul raspberry to whoever booked the now-infamous 'New Mandala Hotel' for SC midterms.
-  A mess full of rotten, bitter raspberries to the juniors who got *sambar-chawal* cancelled..
-  Truckloads of stinky, hairy raspberries to a certain best-friend duo of senior HMs for abandoning their houses in the middle of the term.



- **22nd Dec:** WGS represented by Avika Mantri and Keya Aggarwal secured the first position at the 'Youth Leader' Competition at the annual tGELF Harmony Fest for their disability awareness project, 'Re-Able'.
- **14th-15th Jan:** Shambhavi Chandra, Aaruni Garg and Kaavya Patel qualified as finalists at the Aditya Birla Infinity Quiz.
- **23rd-26th Jan:** 6 AIII students participated in the Round Square Conference held at the Hyderabad Public School on the theme 'Inhale Courage, Exhale Fear'.
- **26th Jan:** Arshiya Sharma and Bhavya Sangal participated in the 'Young Creators League' hosted by Plaksha University with their project 'Sustainable Self-Watering Irrigation System'.
- **26th-29th Jan:** WGS hosted an Art workshop in collaboration with SPIC MACAY.
- **31st Jan-3rd Feb:** 6 AIII students participated in the Round Square Social Service Project hosted by Welham Boys' School at Bharatpur, Rajasthan.
- **10th-13th Feb:** 19 students participated in the Chittagong Grammar School Technovation International Techfest. The team won a total of 9 prizes and WGS was awarded the Best School Award.
- **15th Feb:** The National Book Trust of India organized a Hindi Book Fair at WGS. It proved to be an excellent platform to promote the love of Hindi literature among Welhamites.
- **17th -19th Feb:** Priyal Mittal, Siya Vij and Anshika Sarraf participated in the All- India U-21 and Senior Karate Championship held in Parade Ground Dehradun. Ms Shefali Verma, Head of Department of Sports and Karate Coach was invited to attend a Seminar of WKF for Updated Rules and Regulations, 2023.
- **22nd March:** On International Women's Day, The Human Rights and Social Justice Association awarded the 'Women Empowerment Award' to Ms Vibha Kapoor, Ms Rajshree Ohja, Ms Kusum Dandona and Ms Subohi Rashid for their contributions to the field of education.
- **12th -17th March:** 5 SC students attended the Round Square Conference in Marrakech, Morocco on the theme 'The Future is Now'. They participated in debates, discussions and social service projects in a culturally-unique experience.
- **25th March:** 12 students from Welham Girls' School went for a short collaborative trek from Shahshahi Ashram to Jharipani with Welham Boys' School.
- **4th April:** A group of BIs and AIIIs went for a heritage walk to Guru Ram Rai Darbar organised by SPIC MACAY. They were enriched with the history of Dehradun and the life of Baba Ram Rai.

An Interview with Dr P. Renganathan

The following are the highlights from our interview with Dr P. Renganathan, a pioneering conservationist and archivist from Chennai. He and his team restored important school documents and have helped resurrect Welham's history with their remarkable work.

N&V: Having worked in the field of conservation and archiving for more than two decades, could you share the major projects that you have undertaken in your career?

Dr. P. Renganathan: Our biggest project was for the Malayalam *Manorama* newspaper in 2004. We restored and archived nearly 8.5 lakh newspapers and five lakh sheets of magazines in one year.



N&V: That is a long and intense period of work. You told us you are from a family of goldsmiths but chose a different path yourself. So, what made you get into the field of conservation?

PR: Previously, I did Xeroxing at a lamination shop. Once, a college student brought a certificate for lamination when the technique was just introduced. I put it into the lamination machine but the certificate's corners got damaged. The student got me a duplicate certificate, but the original was still damaged. I realized I had made a mistake and it stuck in my mind. This mistake led me to develop my own process of lamination, which I patented in 2008.

N&V: I think we can agree that mistakes are the best teachers. Could you tell us more about your patented process, sir?

PR: Normally, if you go to a shop for lamination, it is an irreversible process. The biggest advantage of my process is that it is reversible. Most places use the tissue paper process, which is prone to dust and attracts insects. My process, Lamino-Encapsulation, is developed with commodity plastic which has a high melting point and so does not melt easily. The adhesive can also be removed easily using benzene, without affecting the document.

N&V: Sir, how was your time here at Welham? What was the best part about our school?

PR: Very nice. The best hospitality, and everyone is very welcoming.

N&V: It's been our pleasure, sir!



MEMORIAL

With a heavy heart, the Welham family mourns the loss of one of its bright, promising star - Vruckshanca Maheshwari (F/039), Batch of 2021. Vruckshanca was training to be a pilot in the Indian Air Force and an unfortunate crash took away her life. A beautiful, friendly, courteous and intelligent girl, she will always be remembered for touching so many lives. A prayer service was conducted on 25th March, in school where students sang *bhajans* and the Principal recited a prayer for the departed soul. Dear 'Vruck', as she was lovingly called, "your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure. You are loved beyond words and missed beyond measure." May you rest in Peace.

JUNIOR Samboree

Hopeless Juniors: What We Would Do, If Only We Could

From fresh seniors in our old schools to juniors again at Welham, I don't think I have ever felt this inferior to someone who is just a few years (and sometimes even less than that) older than I am. It's fascinating to think what juniors could and would do if given the freedom (which we do have, but we're honestly just a bunch of scared cats).

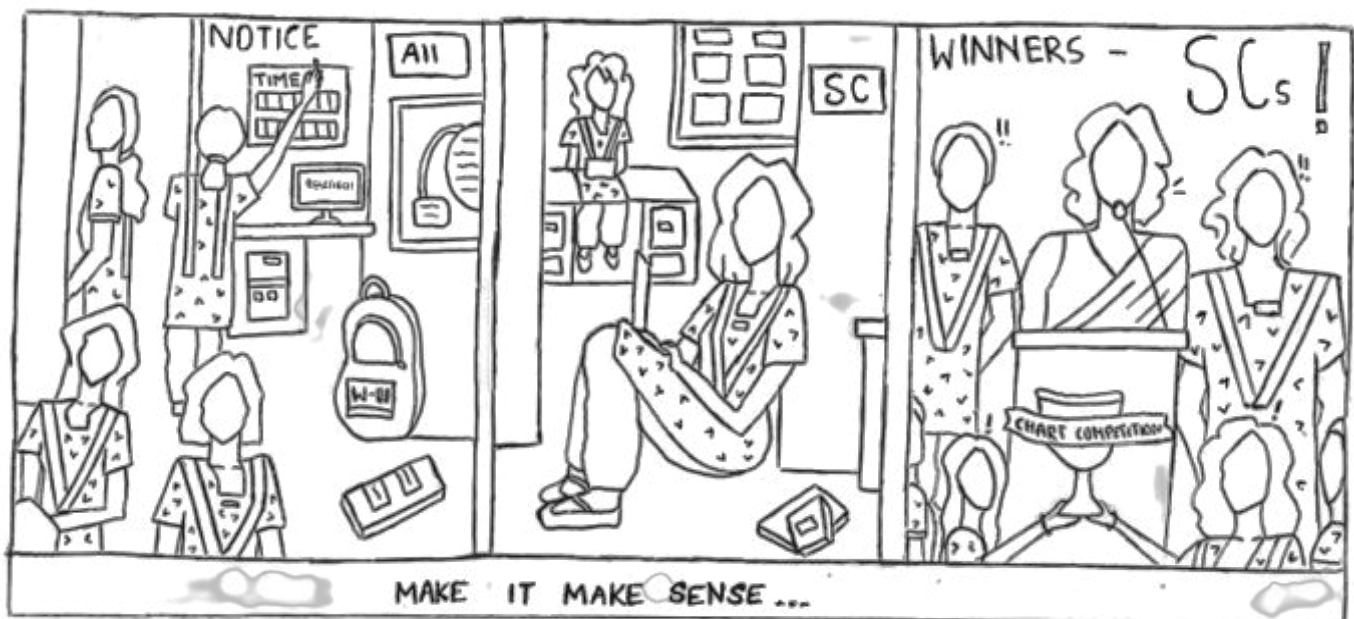
We'd start with cooking food in our dorm pantries on the tiny, but extremely efficient induction stoves (I know, it's a terribly small act of courage, but I think Gandhi ji would side with me). I can picture our juniors protesting "Why no Wai-Wai?" or "Maggi hamara haq!" We would walk around unaffected carrying large speakers, playing every loud and disturbing song we wanted to hear. Every junior's priority would be ticking ambitions off of the "Great Senior Agenda" — a never-ending bucket list of what we hope to do when we become seniors, whose points include:

- *Start a club on any theme.*
- *Drag whatever unfortunate soul you find into it.*
- *Organize events and be "in the spotlight".*
- *Have the power to start 'recs' (though it might seem unexciting to our guest readers, starting a dance party is truly the holy grail of Welham recreation).*
- *Sing Auld Lang Syne after any and every school event that takes place.*
- *Get your mega-loud speaker to the Senior Mess during Sunday breakfast and get them confiscated.*

While the list continues for a few more yards, I'm going to stop here, for we might get severe backlash from our fellow juniors for exposing them, and from the seniors for stepping into their boots sooner than they wish to let go of them (they'd rather run away with them, if I'm being honest).

Saara Goel
Class 8











YELLOW GUMBOOTS



Prathana Pankaj



SPOTTED

-  **Rukmani waking juniors up for morning games.**
-  **Dancing Queen haunting the school EVERYWHERE!**
-  **SCs stuck in the drudgery of classrooms on the first floor for two days.**
-  **Varija's raincoat (finally, again!)**
-  **Woodie and Bullie AIIIs waking up to Avika's jazzy music at 3 a.m.**
-  **SCs conducting 'bonding' sessions with the AIIIs.**
-  **A certain AI class caught red-handed engaging in art theft.**
-  **AIIIs calling their PARENTS from mid-terms. A serious lack of imagination from the AIIIs.**
-  **Matrons having a rec after dinner on all campuses.**
-  **Ms Gitanjali accidentally saying Congress 'Potty' instead of Party in an SC class. Very prophetic, indeed, ma'am.**

-  **Shalini:** If I end up studying law, I will divorce myself.
Research says divorce rates are highest among CLAT aspirants.
-  **Vaaruni:** Vegetarians had it the worst in Johan nesburg.
Manya: Agreed. The non-vegetarians were in a better boating.
Was it the Noah's Ark?
-  **Vaaruni:** Someone just got accepted into Ashoka.
Manya: Yeah! I heard she got an unlimited offer.
We hope college bestows you with ~~uncondi-~~ tional unlimited brain cells next year.
-  **Tejaswani:** Isn't Khalistan near Uzbekistan?
Dear audience to note: Tejaswini is a Political Science student, aspiring to study International Relations and is from the state of Punjab.
-  **Shreya:** Can I count all my birdbrains for creative writing colours?
Direct ticket to the Principal's Award for All-Round Broken Humour.
-  **Ananya Gupta:** Isn't Greece in Rome?
Ek Ivy League college building aapke naam par.
-  **Chitragada (pointing to a banner):** What is 'Tandoori coffee'?
- Varija:** It's coffee for non-vegetarians, obviously!
We heartily welcome all Oriole SCs in the Bird Brain section.










**BIRD
BRAIN**

WHATS IN

WHATS OUT

-  MUN
-  Batch of '24
-  ACE Kids
-  Lemongrass Tea
-  Board-Checking
-  Flu
-  School Captain on substitution

-  DebSoc
-  Batch of '23
-  Science Kids
-  Tang
-  Classes
-  Typhoid
-  Teachers on substitution



Q. Why do all Welhamites have stomach issues only at 6 a.m. before morning sports?

Dear earnest-captain-in-green,

I am quite confident that a decent majority here would gladly get your sweat tattooed with multiple smiles on their faces (those smiles maybe also be premature signs of fatigue). I sincerely suggest that you practice other things besides ritualistically checking the games excuse books, such as sleeping (or better still, letting others sleep). Perhaps you should understand the power of active listening and hear the snores of a certain someone who sleeps on a Yoga mat every evening in Aerobics after 'physiotherapy', and imbibe some knowledge. Mindfulness is quite 'in', I've heard. Maybe you would find your answer in the faces of panting Welhamites who climb more stairs at 6 am than the number of breaths they take per minute, which qualifies as a good enough reason not only for stomach ache, but also for body ache, irritation and general pain in life.

Q. Is it true that Welham Girls' School is turning co-educational?

Dear should-have-been-in-the-Birdbrain-column,

Considering that the announcement was so 'surprisingly' made on the notorious 1st of April, congratulations are in order. April Fools' Day is there to commemorate just the likes of you! Common sense warrants that it must not be of rocket science for you (or anyone with a brain cell) to decipher the veracity of this statement. In times like these, the reverie of yourself, a fanciable, handsome fellow Welhamite, swipes in the back of my head like the dreaded image of the credit card your parents must now be ardently praying they didn't swipe for your education. If you're still under the impression that what was announced in assembly was, in fact, the truth, perhaps you need to rejuvenate your mind by taking a stroll in the garden or outside the school gate... perhaps around Chandbagh or 5 Circular Road, since the thought of the idea has boggled your mind so exceedingly.

Signing off,
Always & forever (never) yours,
Aunt Agatha

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