

From the Editorial Team

Dear Sydenhamite Community,

As we gather the latest happenings and heartfelt stories for this edition of the Sydenham Alumni Cell newsletter, I am filled with a sense of pride .

In this issue, you'll find a treasure trove of alumni events, talks, importance of our surroundings and country's milestones.

We've also included a spotlight on some of the exciting initiatives and events happening at Sydenham College today.

This is the first edition after the commencement of the new year and as the editor, I hope y'all take a look at the additions in the newsletter and provide us with maximum engagement as we seek to connect with you through our words!pages.

We hope you enjoy reading. Spread love!

Cheers To Reading !



Sneak Peek into The Sydenhamite's September 2023 Edition

1. World coconut day: In the heart of tropical paradise, the humble coconut takes center stage on a day dedicated to honoring its incredible versatility and significance. Coconut Day is more than just a celebration of a fruit; it's a vibrant testament to the deep-rooted cultural, culinary, and economic importance of this iconic palm tree product.

2. Teachers day: It is a time when students and society as a whole pause to honor those who have guided us on our educational journeys, instilling not only knowledge but also values and inspiration. In this article, we delve into the significance of Teacher's Day, its origins, and the importance of recognizing and appreciating the remarkable work of teachers in our lives.

3. World Literacy day: Celebrated annually on September 8th, is a global observance dedicated to highlighting the importance of literacy as a fundamental human right and a powerful tool for personal and societal development. This day serves as a poignant reminder that literacy is not just the ability to read and write; it is a gateway to knowledge, empowerment, and the fulfillment of one's potential.

4. Bamboo day: This day is a vibrant tribute to bamboo, the enchanting green giant of sustainability. Journey through time as you explore the Bamboo's cultural heritage and fast forward to the present and witness the magic of bamboo in the modern industry.

5. Rivers day : A day dedicated to celebrating and raising awareness about the vital role that rivers play in our daily lives. It provides an opportunity to explore the significance of rivers and the challenges they face due to human activities. this article encompasses the beauty of these waterways and helps understand conservation efforts to protect them for future generations.

6. Mental health: In an era marked by constant change and unprecedented challenges, understanding and prioritizing mental well-being have become more vital than ever. This article delves into the multifaceted realm of mental health, exploring its importance, common challenges, and the strategies that can promote mental resilience and flourishing in our complex modern lives.

7. New Parliament building: nestled at the heart of india's capital, new delhi, the new parliament building stands as an eminent testament to the nation's unwavering commitment to democracy and architectural brilliance. this spectacular structure, completed in 2023, embodies the ideal spirit of India's political landscape and is an emblem of India's future.

8. Chess prodigy: These young masters of the chessboard inspire awe and admiration, reminding us that genius knows no age. We shall explore how our young Indian talent has taken over the world with his back to back wins.

9. AI tools: Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a transformative force in the realm of technology, revolutionizing industries and reshaping the way we approach complex tasks. In this era of rapid technological advancement, AI tools have taken center stage, offering innovative solutions that have the potential to redefine the boundaries of what is possible.

10. Alumni talks with alumni CA Udit Goyal: This article is one of the finest gathering of the alumnus with the students. Dive deep into the world of one of the youngest CA in the world!



[sydenham_alumni](#)



[SydenhamAlumni](#)



[SydenhamAlumniCell](#)



[SydenhamAlumniCell](#)



[SydAlumniCell](#)

Coconut Chronicles



Let's get ready for a tour to discover the enchanting realm of coconuts. In honor of Coconut Day which occurs on 2nd of September every year, we shall know more about this gem of a fruit and explore its wonders. So, let us brace ourselves to take a deep dive into the versatile world of coconuts to be more familiar about its diverse range of qualities and cultural significance it possesses.

For our very first destination let us get acquainted with this fruit more. Coconuts are believed to have originated specifically in the Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands. They own a very formal scientific name which goes as 'Cocos Nucifera'. Coconuts have been the source of nourishment and sustenance since all the way back to the prehistoric period as they have played a significant role in diet, survival strategies and clothing.

Coconuts are very adapted to the tropical and costal environments and are a vital part of cultures and cuisines. You can easily locate clusters of them hanging by the palm tree. A fun fact about island gem is that it is a type of fruit called a 'drupe', with a harder outer shell and a fleshy interior. The outer layer is called as a 'exocarp' is green when young and browns as it matures. Inside the hard shell you will find hard edible meat filled with healthy fats and nutrients and very notably fresh coconut water. Coconuts truly sound like a tropical treasure.

Now that we are well acquainted coconuts let continue our tour towards destination two where we will see how this island elixir was being incorporated over the time.

It is so fascinating to imagine how our ancestors incorporated this gem of a fruit in their daily lives. As mentioned above coconuts were in use during the stone ages. People back then viewed them resourceful in terms of edibility, a source of hydration and also for crafting tools and containers. The fibrous husk has been utilized for making ropes or weaving materials.

In the 19th and 20th centuries coconut oil extraction processes were improved during this period which lead to an increase use of coconut oil in cooking and in the production of soap. Coir the fiber extracted was used for making mats and rugs. In the World War II coconut oil was extensively used to in the manufacture of explosives and war related products increasing in industrial importance.

Interestingly coconuts were considered exotic and rare in the medieval Europe. Its use is sometimes mentioned in the alchemic texts and early medical literature. In India, they were used as natural buoys for navigation and communication systems located in coastal regions.

In the modern times, coconuts are nothing but a blessing from the heavens. They continue to have wide range of usage and applications. It continues to have a lion's share in culinary delights and dishes as coconut flour, milk, oil are used as healthier substitutes in various cuisines. Coconut oil serves as a common ingredient in hair care and skin care due to its anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory and anti-fungal properties.

Furthermore, it is extensively used as a biofuel, and also a source of renewable energy, as coconut shells are used as biomass to generate renewable energy.

There is absolutely no question as to why this tropical treasure can be a classic example of natural multitasking.

Taking in all the information above must be exhausting . Let us take a break and relax with a sip of water straight from a freshly cracked coconut. It is a natural and refreshing beverage with electrolytes like potassium, magnesium and calcium. It is a very popular choice for hydration as it has no added sugar.

Hopefully everyone is relaxed because this tour is still not over yet. Now we shall visit the cultural significance of coconuts as we arrive at our destination three.

If we take a peek in India we see that coconuts are considered sacred and our very often used in religious ceremonies and rituals. They are offered to deities as a symbol of purity. They are offered to respected individuals as a sign of honor. They are also used in Indian cuisine mainly in the states of Maharashtra, Goa, Kerala, etc.

In the Philippines coconuts are an integral part of Filipino culture. The coconut tree is referred to as the 'Tree of Life'. The leaves and husks are used for traditional handicrafts. In many provinces, Philippines host coconut festivals showcasing importance of this marvelous fruit to local economies.

Thai dishes are widely famous for its usage of coconut to add a unique flavor to their curries and dishes. It is seen as a symbol of abundance and coconut trees are seen as decorative elements in temples and festivals.

Coconuts take deep roots in Caribbean culture. It is used to make their traditional coconut rum. It is again used in cooking the infamous Caribbean dishes and the coconut palm is a symbol of tropical paradise.

In the Pacific islands coconuts shells are used as musical instruments. One such instrument is the ‘niu vai’ which is a coconut shell drum. It is made by hollowing out the coconut shells and attaching the drum head made from animal skin. Another instrument is called as ‘titi torea’ a traditional Tahitian instrument made from a coconut shell with strings attached. There is another instrument such as ‘ulu niu’ with a hollowed coconut shell attached with a handle. It is often used in traditional music.

In the Hawaiian culture, the coconuts are known as ‘niu’. It is considered a symbol of fertility, sustenance and protection.

In the Hawaiian dance hula, coconut shells are incorporated as props in the story-telling. Their shells are tapped together to create sounds of rain and ocean waves.

Aren't coconuts a marvelous gift to us? They play such a vital part in different countries and are incorporated in almost all traditions and cultures. Though we are divided by geographical boundaries but safe to say we are united due to coconuts.

Alas our amazing and insightful journey ends here. As we bid adieu to this whimsical journey through the world of coconuts. From their refreshing water to their milk and versatile oil, coconuts have captured our hearts and taste buds. So next time you see a coconut make sure u remember this magical journey.



TEACHERS: The Champions Of Knowledge And Inspiration.

Like a beacon of light, a teacher plays a vital role in illuminating a student's life. Teachers are the essence of wisdom and guidance. A noble and virtuous profession such as this is celebrated round the globe on 5th of September to honour our diligent and devoted teachers. It is important to recognize and appreciate the dedication and hard-work of these remarkable individuals who help us mould and shape our futures. It's time to show our gratitude and celebrate our teachers and acknowledge their efforts.

Let us now take a look at some of the teachers who took an initiative to bring about change the society with their intelligence and wit.

ASHITA & ANISH NATH: GOOD HARVEST SCHOOL
{India's First School For Agriculture For Girls}

After having worked in Delhi for a decade Ashita and Anish made a decision to return to their home state Uttar-Pradesh to follow newer passions. In U.P. Anish started a farm and Anisha worked as a teacher in Lucknow. While paying visit's to Anish's farm Ashita observed disparity in the educational levels between city and villages. With further interaction she noticed how girls were held back from education and expected to perform chores. They decided to take an initiative and open their farm doors and invite the girls to provide them

with the same quality of education as compared to city based schools.

This impeccable decision gave birth to India's first ever agriculture based primary school for girls in the year 2016. These girls learn about good farming practices in the space of 50000 sq ft. The school also houses a nursery a seed bank and cattle. The couple aims to transform the current situation and release the girls from social pressure and secure their future. By providing them with strong female role models, comfortable learning atmosphere Good Harvest School provides a wonderful opportunity to girls to expand their horizons.

Another fascinating stuff about this school is that it is nestled amidst the farm fields provides the girls with ample opportunities to learn from the natural surroundings and breaks the monotonous restriction within the four walls of the classroom. Basic education, agriculture lessons and co-curricular activities form an essential part of the curriculum.

Ashita Nath with her decade full of experience as a teacher has been working with various social projects including working with street and slum children. At the

Good Harvest she teaches her students English and Math whereas her husband teaches them agriculture. Basic computer skills are also provided to the girls of older age.

Anish and Ashita truly stand as mentors and protectors by creating a safe space for girls in the rural areas and helping them develop themselves in every possible way.

ADITYA KUMAR: THE CYCLE GURUJI

In all his uniqueness and a passion for teaching Aditya Kumar popularly known as the 'Cycle Guruji' has travelled miles to spread knowledge and taught the most underprivileged parts of India all on his cycle! He also provided education without asking for a dime in return. With education being no less than an unattainable luxury for most of the people in this country, Aditya Kumar has emerged no less than a messiah for this country.

Aditya Kumar understood the difficulties for attaining quality education back in the days when he was a student in poverty. To survive in college he started taking tuitions and realised that there are many underprivileged students who wish to learn from him, cannot do so due to financial constraints. This served as his motivation to start a fruitful journey on his cycle.

Interestingly, Aditya Kumar rides 64 kms every single day on his cycle with a bunch of books to the slum children since 1995. He travelled to the remote parts of this country spreading a word about how important education is and how everyone can make a difference in their respective lives.

There were rough and crucial times when he got beaten up 100 times for teaching girls as people misunderstood his intentions. His cycle was stolen almost 15 times during the course of times and has spent 10,000 nights on footpaths. Still these hurdles couldn't stop him from his ultimate goal of providing education to the underprivileged students.

According to Kumar, no students should be denied of education just because of their financial restraints. He almost took 45 months and travelled through 29 states and taught over 20,000 students. Aditya Kumar's efforts were acknowledged and he entered the LIMCA BOOK OF RECORDS and won around 25 international and national awards.

EVOLUTION IN THE ROLE OF TEACHING IN INDIA

Interestingly the role of teachers is ever evolving. About 5000 years ago teachers who were referred to as Gurus imparted education in a gurukul system which was very prevalent in ancient India. They not only taught academics but also instilled moral values. Shifting to the era of colonization by the British, the teachers were instruments of imparting a very British way of education which

followed a standardized curriculum. But also, there were teachers who tried to instil nationalistic values and cultural values in their students. Post India's independence, India focused on expanding and developing education systems meanwhile teachers worked a great deal in spreading literacy throughout the country.

As of now, with the instalment of new education system and additional technological knowledge, teachers are now expected to cater to new learning devices. They now use technological facilities to reach out to their students.

A very notable challenge which our teachers had to overcome was during the time of COVID-19. As there was a nation-wide lockdown with schools and colleges being conducted through the screen, the teachers and educators had to adapt a new way of teaching and as expected they were absolutely wonderful at it. Grasping new ways and techniques of teaching online was up to the mark. This showed that even being teachers they never stopped learning and did not shy away from it. There were challenges like miscommunication, internet issues, yet, they demonstrated resilience and patience which is truly commendable.

HOW DIFFERENT CULTURES VIEW TEACHERS

If we take a peek around the globe we see in China the teachers are held in the highest of regards. Teachers are respected as much as doctors. China is the country that possesses the highest amount of teachers.

If we take a look at Finland, The qualification of a teacher is taken very seriously as teachers in Finland are required to obtain a master degree. Teachers in Finland are trusted with their classrooms.

In Japan we see teachers are respected and referred to as 'sensei' which means 'master'. The teachers in Japan have the reputation of being disciplined and dedicated in their job.

On the contrary, in the western countries teachers do face some challenges related to discipline and respect from the students. In some of the western countries teaching is not seen in high regard compared to the eastern countries and teachers have lesser salaries and suffer to make ends meet. Regardless, in the west teaching is considered as a strong pillar which is holding the nation firmly and teachers are generally respected.

Above written are stories of teachers who have a unique and interesting way of spreading education among the students. Their passion for teaching is clearly evident in the selflessness of their missions. The evolution of teachers through the times and how adaptable and quick they are to understand the new ways of education is truly astonishing. Teachers are in every sense 'a beacon of light' in the lives of their students.

Reading Reimagined



Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute as defined by the UNESCO. It is the passport to a lifetime of wonder, knowledge, and joy; the ticket to the greatest show—the words of the world!

International Literacy Day is celebrated on September 8th, the day pinned on a calendar, to remind everyone of the power of being literate—as a matter of dignity and human rights. This day has been celebrated since 1967, to envision a future of a scholarly and sustainable society. It is a key, to unlock a door, inside which a plethora of opportunities and possibilities welcome one aboard.

Each year a new and enrapturing theme is set to commemorate this day, and this year's theme is; 'Promoting literacy for a world in transition: Building the foundation for sustainable and peaceful societies.' This means helping more people learn how to read, write, and understand things in an ever-evolving world. Wiping out illiteracy in every local community around the world is what International Literacy Day is all about.

Literacy: the ability to read and write, the basics of the basic; yet according to the report published by the National Survey of India, the literacy rate of India in 2023 stands at 77.7%, and this still means that nearly one in four Indians are unable to read and write. India continues to be home to 313 million illiterate people; 59% of them being women. What might be causing this gender gap? Even as the benefits of female education are public—including a more productive workforce, lower fertility and lower infant mortality—the costs such as tuition fees and school supplies as well as opportunity costs of forgone child labour, are privately borne by households. This leads to underinvestment in women's schooling. Yet, programmes such as NPGEL (National Programme of Education for Girls at Elementary Level) and initiatives such as construction of toilets for girls (under the Swachh Vidyalaya Initiative) and campaigns such as 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao', where out of 640 districts covered under BBBP, 422 districts have shown improvement in SRB from 2014-15 to 2018-2019; meaning, these initiatives have been instrumental in improving female literacy.

In today's generation, literacy and technology are interconnected. Through the years new and upcoming technology has entranced people around the globe, and

there have been massive breakthroughs in the world of education too!

Here are some gadgets of innovation and practicality, where many of these are poised to enter the classroom and change the way students and teachers learn permanently.

AI-based learning, this will include customised education, evaluation, progress analysis, etc. Simultaneously, it is also going to be a part of the curriculum as India starts making progress on adapting to the NEP 2020.

Gamification is a new quirk in technology where educational games are being simulated to engage your visuals for learning with the help of coding. It is binding students with gimmicks like scoring, competition, team activity that enable students to consume the latest information. For example, the app Duolingo keeps users coming back to extend their "streak," which refers to the number of consecutive days the user has completed a lesson. Streaks are represented by a flame icon, and if the user doesn't meet their streak, the flame gets extinguished. This gamification element encourages users to check the app daily. Augmented Reality (AR) is an environment-friendly tech, that makes learning an experiential approach whose explicit role is student engagement, understanding abstract concepts, and getting-on-hand expertise in virtual mode. For example, Companies have created interactive AR children's books. Using your phone, you can see characters come to life as you read, entertaining kids and making reading fun. What individual steps can you take to promote literacy on a personal level? Donating books to small schools near your area or NGOs can be a substantial help to keep young students interested in reading, ask your friends, relatives or neighbours if they would like to contribute too! Secondly, the simplest thing to do can be, gifting books to children and adult alike, you never know, that one book could start a journey of a lifetime of books for that person! Some issues seem to be so large and overpowering that they seem practically unsolvable. But one problem that may be resolved is breaking the cycle of illiteracy, one child and one adult at a time.

Nature's Versatile Gift: Green gold



Each year, on September 18th, the global community comes together to celebrate World Bamboo Day, a day dedicated to honouring this remarkable plant and its contributions to humanity. From its cultural significance to its role in combating climate change, World Bamboo Day sheds light on the extraordinary potential of bamboo to shape a greener and more sustainable future. The day was conceptualised by Kamlesh Salam, former President of the World Bamboo Organisation, and delegates from around a hundred countries and declared official on 18 September 2009. World Bamboo Organisation, which is a member of the United Nation's Global Compact, agrees with the foundations laid by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and sees immense potential in bamboo to play a vital part in restoring the ecosystem by 2030 (following the UN's declaration of 2021-2030 as the Decade of Ecosystem Restoration). Thus, it comes up with new ideas for spreading the word about the importance of bamboo every year on World Bamboo Day.

Bamboo, a plant of grace and strength, holds a significant place in the culture of various civilizations. From Asia to the Polynesian islands, and from art to martial arts, bamboo's symbolism weaves a narrative that reflects the values, beliefs, and aspirations of the people who have cultivated it for centuries. The symbolic significance of bamboo is rooted in its unique characteristics including strength, flexibility, and growth. In many cultures, stalks of bamboo represent resilience and adaptability due to their ability to weather significant storms and high winds without breaking and its rapid growth emphasises its symbolism in prosperity and progress. But bamboo is not just appreciated for its practical applications, but also for its impact on the human mindset. It teaches a variety of different meanings to us to maintain a positive outlook on life even amidst adversity.

In China, bamboo takes on the role of virtue and reflection of the human soul and emotions. Its deep roots, straight stems, and evergreen leaves symbolise qualities such as resoluteness, moral integrity, and modesty. Chinese tradition intricately intertwines bamboo with traditional values, emphasising the harmony between nature and humans. Japan finds prosperity and stability

within bamboo's symbolism. The plant's sturdy roots and simple beauty make it a representation of both material and aesthetic wealth. Japanese people seek shelter in bamboo groves during earthquakes, highlighting bamboo's role in anchoring the earth and providing safety. Southeast Asia views bamboo as a symbol of strength, flexibility, new beginnings, and endurance. Its presence in mythology and folklore further emphasises its cultural significance. In Hawaiian culture, bamboo signifies resilience and adaptability, reflected in its use in constructing houses and functional items. Bamboo is believed to contain mana, and spiritual energy, making it an essential resource. Polynesian cultures similarly view bamboo as a symbol of life and abundance, with links to creation myths that emphasise the close connection between humans and nature.

Bamboo's symbolism also has a very significant impact on Literature, stories, and art especially in Asia. Its interconnected root system, known as the rhizome, symbolically represented connections between the spiritual and earthly realms. In Zen tradition, bamboo embodies the understanding of existence, representing the universal spirit. In modern media also bamboo had a very significant role. One example of it is that in the Star Wars franchise, the character Yoda has a musical instrument around his neck which is distinctly made of bamboo and bears resemblance to the traditional musical instrument of the pan flute. Visual arts, from Chinese paintings to European Japonism, find significance in bamboo's representation of longevity, steadfastness, and reliability. Even in martial arts, bamboo's qualities shine. Vovinam, the Vietnamese martial art, sees bamboo as a symbol of flexibility and strength, while Bruce Lee's Jeet Kune Do philosophy is imbued with bamboo's adaptability and resilience.

Bamboo's remarkable versatility and sustainable qualities have revolutionised industries and provided a beacon of hope in the fight against deforestation. It also had a very remarkable impact on construction, manufacturing and environmental conservation. Bamboo's strength, flexibility, and rapid growth have made it a

sought- after material in construction and furniture making. Communities worldwide have used it to craft durable and sustainable alternatives to wood. Bamboo furniture, known for its durability and eco-friendliness, finds its place in homes, offices, and various structures. Its fast growth makes bamboo a renewable construction resource, serving as an abundant and eco-conscious choice.

Throughout history, bamboo has been instrumental in creating tools and weapons due to its high tensile strength and lightweight nature. From hunting implements to everyday tools, its reliability and resilience have made it a symbol of strength in rural areas. Beyond its structural uses, bamboo fibres are transformed into clothing and paper. Bamboo fabric's softness and comfort, coupled with its sustainable attributes, are gaining popularity in the fashion industry. Bamboo paper offers a high-quality, eco-friendly alternative to traditional wood-based paper, paving the way for a greener future. Bamboo also extends its influence to culinary and medicinal domains. The young shoots of bamboo are used to create diverse dishes. Additionally, parts of the bamboo plant hold medicinal properties, showcasing its role in holistic well-being.

Deforestation, a pressing global concern, finds a promising solution in the form of bamboo. With its remarkable attributes, bamboo emerges as a key player in curbing the loss of vital forests. Some of the ways by which bamboo helps to fight against deforestation are: Bamboo's adaptability positions it as a sustainable substitute for timber; Bamboo's robust root system combats soil erosion and runoff; Thriving in tropical and subtropical forests, bamboo aids in conserving these critical ecosystems and this growth supports biodiversity and sustains delicate forest balances; Bamboo charcoal offers an eco-friendly alternative to traditional wood charcoal; Combining bamboo with trees, agriculture, and

settlements restores degraded areas holistically.

In the realm of contemporary design and technology, bamboo has emerged as a transformative force, offering innovative solutions that bridge the gap between tradition and modernity. With the ascent of sustainable development, bamboo has gained prominence as an eco-friendly material driving the future of architecture. Renowned for its renewability, rapid growth, economy, safety, and durability, bamboo has found its way into diverse architectural domains. Bamboo's innate strength-to- weight ratio, akin to timber, makes it a valuable asset for structural purposes. Its rapid growth due to a unique rhizome-dependent system sets it apart, providing a renewable resource that keeps up with the demands of modern construction.

In a world shifting towards circular economies, bamboo's potential shines brighter than ever. Its rapid growth and minimal need for pesticides render it an eco- conscious choice. As a renewable resource, bamboo aligns with the ethos of a circular economy by prolonging resource utilisation and minimising waste.

As we stand at the crossroads of innovation and sustainability, bamboo emerges as a silent hero. World Bamboo Day serves as a timely reminder of our interconnectedness with nature and the urgent need for sustainable practices. Bamboo, with its cultural heritage, versatile applications, and ecological contributions, embodies the spirit of innovation and adaptation that our world requires. By embracing bamboo as a resource and celebrating its multifaceted brilliance, we sow the seeds of positive change for generations to come. As September 18th approaches, let us join hands to honour bamboo and its potential to transform our world into a greener, more harmonious place.



Khatti-Mithi Nadi



Rivers are like veins of the earth, carrying life-giving water to nourish the land and its inhabitants. They are also sources of beauty, culture, and recreation for millions of people around the world. That is why every year, on the fourth Sunday of September, we celebrate the World Rivers Day, a global event that highlights the many values, benefits of our rivers, and encourages their conservation and restoration.

One such river deserving much attention and care is the Mithi River or as commonly referred by Mumbaikars as Bandra Chi Khadi, situated in the heart of the bustling city of Mumbai. This 17.8-kilometer-long river traces its origins to the Vihar Lake and Powai Lake, meandering through the city before merging with the Arabian Sea at Mahim Bay. Over the centuries, the Mithi River has witnessed a rich tapestry of history and cultural significance, once serving as a source of fresh water and sustenance for local communities, as well as a venue for religious festivals and rituals.

Regrettably, the Mithi River's story has taken a tragic turn over the years. The river has borne the brunt of urbanization, industrialization, and rampant pollution. Encroachment by illegal settlements, slums, and commercial buildings has drastically reduced its width and depth. The Mithi River has now become a dumping ground for domestic sewage, industrial effluents, solid waste, and debris, rendering its waters contaminated and unsuitable for any purpose. Moreover, the river has lost its natural flow and biodiversity due to dams, bridges, and culverts. The decline of the Mithi River is not limited to ecological concerns; it has also adversely impacted the social and economic fabric of the region. The river now poses a threat of diseases, floods, and other health hazards to those living along its banks. Its aesthetic charm and recreational potential have been marred by its transformation into a foul-smelling and unsightly drain with water darker than the darkest pits of the earth.

Amidst this grim scenario, there is a glimmer of hope for the Mithi River. Recent years have witnessed numerous initiatives and efforts aimed at restoring the river to its former glory. Such initiatives and efforts are:

-The Mithi River Development and Protection Authority (MRDPA) which was formed in 2005 after the devastating floods to undertake beautification and restoration projects along the river. The MRDPA has spent over 12 billion rupees in widening, deepening, desilting, and landscaping the river.

-The Mithi River Beautification Project (MRBP): Launched in 2018 by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), MRBP seeks to create public spaces, parks, gardens, walkways, cycling tracks, and art installations along the riverbanks.

-The Mithi River Conservation Project (MRCP): Initiated in 2019 by the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IITB), MRCP involves scientific studies, community engagement, awareness campaigns, and ecological restoration activities aimed at enhancing water quality and biodiversity.

Some other efforts taken by individuals and Organisations include:

-An initiative by Water conservationist and Magsaysay Award winner Rajendra Singh, who suggested a 10-point plan to save the Mithi, which includes protecting and preserving the sources of the river (Powai and Vihar lakes), the catchment area, the water bodies along the river, the mangrove cover and the natural boundaries of the nullahs. He also emphasized on public participation, awareness campaigns and preventing untreated pollutants from entering the river.

-Earth5R, a social enterprise, which took up the task of cleaning Powai Lake, a major contributor to the Mithi river, in 2018. The team and volunteers removed over a ton of plastic waste from the lake, most of which was later recycled. Earth5R also conducted workshops and training sessions for local communities on waste management, composting and circular economy.

-WRI India, a research organization, conducted a walk along the Mithi river in 2021 to explore its trained riverine

ecosystem and its challenges. The walk aimed to understand the impacts of training (building retaining walls) on the river's natural flood resilience capacities, biodiversity, and social aspects. The walk also highlighted the need for integrated urban water management, community engagement and ecological restoration.

These initiatives have yielded promising results, including a reduction in pollution levels, increased green cover, enhanced recreational opportunities, and heightened public awareness regarding the river's significance. However, much work remains to be done before the Mithi River can be fully rejuvenated. Some of the measures include widening and deepening the river, desilting it every year, building sewer lines and sewage treatment plants along the riverbank, and constructing retaining walls on both sides. To our dismay, these actions have not been able to stop the pollution of the river or revive

its ecosystem. Experts have suggested that a comprehensive Mithi River Eco-restoration Plan is needed to address the root causes of the problem and to integrate the river into the city's development in a sustainable way. The Mithi river deserves to be the pride of Mumbai, not its liability.

The Mithi River is not just a mere water body; it is a living entity that connects us with our past, present, and future. It is our responsibility to care for it as it cares for us by organising efforts to restore its cleanliness, greenery, and beauty. As we celebrate World Rivers Day, let us reflect on the profound importance of rivers in our lives and pledge to protect them. The Mithi River, with its rich history and undeniable potential, stands as a testament to the resilience of nature in the face of adversity. By working together and adopting responsible practices, we can ensure that the Mithi River, and all rivers like it, remain the life-giving arteries of our planet for generations to come.

Wellbeing unlocked!

Think, feel, behave— 3 words to simply understand mental health. It is said that there is no health without mental health, which puts you in the picture of how significant it is. The WHO (World Health Organization) constitution states: 'Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.' meaning, this topic encompasses the wellness and happiness of a person too.

Where textbooks and deadlines often take centre stage—hidden behind a curtain, there is the world of the mental health of a student. Various factors contribute to the mental well-being of students, including academic pressures, social interactions, financial stress. These challenges can often lead to mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and burnout. Anxiety; a feeling of worry about an uncertain outcome, but what could cause a student to be anxious?

Many students feel immense pressure to excel academically, fearing that any deviation from perfection will negatively impact their future and in turn, may disappoint their parents. Demanding schedules, assignments and exams may cause immense stress. This instilled fear is a growing cause for the negative effects on a student's mental health.



Likes and social scenes are also a leading cause for the downfall of a student's mental health. Students may feel isolated despite being surrounded by peers due to the frequency of social media and the reduction of face-to-face interactions with their friends. Loneliness and social anxiety can result from this lack of genuine connection, further worsening mental health challenges.

The financial burden of education is another contributor to student mental health issues. The rising cost of tuition and living expenses can leave students in a constant state of financial stress if they don't have a support system. This can lead to sleepless nights and anxiety as students struggle to balance their academic responsibilities and their financial issues.

The fear of being judged is also the root cause of anxiety and the undoing of a student's mental health. Despite the pressing need for mental health support, many students hesitate to seek help due to the stigma surrounding mental health issues. Moreover, accessibility to mental health services remains a concern, leading to making students feel helpless.

How does one address these challenges?

Educational institutions play a pivotal role in promoting the mental health of their students. Strategies such as these may be a stepping stone to preventing or improving a student's mental health.

Counselling services; providing easily accessible and confidential counselling services is crucial. Trained professionals, like counsellors which are often hired in schools, can offer guidance, support, and therapy to students facing mental health issues. Awareness campaigns; institutions can organize mental health awareness campaigns to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health problems. Open conversations can help

create a culture of empathy and understanding. Stress management programs; offering stress management workshops and programs can equip students with coping mechanisms to handle academic and personal pressures effectively. Infusing the curriculum with mental health education can teach students how to handle and balance their work, so they aren't overloaded causing stress.

It is essential for educational institutions, parents, and society as a whole to recognize the importance of student mental health and take proactive steps to support the minds of our future leaders. By doing so, we can create an environment in which students can thrive academically and emotionally, setting them on a path to success and well-being.

The Triangular Triumph



India, a land of diversity and rich history, stands as the world's largest democracy, governed by a parliamentary system that reflects the collective aspirations of its populace. The heart of this vibrant democracy is the Parliament of India, the supreme legislative institution where elected representatives engage in rigorous debates and enact laws for the betterment of the nation. The Parliament of India consists of two distinct houses: the Lok Sabha (House of the People) and the Rajya Sabha (Council of States). While the Lok Sabha is directly elected by the people, the Rajya Sabha's members are chosen indirectly by state legislatures.

With a history dating back to the pre-independence era, the Parliament of India has played an instrumental role in shaping the nation. The iconic Old Parliament House, also known as Sansad Bhavan, was constructed in 1927 during British colonial rule. Designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker, this circular structure drew inspiration from the Chausath Yogini temple in Morena, Madhya Pradesh. It witnessed historic milestones such as India's transition to self-rule in 1947, the adoption of the Constitution of India in 1950, and the inaugural session of the Lok Sabha in 1952. However, the passage of time exposed the inadequacies of the Old Parliament House. Issues including space constraints, structural vulnerabilities, seismic risks, and outdated amenities necessitated a modern replacement that could better embody the diversity and unity of India's culture and heritage.

In response, in 2019, the Indian government initiated the ambitious Central Vista Redevelopment Project, which encompassed the construction of a new parliament building along with other infrastructure improvements in New Delhi. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the new parliament building on May 28, 2023, coinciding with the 75th anniversary of India's independence. The new parliament building, situated on Rafi Marg opposite the Old Parliament House, is a triangular architectural marvel designed by Bimal Patel and his firm, HCP Design, Planning and Management Pvt. Ltd. Spanning an impressive 65,000 square meters and towering to a height of 39.6 meters, it can accommodate up to 1,272 members, with 888 in the Lok Sabha chamber and 384 in the Rajya Sabha chamber, and provisions for future expansion. It houses offices for constitutional authorities, committee rooms, a library, dining hall, media gallery, museum, and other essential facilities.

The new parliament building is far more than just a modern structure, the building serves as a symbol of democracy and diversity of India. It artfully incorporates various elements of India's culture and heritage into its design. Drawing inspiration from ancient Indian texts like the Vedas and Artha-shastra, which delve into governance and polity, the new parliament building mirrors India's diversity by utilizing materials from different states,

such as sandstone from Rajasthan, granite from Karnataka, marble from Gujarat, carpet from Uttar Pradesh, bamboo wood from Assam and Teak from Maharashtra, among others;

1. **THE ASHOKA CHAKRA:** The iconic Ashoka Chakra, symbolizing India's ancient civilization and national emblem, prominently graces the exterior facade. It embodies the principle of dharma or righteousness, which guides India's democracy.

2. **THE PEACOCK:** India's national bird, the peacock, known for its beauty and grace, is a central motif in the design of the Lok Sabha chamber. The chamber replicates the elegance of a peacock feather, with shades of green and blue, and the ceiling features a peacock motif with LED lights that change colour throughout the day.

3. **THE LOTUS:** India's national flower, the lotus, representing purity and enlightenment, influences the design of the Rajya Sabha chamber. It is shaped like a lotus flower with shades of pink and white, and its ceiling boasts a lotus motif illuminated by LED lights, creating a tranquil ambiance.

4. **THE BANYAN TREE:** The national tree represents the divine creator of the world, Lord Brahma, and is also a common sight for village meetings and panchayats. The banyan tree is planted in the central

courtyard of the new parliament building, where it can be seen from all the three entrances. It is meant to evoke a sense of reverence and respect for the ancient wisdom and culture of India.

5. **THE IDOLS:** Four statues at the entrance honour Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation; Bhimrao Ambedkar, the chief architect of the Constitution; Vallabhbhai Patel, the iron man of India; and Subhas Chandra Bose, the leader of India's freedom struggle, paying tribute to India's freedom fighters and constitutional makers.

Unlike its predecessor, the new parliament building offers ample space, enhancing functionality and efficiency. Equipped with modern amenities like digital screens, sound systems, and biometric access, it elevates the quality of parliamentary proceedings. Its design allows for more natural light and ventilation, creating a healthier and eco-friendly environment. The new parliament building serves as a testament to India's growth and development as a thriving democracy. It stands as a place where elected representatives collaboratively work for the common good of the nation and where citizens can actively witness and participate in the democratic process. It embodies the convergence of India's past, present, and future—a beacon of democracy and diversity that shines brightly on the world stage.

Check-mate!

"My mother can tell just by looking at my face & body language if I have a good position on board" says the 18 year old young boy and world's one of the most talented chess prodigy's after a massive month of wins.

Chess is a timeless game that transcends generations and cultures. It is a strategic battle of wits played out on a checkered battlefield, where each move carries profound implications. Dating back over a thousand years, chess has evolved into a globally cherished pastime and a test of intellectual prowess. This ancient board game continues to captivate minds. Amidst this rich history of the game, emerges Rameshbabu Pragganandhaa, a young chess prodigy whose remarkable talents have garnered international attention. Pragganandhaa's journey through the intricacies of chess mirrors the timeless allure of the



game itself, as he strives to make his mark on the global stage with his exceptional skills.

Born on August 10, 2005, in Chennai, India, Pragganandhaa's rise to prominence has been nothing short of remarkable. At an age when most kids are just learning the basics of chess, he was already creating history in the chess world. Not just her son, Nagalakshmi (Prag's mother) is a proud mother of Vaishali, who is also a two-time Youth Chess Champion and a Grandmaster. Nagalakshmi accompanies her kids to every tournament.

The Indian grandmaster had to settle for the runner's up

title after his opponent, the world's top- ranked Magnus Carlsen defeated him in a round of tie-breakers after their previous two games ended in a draw. Pragganandhaa, or Pragg as he's popularly known, defeated the world's second and third ranked players to make it to the World Cup final, a remarkable feat in itself as no other Indian has competed in the finals since chess legend Vishwanathan Anand won the title back in 2002. He also made headlines for becoming the world's youngest player to play in the finals and the third-youngest person to qualify for the Candidates Tournament, putting him in the league of prodigies like Carlsen himself and Bobby Fischer.

Pragganandhaa's journey in chess began at the tender age of three. He showed an innate talent for the game, and with the guidance of his father, he quickly developed his skills. His first coach, K. Visweswaran, recognized his prodigious talent and began nurturing it. At just seven years old, Pragganandhaa earned his first FIDE rating, making him one of the youngest players in the world to achieve this feat. His rapid progress continued as he climbed the rating ladder, and it was clear that he had an extraordinary talent for the game. His knack for finding creative solutions on the chessboard, combined with his deep understanding of various openings and endgames, set him apart from his peers.

Pragganandhaa's list of accomplishments is extensive and impressive. In 2016, at the age of 10, he became the youngest International Master in chess history, surpassing the previous record set by Sergey Karjakin. He achieved this remarkable feat at the World Junior Chess Championship in Bhubaneswar, India. In 2018, Pragganandhaa earned his Grandmaster title, solidifying his status as one of the

world's youngest chess grandmasters. This achievement came at the Gredine Open in Italy when he was just 12 years and 10 months old. His rapid ascent to the Grandmaster title was nothing short of astonishing.

Pragganandhaa's playing style is characterized by his aggressive and fearless approach to the game. He has a keen eye for tactical opportunities and is known for his uncompromising attitude on the board. His playing style has drawn comparisons to chess legends such as Bobby Fischer and Mikhail Tal, who were renowned for their dynamic and aggressive chess.

Despite his young age, Pragganandhaa has also expressed his admiration for chess legends like Garry Kasparov and Magnus Carlsen. He continues to study their games and draw inspiration from their strategic thinking and creativity.

Pragganandhaa's meteoric rise in the world of chess has not only garnered attention for himself but has also shone a spotlight on the burgeoning chess scene in India. He is part of a new generation of Indian chess players who are making significant strides in the international arena.

His achievements have inspired countless young chess enthusiasts in India and around the world. He serves as a role model for aspiring chess players, showing them that with dedication, hard work, and passion, anything is possible.

His story is a testament to the boundless potential of young talents and serves as an inspiration to chess enthusiasts of all ages. As he continues to hone his skills and compete on the global stage, R Pragganandhaa is undoubtedly a name to watch in the world of chess.



Tuning into tomorrow



The music industry is no stranger to technological innovation. From the introduction of vinyl records in the early 20th century to the advent of digital streaming services in the 21st, technology has played a significant role in shaping the way we listen to and create music. Now, with the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI), the industry is once again poised for significant transformation.

One of the most significant benefits of AI in music production is the ability to quickly generate new ideas and variations. As any musician can attest, coming up with fresh ideas can be a time-consuming and sometimes frustrating process. With AI, however, the software can quickly analyse and synthesise vast amounts of data, creating new musical ideas and variations in a matter of seconds. This technology has the potential to streamline the creative process and allow artists to focus more on the quality of their work rather than the quantity.

Evoke Music is a game-changer for content creators across the globe. It harnesses the power of artificial intelligence to generate music that's not only high in quality but also free from copyright concerns. With access to a staggering collection of over 60,000 tracks and sound effects, users can find the perfect musical accompaniment for their content without the fear of facing legal issues related to copyright claims. One of the most fascinating aspects of Evoke Music is its AI-driven composition process. Instead of relying on human musicians, the platform utilises cutting-edge AI algorithms to create music that spans various genres, instruments, and moods. This means that content creators can find the ideal background music for their project. To streamline the music selection process, the platform offers a user-friendly search and discovery system. Users can search for music by genre, instrument names, or mood, making it incredibly easy to find the right sound to complement their content. Additionally, the platform supports keyword-based searches, allowing creators to find music related to specific themes, topics, or emotions.

Perhaps the most significant advantage of Evoke Music is the peace of mind it provides to content creators.

Copyright claims and licensing fees have long been a source of frustration and financial burden for those using music in their creative projects. Evoke Music eliminates these concerns entirely, as all of its music is generated by AI, ensuring that users can freely use the music in their content without the risk of copyright infringement. Evoke Music caters to a wide range of content creators, from YouTubers and podcasters to business professionals and educators. Whether you're an individual just starting your content creation journey or a seasoned expert looking for fresh and unique music, Evoke Music has something to offer. The platform's expansive library ensures that there's something for everyone, no matter your niche or creative vision.

In the world of music, songwriting is often seen as a mystical process, where inspiration strikes like lightning, and lyrics flow effortlessly onto the page. Yet, every songwriter knows that the reality can be quite different. There are moments of inspiration, but there are also times when the creative well runs dry. This is where Lyrical Labs comes into play, revolutionising songwriting by offering an AI-powered lyrics platform that provides an endless wellspring of original ideas and creativity.

Lyrical Labs is changing the game for songwriters by harnessing the power of artificial intelligence to provide an infinite source of inspiration. With its AI-generated lyrics, the platform offers a never-ending supply of original ideas, ensuring that writer's block becomes a thing of the past. Whether you're a budding artist or a seasoned songwriter, the AI can write about any topic and mimic the style of any genre or artist. Once an artist has their lyrics, Lyrical Labs takes songwriting to the next level. The platform allows them to provide feedback directly to the AI, facilitating a dynamic and iterative creative process. By conversing with the AI, they can fine-tune their lyrics, ensuring that they align perfectly with their musical vision. This real-time collaboration between artist and AI is a game-changer, enabling them to create lyrics that resonate deeply with their audience. In addition to its AI-powered lyric generation, Lyrical Labs comes equipped with an in-built

smart dictionary. This feature is a treasure trove of related words, phrases, and concepts designed to spark creators creativity. It's the perfect tool for finding that word or phrase that completes the lyrics or adds that extra layer of depth to the song. With the smart dictionary, creators can explore new horizons and push the boundaries of songwriting. With over 100+ languages to choose from, you have the freedom to write your song in whatever language speaks to your heart. This inclusivity ensures that artists from all corners of the globe can access the power of AI-driven songwriting inspiration. Conversely to seeing AI as a tool, some musicians consider AI to be hugely detrimental to the music scene. At the moment, because such technology is still so young, the music it's producing is not necessarily of great quality. This means it can still take hours to develop a 'good' song, by which time many would argue that the user may as well have invested the time in creating something themselves. Those who have produced their own music, or even fans of authentic, artistic music, will also argue that a computer could never emulate the human touch of a true musician.

Music has been an integral part of the story of humankind for millennia; in fact, the first known piece of music is

believed to be around 3,400 years old. Songs have long been used as a means of communicating messages and folk stories, encompassing everything from societal ethics to world history. Because many people see music as such an innately human expression, it is often considered as too precious to impart onto technology. The thought of a computer generating a 'random' piece of music that hasn't been painstakingly created by an artist is almost seen as sacrilegious.

Regardless of which side of the argument you fall on, it seems likely that the use of AI in music production will only become more frequent. Our modern world is preoccupied with technological advancements. Instead of shying away from the idea of this technology driven future, the best approach to take is one of optimism and curiosity. While there are always bound to be diehard old school musicians who refuse to use tech, music producers should consider AI as something to be embraced. AI music software is still very much in its infancy, but with more investors interested in the development and outcomes of such technology, and considering the rapid growth rate of other tech advances in recent years, it's only a matter of time until AI-produced music is seen as the new norm.



Alumni Talks with CA Udit Goyal



The Sydenham Alumni Cell recently hosted a captivating and inspiring alumni talk featuring CA Udit Goyal, one of India's youngest Chartered Accountants. The event proved to be an enriching experience, not only for the students but also for alumni and professionals in attendance. Udit Goyal's journey from a student at Sydenham College to becoming a Chartered Accountant at such a young age is truly sensational.

The event was organized with meticulous planning by the Sydenham Alumni Cell, aiming to bring alumni back to their alma mater to share their experiences and insights with current students. CA Udit Goyal, an illustrious alumnus of Sydenham College, was invited to be the guest speaker for this inspiring talk. The event was open to students, faculty, and alumni, creating a unique opportunity for networking and knowledge exchange.

The guest of honor for the evening, CA Udit Goyal, brought a wealth of experience and knowledge to the stage. With a stellar career in finance, Goyal has carved a niche for himself as a respected authority in the field of taxation, financial planning, and corporate governance. His journey from a budding finance enthusiast to a renowned Chartered is one to remember. One of the standout features of the evening was the interactive nature of the event. CA Udit Goyal encouraged questions and discussions, creating an open forum for attendees to seek clarity on various financial topics. This approach made the lecture engaging and allowed participants to gain personalized insights into their specific concerns.

Hailing from a village in Rajasthan, Mr. Udit is one of the

most down to earth people one might come across. A simple lifestyle and simple approach to his goals makes it all about him. He's also an avid traveller, loves photography and a family man. He's been in Bombay away from his parents for a long time now and also touched the hearts of the students with his journey throughout the hostel Life and now working with top professionals in the industry.

The talk featured him being absolutely authentic. He engaged with the students an hour before the event started too and shared his experiences more like a friend to the young minds. Radhika ma'am could also reminisce about teaching his batch and he talked about how he gave up the "cool life" his peers enjoyed while he struggled to get to the top today. The monotonous schedule for months paid off and taught students to stay consistent now to achieve something big tomorrow. It was a memorable evening that left a lasting impact on all who attended. It showcased the importance of continuous learning and the value of engaging with experts in the field.

Goyal's insights into the ever-changing world were particularly enlightening. He highlighted the importance of staying updated with the latest trends and updates emphasizing how it could significantly impact financial decision-making for individuals and businesses alike. The alumni cell was immensely grateful for the response it got from the students and seeing the guest having a great time back at their second home!



The Grand Sydenham Reunion 2024

**12th
January
2024**



Organised by
SydAlumni

The Syd Alumni Association is pleased to announce the
reunion of Alumni of all batches of the College

Venue: Willingdon Club Lawns
At: 7pm

Senior Alums attending

**Lavish Dinner Menu with
unlimited Premium Alcohol**

Exciting lucky draw prizes

Music and Dance

**Reunion Photographs with
your batchmates**

Alumni with spouses to attend

CHARGES FOR DINNER RS. 2500/-PERSON

Please send your payments to:

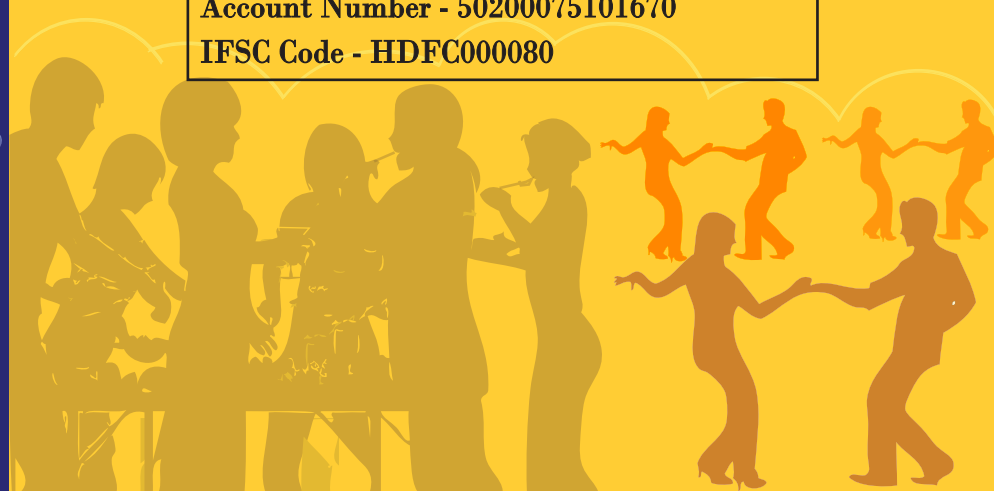
Name-Sydenham College Alumni Association
Bank - HDFC Bank
Account Number - 50200075101670
IFSC Code - HDFC000080

**SPONSORS:
360 ONE.**

**WEALTH MANAGERS -
LEAD SPONSORS**



**VIP LUGGAGE -
GIFT SPONSORS**



Sydenhamites can send their E-mail Addresses/Contact Details at **sydenhamalumni@gmail.com** for the free subscription of our monthly newsletter

College Principal: Dr. Shriniwas Dhure
Alumni Cell Prof. Incharge: Ms. Vijaya Yeole
Head Of Alumni Association: Mr. Ajit Lalvani
Editors: Hrishita Kapadia, Kimaya Patange, Priyanshu Verma,
Suyash Save, Tania Tupe
Layout Designer: Kaumudi Pradhan.

The views and opinions expressed or implied in THE SYDENHAMITE are those of the authors or contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Editorial Team or the SYDENHAM COLLEGE ALLUMNI ASSOCIATION . Material in this publication may not be reproduced, whether in part or in whole, without the consent of SYDENHAM COLLEGE ALLUMNI ASSOCIATION