



BRICK *by* BRICK

A Newsletter of the IIMA Archives

IN THIS ISSUE

- ▶ Remembering Ravi J. Matthai
- ▶ FORSAW, SOMA and FII:
Students Learning to Apply their Knowledge
- ▶ 'Steeling' the Tree-and-Vine of the Logo
- ▶ 'Stargazers' at IIM Ahmedabad
- ▶ Where was IIMA's first Convocation held?
- ▶ Tata Central Archives
- ▶ News and Events

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HAPPY NEW YEAR 2023

We wish all our readers a very Happy New Year 2023. We thank you for the positive feedback on the [first issue](#) of 'Brick by Brick' (September 2022). We are pleased to present to you the second issue. This issue offers further insights into the rich history of IIMA: What does one faculty member remember about one of the key institution builders who played a significant role in shaping the culture of the Institute? What are some of the ways in which the students lived up to the motto of IIMA? How did the institute combine art and architecture in its New Campus? How did students reveal their entrepreneurial bent of mind by pushing through with their idea of an astronomy club, in spite of the absence of institutional support? Where was IIMA's first convocation held? In addition, in line with our efforts to network with other heritage-related organizations, we feature the Tata Central Archives (TCA), Pune, the 'custodian of the Tata story'. We hope you enjoy reading this issue.

The Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) was founded in 1961 and has emerged as a world-class management education institute. The IIMA Archives was established in November 2017 to preserve institutional and architectural memory, and periodically disseminate historical information about the institute to the IIMA community and the general public. The IIMA Archives aims to strengthen IIMA's brand and identity through a digital connect with the stakeholders of IIMA that focuses on the history and legacy of the Institute. In the long run, it hopes to become a Business History Research Hub, a small beginning towards which was made with documents and directories related to Indian business history.

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Cover photo: International Management Development Centre, IIMA New Campus

OUR FOUNDERS AND BUILDERS

Remembering Ravi J. Matthai

Sasi B. Misra

Sasi B. Misra was in the Organizational Behaviour Area of IIMA from 1969 to 2004. He has a Ph.D. (1969) in Psychology from the University of California, Los Angeles. He is a former Vice Chancellor of Berhampur University, Orissa, and former Institute Professor, Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI), Gandhinagar. For further information visit <https://archives.iima.ac.in/faculty/Sasi-B-Misra.html>. In this article he reflects on his association with Professor Ravi J. Matthai, director of IIMA (1965-72).

Much has been said and written about Ravi J. Matthai's (RJM) inexhaustible passion, intense commitment and tireless efforts to make IIMA a vital world-class institution, something that would even have probably astonished RJM himself. I believe he became a widely acknowledged and lauded institution builder without being aware of it. In this note I would like to recount a few stories of my association with RJM, through his own words and actions. I shall attempt to decode their underlying meanings to 'know RJM again'.

“ I would like to recount a few stories of my association with RJM, through his own words and actions. I shall attempt to decode their underlying meanings to 'know RJM again'. ”



Professor Ravi J. Matthai, at work on the Jawaja Project in Rajasthan (date not known, probably mid to late 1970s)

Towards the end of 1968 or early 1969 (such a long time ago; where have the years gone?) I wrote to Prof. Ravi J. Matthai, Director, IIMA exploring the possibility of a faculty position at the institute. RJM promptly wrote back. That was the beginning of my long association with him. In his December 26, 1968 letter to me RJM wrote, "We are very keen to have outstanding young PhDs working here... normally a person who has just completed his PhD would start with us as an Assistant Professor..." I may mention I was 26 years old then and about to earn my PhD degree in Social Psychology from the University of California, Los Angeles.

RJM further wrote, "As you know, this is an Institute of Management... We use the Case Method a great deal in teaching, because we are primarily interested in the student learning to use [emphasis in the original] knowledge and this pedagogical method, we have found, most effective. Eventually, of course, it is up to the instructor to use the method he thinks is most effective keeping in view our Institute's objectives. We do, however, emphasise that faculty members must build up their own teaching material and not depend on foreign textbooks."

Such was RJM's clear and precise communication meant to persuade gently without a trace of coercion. In retrospect, this also reflected Ravi's eclectic approach to higher education and his democratic spirit. As an aside, I should mention that as I started teaching at the institute, I resisted the case method for a brief period of time. Soon enough, not only did I start using cases in courses I taught, but I also wrote several cases which are still in use at the institute. I am still unsure about how I would have reacted had I been forced to comply with the case method of teaching.

We can learn about the effectiveness of Ravi's communication, in terms of substance and style, from his participation in a simulated case study. My friend and colleague Shreekant Sambrani and I had prepared a simulated case ('Pratap Mehta', by Sasi Misra and Shreekant Sambrani, available in the Case Unit of IIMA). Pratap Mehta, a graduate of the Class of 1974 at IIMA receives an offer of executive level appointment from Indian Paints Limited (IP). Mehta, accepting IP's appointment offer, writes to Mr. Keki L. Varnishwalla, MD, IP. Though it is a formal letter, Mehta slips into informality at will. Mehta's letter, to say the least, is patronising, superior in tone, projecting an undisguised attitude of self-importance. Shreekant and I requested a few former chief executives including Ravi to respond to Mehta's letter by playing the role of Mr. Varnishwalla. Whereas the others just responded through two and three line letters withdrawing IP's job offer to Pratap Mehta, RJM chose to write to Mehta at considerable length. I quote a few lines from his letter to Mehta.

"I have received your provisional bill... I am not raising any questions about this." (Mehta had included tips and portorage in the bill.) "From the general trend of your letter, I wondered whether you would accept a word of advice from a person considerably older and more experienced than you. I am sure that at your age, I was perhaps a little insensitive to the reactions which my remarks, in writing or in conversation could create. My initial reaction to your letter was one of apprehension. Having flattered me at the outset you proceeded to ask about our plans of development even before you had joined us... You also virtually asked for confidential reports on my senior colleagues which could be regarded as, to say the least, a trifle indelicate... I am sure you did not intend to appear presumptuous... I am making the assumption that the inappropriateness of your letter is inadvertent." "I am writing at some length since I do feel a sense of responsibility towards a young person like you, who has evinced interest in joining us, but the fact is you are not yet indispensable... I hope you will take my remarks in the helpful spirit in which they are intended."

This letter is not only a marvellous specimen of Ravi's keen understanding of another person but of his command over language and his mastery of positive and proactive communication.

I now move on to narrate a few apparently innocuous incidents that provided me with glimpses of RJM's personality and core values. I once met Ravi to discuss a matter related to the development of a new course. During our discussion, I remember commenting on a colleague as a 'charlatan'. Ravi shut me up by reacting sharply, "Sasi, my mother told me that everyone is God's child." The matter ended then and there. I realised that my remark had been utterly immature and loose tongued. Ravi would not allow comment on colleagues behind their backs. I believe the real intention behind Ravi's intriguing remark was to reinforce norms of discretion among faculty and to demonstrate leadership distance itself from personal feuds among colleagues.

Another incident. During the 1960s and early 70s, the institute used to conduct MDPs in star hotels in different cities (KLMDC had not yet been built). My first opportunity to teach in the MDP was at the Clarks Shiraz, Agra. One evening Ravi invited a few faculty members including myself to dinner in his suite. After dinner, he asked for the bill. Instead of charging the dinner to the programme account, he paid for it by writing out a cheque from his personal account. Such was Ravi's standard of probity. But here was another message: Do as I do, not do as I say.

Last but not least, I mention applying for a fellowship of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation with a request to Ravi to write a letter of reference for me. He readily agreed, adding, "Hope I don't cross any institutional wires." Such was Ravi's adherence to role clarity and norms of transparency.



Professor Matthai with his dog Puddle

Ravi was a large hearted, open minded and liberal person who did not seek power, pelf or publicity. Even his harshest critics would agree. Ravi's own behaviour shaped the culture of the institute characterized by ethical conduct, refined overt behaviour and liberal attitudes. He was a man of a few measured words, not given to hyperbole or sermonizing, which is evident from his one-liners.

I end this note by paraphrasing what Thomas Jefferson said when he followed Benjamin Franklin into the post of American Ambassador to France. "Many have succeeded Ravi J. Matthai as Director IIMA. No one could replace him."

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

FORSAW, SOMA and FII: Students Learning to Apply their Knowledge

The IIMA logo carries a one-line motto, 'vidyaviniyogadvikasah'. This imperative, added in 1967, exhorts IIMA to 'apply (or distribute) knowledge, for development'. One way in which students have tried to live up to this motto is by reaching out to people who might benefit from their skills and knowledge. The initial efforts, in the 1970s, coalesced around FORSAW, the FORum for Social AWAREness. Students reached out to social action groups and tried to learn from them while also contributing

“ One way in which students have tried to live up to this motto is by reaching out to people who might benefit from their skills and knowledge. ”

to improving their practices. Even though the forum faded away, many students, as part of their project course work, have contributed to improving practice in social and development organizations. These projects number in the hundreds. Prof. Anil Gupta, who retired in 2016, recalls a significant project: a plan to rehabilitate people who had lost their handcarts in the 2001 earthquake; “Madhabi Puri Buch [the current SEBI Chairperson] worked on one such project--she worked on street children and their educational needs.” Another student project in the early 1980s tied in with work on tribal development. Organizations that benefited from such projects included the large ones like SEWA as well as very small organizations. This kind of work was in evidence even during emergencies, During the 2001 earthquake, IIMACORE, a temporary organization set up by IIMA faculty and students, undertook relief work using CR 324 (the present Yoga Centre) as a godown and control centre. This group dealt with about 200 voluntary organizations, receiving donated material at night, and some students and faculty members getting the material ready for shipment by early morning. This went on for a month, up to March 1, 2001. Soon after the earthquake, some students visited the airport and saw the chaos there--relief material was piling up and no one seemed to have a clue about what to do with it. Within a day, they had prepared a computer-based program to track supplies; this was given to the Relief Commissioner. At his request, the students also made a simple website on how to respond to aftershocks. This included data on forecasts of aftershock waves--and had advice on how to respond to tremors; for example, by highlighting that the corners or the doorframes were relatively safe places.

SOMA

A second way in which students reached out was through SOMA, Student Organization for Managerial Assistance. This was founded in 1972--Sowinder Singh (PGP 1970-72) was one of the founders. For about a decade, it executed projects for organizations in various sectors. Then there was a lull, before it was revived in 1992-93. That year it undertook five projects: Revitalization package for Kishore Vadilal Enterprises, Streamlining the technology transfer process at ATIRA, Rationalizing the workflow in the publishing department at ATIRA, Revival Strategy for Surgiplast and Marketing Strategy for a new service introduction by Thermax. A few faculty members used to attend SOMA meetings. Prof. Gupta recalls: “When students did not do well, the client would feel bad, and so we wanted to guide the students when things were not going right. We did not want the outsiders to feel that their confidence in our students' capability was misplaced. Our students generally did a good job, but very rarely some groups would fail. We would then apologize, and find others to complete the job. Then the Forum for Industry Interaction (FII) came up in the early 2000s, and this attracted many students. For a while, the two groups, SOMA and FII co-existed.” To avoid confusion in the clients' minds, it was proposed that FII would have a social wing (for non-profit organizations) and a corporate wing that would look at private entities. By 2005 FII had established itself firmly as the 'student consulting body'.

FORUM FOR INDUSTRY INTERACTION (FII)

FII represents a more sophisticated and structured phase in the students' attempts to apply their knowledge, 'for development'. Its activities were organized well, and it managed to undertake projects in a variety of functional areas. A 2006-07 report has the following to say:

Forum for Industry Interaction (formerly known as Students' Organization for Managerial Assistance, SOMA) propagates world class managerial practices to fledgling businesses, NGOs, and established business houses. FII has successfully carried out consultancy projects in finance, strategy, operations research, marketing strategy, start-up ventures, informational technology, and organizational design for clients as diverse as Bosch Rexroth, RPG, Symphony Air Coolers, Shoppers Stop, Ingersoll Rand, Blue Star Diamonds, CEON, CRY, SEWA, AMC, and Disaster Mitigation Institute. Students get a chance to apply their academic concepts to solve real life issues and clients get access to cutting edge solutions from future leaders of the corporate world.

FII coordinators were proactive in reaching out to potential clients. A 2009 mail sent out for a possible assignment on speed valves is reproduced here, courtesy Prof. Anil Gupta:

From: John Cherian <8johnc@iimahd.ernet.in>
Date: Fri, 3 Jul 2009 at 11:15
Subject: Student consulting expertise from the Forum for Industry Interaction, IIMA
To: <svp.technocrat@gmail.com>
Cc: Thahir N M Student <8thahirn@iimahd.ernet.in>, Prof. Anil Gupta <anilg@iimahd.ernet.in>

Dear Mr. Pathak,

Greetings from the Forum for Industry Interaction (FII), the student consulting body at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (Website: www.iimafii.org) We offer quality management consulting for SMEs, entrepreneurs and NGOs across areas such as Strategy, Finance, Operations, Marketing, Human Resources, and Information Technology. FII has been on campus for decades under the brand name SOMA (Student's Organization for Managerial Assistance) and has had several satisfied clients for projects in different areas of management.

We heard from Prof. Anil Gupta about your project on speed valves and the interest it is generating around the world. We would love to add some value to this project. We can provide a business plan for the project/ conduct marketing research studies for the same. We welcome you to our campus to start a project along with FII and gain access to our varied and diverse pool of talent.

Please use the following links to get more information about us.

1. The value proposition of FII (if this link does not work, please paste http://iimafii.org/downloads/FII_2009_Value_Proposition.ppt in your browser and click Go).

2. Our detailed brochure (if this link does not work, please paste http://iimafii.org/downloads/FII_Brochure_2009.pdf in your browser and click Go).

I would be very much obliged, if you could please go through the same and get back to us at 8johnc@iimahd.ernet.in on how we can build a relationship with you, going forward. Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Thank you
Yours sincerely,
Team FII

The fees that FII charged was used to award prizes to students who performed well. FII involved faculty as mentors and judges of the work done. Faculty mentoring added to the students' learning and to the legitimacy of the work. FII has been featured in major newspapers like the Economic Times, Time of India and on various other channels through the years. For example, a June 2015 report in a newspaper highlighted the work done for an inter-governmental skill development agency, and for a French coalition of 1,000 small and medium enterprises that wanted to understand the SME sector in India. Other clients in 2014 included Amazon, GE, Saint Gobain, Adani, Infibeam, Onida, Glotera and CISCO. The report also noted that the fees organizations paid (2014-15) were INR 30,000 (NGOs and start-ups) and INR 55,000 (established businesses). The number of projects done during this period averaged 40 per annum.

The scope of FII, which became an ISO 9001:2008 certified organization, has increased from doing live projects to conducting national and international competitions in partnership with other similar consulting bodies. With virtual internships and projects becoming a possibility, students now get the opportunity to do national and global projects. Clients have paid to fly students out to their offices, just like they would do any professional consultant. International collaborations and partnerships have increased. With an increase in the number of start-ups being launched, especially by IIMA alums, FII has become the go-to consulting body to work with the bright young minds of IIMA.

With inputs from Profs. Anil Gupta and Vijaya Sherry Chand, and Shivani Agarwal, Secretary, Forum for Industry Interaction (FII) of IIMA.

STORIES THE ARCHITECTURE TELLS US

'Steeling' the Tree-and-Vine of the Logo

Walter D'Souza

Walter Emilio D'Souza, born in 1957 in Mumbai, is a product of the Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University, Baroda (1983). He lives in and works out of Ahmedabad and Aldona Bardez, Goa. In this article, he recounts the story* of the steel artwork that adorns the entrance to the International Management Development Centre (IMDC) and the corridors of the academic block of the New Campus.

The story of the artwork at the IMDC entrance began when the architect of the IIMA New Campus project, Bimal Patel, invited me to visit his office and take a look at the plans for a building that was coming up. He just told me that there was some work to be done; and that that work was 'structural'. It wasn't an add-on for the sake of adding some artwork. That got me excited. I went and saw the drawings. I was told, "See, Walter, this is a truss, a good bit of which is structural; it has a function, but within that framework, try to see what can you do." So the first thing that was pointed out to me was a 'steel truss,' which would be right at the main entrance of the building. The architect added, "I don't need to spell things out to you. I know you are a sensible person. So this is a steel truss. Only after that comes up, can we cast a slab." A member of his office staff had to come up to me and show what a truss, an assembly of items that behaved like a single structural unit, looked like in reality.

“ And I looked at that logo, and said to myself, “Hey, it's all here.” With that insight, all I had to do was to sketch it out, do a study of the main inspiration for that logo, and put the two together. ”



The main screen at the IMDC entrance

Then, the architect pointed out another area next to the IMDC--an academic block that was being built, which again had a similar opening of double height. Some sort of a screen was required there as well. I needed some time to absorb what I had been told and told the architect that I would visualize something and send it to him. I came back to my studio. Now, what I had with me was a drawing of the steel truss. You see that structure in factories and other places. What was I do with it? I thought about IIMA. The main visual one has of the institute is its red-brick buildings. These were well known, widely publicized and are indeed fantastic buildings. But what really goes out in the snail mail, on the letterheads, stationery and occupies many other spaces, is the IIMA logo. And I looked at that logo, and said to myself, "Hey, it's all here." With that insight, all I had to do was to sketch it out, do a study of the main inspiration for that logo, and put the two together. I simplified things as much as I could. I made a few models, correcting myself in the process--as any artist would do. I kept shifting things around till I got a satisfactory visual context. And finally I told myself, "This works."

I made a pencil-on-paper drawing, and that was in front of me when I worked further on the details. That was the beginning. I took the IIMA logo, and worked on it. Soon, I got a call from the architect's office asking if there was anything ready. I made a small steel model. The next day, I went to his office and showed him the drawings and the model done to scale. But I had to warn him, "The final drawings are done to scale, but they are not engineering drawings. I'm sure your people can take care of them and check out whether the design is sound enough to work as a steel truss." To our good luck, everything fell into place. I was very happy.

What I had done was to take the IIMA logo, and look at it from the point of view of a detail in the logo--not the full tree-and-vine motif, but just a detail that had to address the requirements of a steel truss. The idea was to talk about how management looks at details; there are various levels and layers to any problem that you look at, and the ability to look at the whole through the details is what I guess management schools impart to their students. My attempt was to take off the hard edge implied by the nature of the truss and the material, and introduce some of the organic qualities of nature. I did not want to go overboard with the hard stuff--the work was to be made of solid steel, but I wanted to give it a soft edge, which is what I thought would be appropriate for an entrance to this section of a management school.

The original idea was to balance this work with another one in an adjacent space near the IMDC building. This is the space at the end of the academic block. Beyond it is the main axis of the New Campus, running from the underpass to a water tower. And beyond that, are the student dormitories. So when one came in from the dormitory side, this double-height opening would have been the entry, a divider between the student residences and the academic/ executive education space. The screen here would have completed the work in the IMDC, with the leaves of the IMDC tree symbolically coming down here, to touch the ground [see the designs made at that time]. The work that one sees today is actually incomplete. There was a change in thinking and for some reason the second part of the tree-and-vine adaptation could not be taken up.

The fabrication of the steel artwork for the IMDC was done on campus, very close to the IMDC entrance. All the cutting, welding and grinding happened on location. Given the weight of the structure, cranes were used to install the truss, and then it was welded in. The steel used was 10 mm steel; the frame is about 15 cm thick, that is, the structure is hollow inside. The truss details had to be incorporated in the work, and this was handled by the structural engineers.

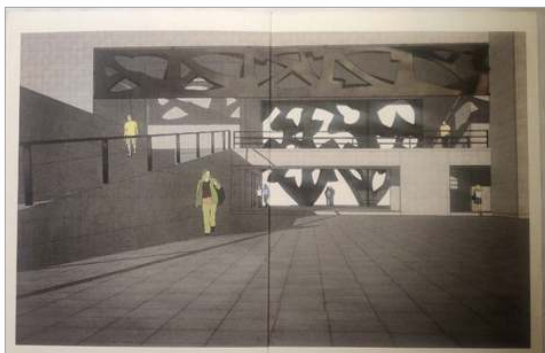
The fabricators and the others involved in managing the installation hadn't bargained for the amount of work they would have to put in when they worked with an artist. I was fortunate to have the freedom to call up the architect's office and say, 'Please send somebody down, because the folks here are taking shortcuts. And that's not acceptable. I'm sure it won't be acceptable to you as well.' They came and put their foot down. Finally, the fabricators did a terrific job. Because it was not simply welding flat sheets of steel. The work involved bending, and creating subtle curves. It was important to do this carefully, not compromising on subtle details. So, though I had to complain all the time, my concerns were addressed. And those subtle curves and details were not overlooked. Straight lines are easy enough, but I wanted to soften the lines up. The curves do that.



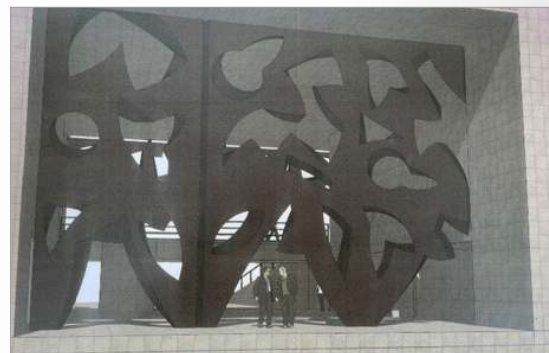
The screens on the first floor stretching out towards the Main Campus (right to left)

When the architect Bimal Patel and I looked at the work done, we realized that there was a lot more possible, not just as ornamentation, but as additions that were both functional and qualified as art. These are to be found in the academic block. As you stand facing the IMDC entrance, turn your head left and you will see the screens that extend back towards the Main (Old) campus, along the corridor of the first floor. By this time, I had made a number of sketches of the tree-and-vine motif of the IIMA logo; I had also imagined the branches growing out of the frame of the logo and spreading out. I said to myself, "Okay, now they grow in new directions. Perhaps traveling around the country, touching new institutions and new spaces for management education. IIMA was one of the earliest IIMs, and then other IIMs came up in the country. Now we have returned to this extension [the New Campus]." I'm not so well informed, but I guess IIMA's contribution, its outreach, has been to the broader field of management education. Its influence, over time, would have been felt by others, who in turn, would have extended it. That was my reading. With this in mind, I had already made some sketches. One day, the architect said, while discussing the first floor classroom corridor of the academic block, "We are looking at bamboo blinds here to shield the corridors and classrooms from the sun and the rain. Can you look at this too?" I said, "Yes, I have it all done. It's just a matter of slotting them into the niches that you have here." And so the first floor got its extensions of the tree-and-vine pattern screens.

In the main IMDC building, there are courtyards inside. Over there, the architect was talking about having louvres up in the courtyards to cut out some part of the sun's glare. There were the two of us visualizing the same leaf patterns on the ground. But that also did not work out. But what exists, inspired by the IIMA logo, but reinterpreting the tree-and-vine motif to convey management education's focus on 'detail' and IIMA's outreach and impact, is an illustration of a new aesthetic resulting from art working with architecture.



*The screen that was not built (at the far end, in the background).
View from the plaza in front of the IMDC, looking out towards
the student dormitories*



*The screen that was not built. View from the dormitory side,
looking towards the IMDC plaza. The leaves of the tree meeting
the ground are clear in this image*

**As told to Prof. Vijaya Sherry Chand, December 2022*

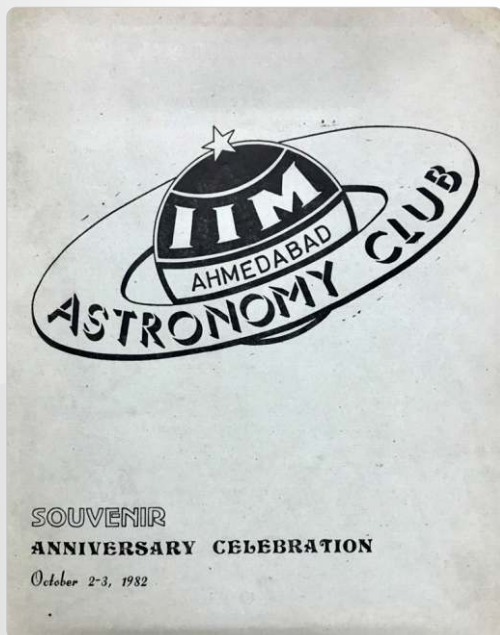
STUDENTS' CORNER

'Stargazers' at IIM Ahmedabad

I have always wondered who founded 'Stargazers', the Astronomy Club of IIMA and what prompted the founders to encourage students to get involved with planets, constellations, and far-away heavenly bodies. And so when I received an email from the Director's office that Mr. Varun Arya (PGP 1981-83), who had initiated the astronomy club at IIMA, would be on campus and wanted to meet the coordinator of the astronomy club, I knew that my questions would be answered. Mr. Varun Arya spoke with enthusiasm about how he founded the astronomy club. A graduate of IIT Delhi, he was immensely interested in physics.

“ *The institute was not clear about astronomy's connections with management. Since official support was not forthcoming, the group, with Mr. Arya as coordinator, formed the astronomy club as an informal activity.* ”

This interest was shared by a dozen other engineering graduates from IIT Delhi and IIT Kanpur who had joined IIMA. They used to lament about their weakening contact with physics and mathematics. Mr. Arya then suggested the formation of an astronomy club. Professor V. S. Vyas was the director at that time (1981-82), and Mr Arya wrote to him about it. The response was not encouraging. The institute was not clear about astronomy's connections with management. Since official support was not forthcoming, the group, with Mr. Arya as coordinator, formed the astronomy club as an informal activity. The students established the positions of President, Vice President and Secretary. Professor Nitin Patel was invited to become President, Professor Samir Barua (who had joined the institute in 1980 and was later its director) became Vice President, and Mr. Varun Arya became the secretary. This was in 1982.



Cover page of the souvenir released during the first anniversary celebrations of the Astronomy Club, October 2-3, 1982

The club needed funds and so charged a membership fee of Rs. 300 per annum. Around 100 students joined as members. They were followed by another 100 faculty members and other campus residents. Mr. Arya wrote to Professor Devendra Lal, FRS, Director of the Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), Ahmedabad and to Professor E. V. Chitnis, Director of Space Applications Centre (ISRO), Ahmedabad, seeking support. Professor Lal replied with an encouraging, "Dear Varun, we stay so close to each other and we talk by letters? Why don't you come tomorrow and have lunch with me." A young Mr. Arya went to PRL, met the director, and was introduced to the scientists at PRL over lunch. They were intrigued by the enthusiasm for astronomy shown by someone from a management education institute. Professor Lal generously offered to provide full support to the Astronomy Club in conducting guest lectures and astronomy-related events. One eminent personality who came to IIMA for a guest lecture was Professor M.K. Venubabu, founder and director of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bangalore.

He also happens to have a star named after him. Another eminent guest lecturer was the celebrated Indian-American physicist, Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar, the 1983 Nobel Laureate in Physics. With such people coming to IIMA, the club got wide recognition. It obtained films from the British Council, Bombay, and some films related to space. These were shown to the IIMA community.

As the club approached its first anniversary, it wanted to invite top Indian astronomers to the institute. Mr. Arya wrote to Professor Satish Dhawan, Director of ISRO and Dr. Raja Ramanna, Director, BARC, and to the Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission of India. Each of these institutions contributed Rs. 15,000. With this amount the Astronomy Club was able to buy a telescope. These developments were brought to the attention of the director, Professor Vyas. He wrote back saying, "Dear Varun, you have proven me wrong; there are so many students, faculty members and their spouses as members. I take back my words and make this an institute activity."



Stargazers pointing out Jupiter and Saturn to a crowd of 300+, during the The Red Brick Summit, September 30, 2022

In October 1982, Professor I.G. Patel took over as IIMA's director, and at a function held to welcome him, he was introduced to the club's activities. Professor Patel presided over the first anniversary celebrations of the Astronomy Club. The institute provided some space in the ground floor of Dorm 15. The club inaugurated its new premises with a library of 1000 books and an exhibition of photographs of various planets and other heavenly bodies obtained from NASA. In the second year, Professor Samir Barua became President and Professor V. V. Rao became the Vice President of the club. The club hasn't looked back and continues to engage the students and campus residents with various interesting events and activities related to astronomy.



Members of the Stargazers at Conjunction 18, when 5 planets (Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn) and the moon formed a single line, June 24, 2022

This article, by Yashaswy Akella, PhD student (2018-2023), is based on his interview of Mr. Varun Arya on August 20, 2022.

SEPIA ECHOES

Where was IIMA's first Convocation held?

The iconic Louis Kahn Plaza, the brick-paved platform, and the large expanse of lawn attached to it, are where IIMA convocations are held nowadays. But it was inaugurated only in 1974. Where were the convocations held up to 1973? A fairly large and peaceful space between student dormitories 6, 9 and 12 (the outer dorms) and the faculty houses (see 2022 photo), which is today a children's corner, a lawn and open area, was the venue. A temporary 'pandal' (marquee), which had provisions for electric fans, would be put up. The convocation procession would begin close to

where the Kasturbhai Lalbhai Management Development Centre stands today and wind its way westward to the pandal. The first convocation was held on April 10, 1966 for the first batch of the Postgraduate Programme. Forty-eight students graduated with a postgraduate diploma in business administration. The title awarded became the 'Postgraduate Diploma in Management' only at the 1976 convocation. This was done to accommodate the Specialized Package in Agriculture in the title awarded by the Institute. The Union Minister for Education, Shri M. C. Chagla was the Chief Guest at the first convocation. Prakash L. Tandon, Chairperson of the IIMA Board of Governors, Prof. Ravi Matthai, Director of IIMA, Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, Dr. Douglas Ensminger of the Ford Foundation, and Prof. Harry L. Hansen of the Harvard Business School, were present. Convocations have become larger and grander with time, but the simplicity of the very first event reminds us of the firm faith in the future with which we started.

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Convocation Procession, First Convocation, April 10, 1966



Prakash L. Tandon (standing). To his left (L-R): M. C. Chagla (Chief Guest), Ravi J. Matthai and Douglas Ensminger (Ford Foundation). Vikram Sarabhai is seated to the right of Prakash Tandon. First Convocation, 1966



View towards the stage. D-12 is on the right; faculty housing on the left, 2022



View from the stage towards the gathering. D-9 is to the left (D-12 is hidden by trees); faculty housing on the right, 2022

HERITAGE NETWORKS

Tata Central Archives

The Tata Central Archives (TCA), Pune, India, as its 2016 silver jubilee brochure proudly proclaims, is the 'custodian of the Tata story'. This story began more than 150 years ago. The TCA, however, was formally inaugurated only three decades ago. J.R.D. Tata (JRD) who inaugurated TCA on January 7, 1991, had deep respect for preserving historical records, originating perhaps from the advice he received from his father in 1922 to "write down and note everything he saw or heard, so it could serve as a useful record and reference for the future." This respect for records may have remained confined to his own personal collections had he not been denied access to information about Tata Airlines, an airlines that he had founded and nurtured, just a couple of years after its nationalization. He referred to this experience in a note to the Tata directors in 1978, and during the centenary celebrations that year of the Empress Mills, a mill of the Central India Spinning, Weaving and Manufacturing Company, J.N. Tata's first venture, he came up with the idea of starting a central repository. It took another decade for the idea to mature, and it was during the 150th birth anniversary celebrations of J.N. Tata in 1989 that TCA's formation was announced. The credit for translating the idea of a repository into an archives goes to the chronicler of the Tata Group's history and Tata veteran, R.M. Lala.

“ The Tata Central Archives (TCA), Pune, India, as its 2016 silver jubilee brochure proudly proclaims, is the 'custodian of the Tata story'. ”

The first task undertaken by TCA was the collection of the records kept by the various Tata companies. A.N. Mambro, a noted Konkani writer and a Tata employee, was the first Principal Archival Officer. He and his team spent a decade visiting company godowns and other storage sites to identify records of value. Some of the key records so identified were the Bombay Presidency Legislative Assembly Debates, the Mill Owners Association Reports, and some important legal agreements related to the Taj Mahal Hotel. The most prized acquisition, however, was the set of perfectly maintained records of JRD.



JRD Tata's office relocated to TCA at Pune from Bombay House, Mumbai, the headquarters of the Tata group. It evokes nostalgic memories in everyone who worked closely with him

TAC initially operated from 23, Sir P.M. Road, Union Co-operative Insurance Building, Fort, Mumbai. It moved to the campus of the Tata Management Training Centre in Pune in 1999, and its building was formally inaugurated in 2001. By the time TCA moved to Pune, it had collected half a million records. Digitization of the records started in 1999. It received the ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management Systems award, and became the first business archive in India to be awarded the prestigious Platinum Rating under the Indian Green Building Council's Green Existing Buildings Operations and Maintenance Rating System.

TCA houses more than 1.6 million print and digital documents which trace the history of the Tata Group and its social and economic impact on the nation. JRD's records alone account for about 70,000 documents. The most prized artefact in the JRD collection is the 'Bharat Ratna', India's highest civilian honour, bestowed on J.R.D. Tata by the Government of India--the first time an industrialist was so honoured.



Picture of the Bharat Ratna awarded to JRD Tata

TCA's collection of paper documents includes formation papers, annual reports, board minutes, business and trade and accounting records, labour welfare measures and biographies. TCA also has a vast collection of newspaper clippings. The 250,000-strong photograph collection includes images dating back to the late 1800s. TCA also holds about 200 awards, medals and citations presented to Sir Dorabji Tata, Lady Meherbai Tata, R.D. Tata, J.R.D. Tata, R.N. Tata and other Tata luminaries. Over 20 valuable paintings and over 20 articles of clothing form part of the material collections. The furniture collection includes antique furniture from 'The Homestead', Sir Ratan Tata's manor at Matheran, a hill station near Mumbai. The multimedia collection includes over 1000 audio-video recordings related to various Tata companies, institutions, and personalities.

The 'JRD Tata Home Workshop Incorporated', as JRD used to jokingly call it, was a 250 square foot workshop at his residence in Mumbai. It had rows of shelves, with instruments neatly arranged on them. The entire workshop has been relocated to TCA, and a part of it has been recreated at the TCA exhibition gallery with the help of Telco (now Tata Motors) apprentices.

TCA has spent a lot of effort in developing its skills in preserving and conserving records. It has also invested in the latest state-of-the-art infrastructure, storage and security systems. Records are stored in acid-free files, enclosures and boxes in climate controlled repositories. As part of its outreach activities, TCA holds thematic exhibitions regularly for the general public. In addition, in-house exhibitions on Tata personalities, companies and institutions are held at its premises. There is a Mobile Exhibition on J.N. Tata that is taken to different cities in India.

TCA has become a valuable resource for researchers and students, who are interested not just in Tata history, but also in India's industrialisation development, and the conversations between Tata personalities and the nation's leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji and Mahatma Gandhi.

Over the last three decades, TCA has tried, even as it preserves the history of the Group, to help its stakeholders understand the Tata Group's culture and ethos and the values it stood for. The history of the Tata Group provides a window into the history of modern manufacturing in India. TCA, as the 'custodian of the Tata story', therefore, is also a custodian of the story of India's industrialization.



Empress Mill's dispensary for men (left) and women (right)

Contributed by Tata Central Archives <https://www.tatacentralarchives.com/>

NEWS AND EVENTS

The IIMA Archives is open to visitors on all working days from 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. The Communication Department brings IIMA's executive education programme participants for a tour of the 'Brick by Brick' exhibition. During the last three months, the Archives has had a little less than 600 visitors.

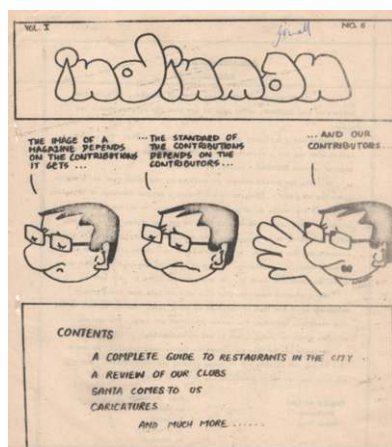
IIMA Archives also responds to requests for IIMA archival records. During the last quarter, there have been 41 such requests from research scholars. Here is an interesting note from one of the users: "I do research on how executive education as a new concept for developing top executives spread as an international phenomenon from the US after World War II. In India, this idea was expressed in the 3-tier programme (3-TP) soon after IIMA was established. This programme was unique compared to the executive programmes at Harvard Business School, which was strongly involved in establishing IIMA. The documents I studied at IIMA Archive gave me new insights into the role that Indian actors played in transforming the American concept of executive education to a unique and sustainable concept that matched the Indian context." *Prof. Rolv Petter Amdam, Professor of Department of Strategy and Entrepreneurship, BI Norwegian Business School, Oslo, Norway.*

“ Last year, on November 10, IIMA Archives celebrated sixty years of IIMA with the permanent exhibition 'Brick by Brick'. This year, on November 10, to mark the first anniversary of 'Brick by Brick', IIMA Archives held a temporary exhibition, 'Not Yet 25: IIMA through Pranal Patel's lens, 1967-1985'. ”

The IIMA Archives also participates in current events on campus by contributing relevant material. For instance, for the various reunion visits being conducted at IIMA in the month of December, which is also celebrated as 'Institute Day month', Archives contributed archival material such as Old Photos, Students Year Books & Seating (face) Charts.



Alums of GPG 1987, exploring archival records of their times, December 16, 2022



'Indinman', Volume I, No. 6

The IIMA Archives continues to add to its collection of records related to IIMA. One collection which has been added recently is 'Indinman', a student newsletter from the mid-1970s, courtesy Mr. C. Gopinath, GPG 1975.

Last year, on November 10, IIMA Archives celebrated sixty years of IIMA with the permanent exhibition 'Brick by Brick'. This year, on November 10, to mark the first anniversary of 'Brick by Brick', IIMA Archives held a temporary exhibition (November 10 to November 17, 2022), '**Not Yet 25: IIMA through Pranalal Patel's lens, 1967-1985**', of photos by Shri Pranalal Patel, a renowned photographer of Ahmedabad. The exhibition helped the IIMA community relive the fascinating journey of IIMA over the first 25 years of its history. Visitors experienced the stories of not just Louis Kahn's dormitories and classrooms, but also of Anant Raje's creations.

Pranalal Patel (1910-2014) started his photography journey in 1932. He became an Associate of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain in 1946 and was made an Associate of the India International Photography Council in 1993. He won numerous international and national awards, and his photographs have been published in a wide range of magazines and books. His work continues to be exhibited through permanent collections at places like the Gandhi Ashram, Ahmedabad.



Shri Anand Patel (Shri Pranalal Patel's son), at 'Not Yet 25'

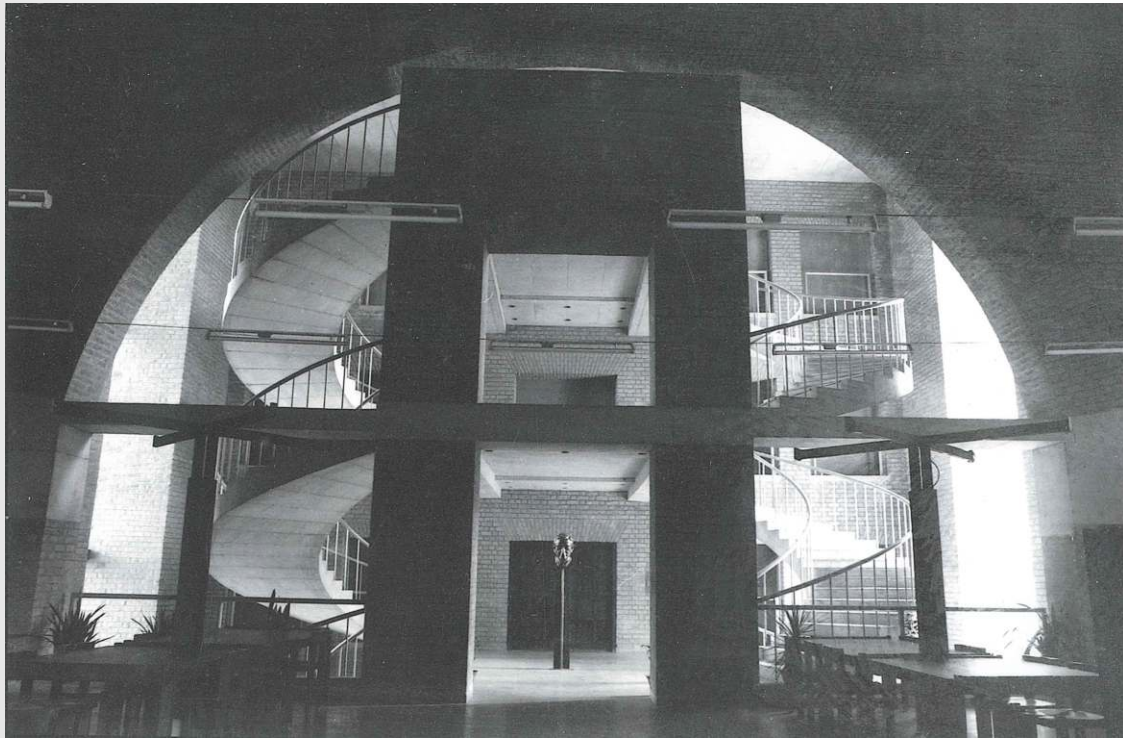


Shri Vivek Matthai (Prof. Ravi Matthai's son), at 'Not Yet 25'



Prof. Dhiman Bhadra, at 'Not Yet 25'

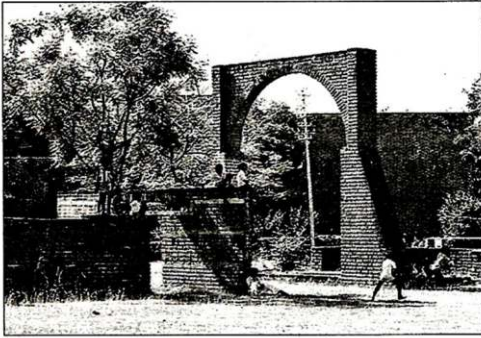
IIMA Archives is proud to possess about 200 of his photos of IIMA in its 'Pranalal Patel Collection'. Visitors also liked the campaign 'the photo you like the most' by IIMA Archives, where visitors participated in the campaign, selected, and dropped in about the photo they liked the most, out of 60 photos those were exhibited. Here is the photo, which got maximum votes.



A 1980 photo of the bronze head of Vikram Sarabhai at Vikram Sarabhai Library, sculpted by Sadashiv Sathe, and inaugurated on February 11, 1976. Photograph by Pranlal Patel (IIMA Archives Collection)

The exhibition was widely covered by the media such as [Times of India](#), [Divya Bhaskar](#), and [News18 Gujarati](#).

Poetry in B&W: Pics by Pranalal Patel on display at IIMA Archives



One of the pictures clicked by renowned photographer Pranalal Patel during the B-school's formative years

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ahmedabad: The sprawling Louis Kahn Plaza and the first arch that gave shape to the distinct architectural language of IIM Ahmedabad (IIMA) are among the visuals captured by renowned photographer Pranalal Patel in the B-school's formative years.

In all, 60 such photographs by Patel have been selected for 'Not Yet 25', a special exhibition, at IIMA Archives from November 10 to 17.

IIMA Archives officials sa-

id they have about 200 pictures by Patel, an internationally acclaimed lensman from the city, in the 'Pranalal Patel Collection.' The images capture IIMA from 1967 to 1985. "As the name suggests, the black-and-white images of the classrooms, newly built dormitories, open spaces, the famous arches and circular openings evoke a sense of nostalgia," said an official. The exhibition is being held to mark one year of IIMA Archives that was launched on the occasion of 60 years of the institute.

TIMES OF INDIA 12/11/2022 P.04 AHMEDABAD



અમદાવાદ-સિટીભાસ્કર 12-11-2022

IIMA ઇતિહાસના પ્રથમ 25 વર્ષની કેમ્પસ લાઈફ અને રસપ્રદ સફર જોઈ શકાશે 'નોટ યેટ 25' IIMA પ્રણાલપટેલની નજરે... એકિએબિશનનું આયોજન થયું



અમદાવાદ : આઈઆઈએમ અમદાવાદના આર્કીટેક્ચર દ્વારા પ્રણાલપટેલના ફોટોનું એકિએબિશન યોજવામાં આવ્યું છે. જે ફોટોમાં આઈઆઈએમ ઇતિહાસના પ્રથમ 25 વર્ષની કેમ્પસ લાઈફ અને અન્ય રસપ્રદ સફર ફરીથી જીવંત જોઈ શકાય છે. તેમણે ક્રિલક કરેલી એક તસવીરમાં કેમ્પસના એતિહાસિક ડેમ અને તેમાં મોંઘી બેઠેલા જોઈ શકાય છે જે એ સમયની યાદ તાજી કરે છે. તે સિવાય સ્ટુડન્ટ્સ મેસ, ક્લાસરૂમ વગેરે એ સમયે કેવા હતા તે તસવીરોમાં આબેહૂબ જોવા મળે છે. પ્રણાલપટેલ (1910-2014) એ 1932માં તેમની ફોટોગ્રાફી સફર શરૂ કરી હતી. તેઓ 1946માં રોયલ ફોટોગ્રાફિક સોસાયટી ઓફ ગ્રેટ બ્રિટેનના અસોસિએટ બન્યા હતા અને 1993માં ઈન્ડિયા ઈન્ટરનેશનલ ફોટોગ્રાફી ફાઉન્ડેશનના અસોસિએટ બન્યા હતા. આઈઆઈએમએ આર્કીટેક્ચર પાસે 'પ્રણાલપટેલ કલેક્શન' ના નામે લગભગ 200 જેટલા ફોટો છે. ગયા વર્ષે IIMA આર્કીટેક્ચરે તેના 60 વર્ષના સેલિબ્રેશન માટે 'બ્રિક બાય બ્રિક' પરમેન્ટન્ટ એકિએબિશન શરૂ કર્યું હતું. આ વર્ષે 'નોટ યેટ 25' - આઈઆઈએમ પ્રણાલપટેલની નજરે... એકિએબિશન શરૂ થયું છે જે 10થી 17 નવેમ્બર સુધી જોઈ શકાશે.

Please visit the IIMA Archives at Dorm 15 (Ground Floor), Main Campus, IIM Ahmedabad, Vastrapur, Ahmedabad 380015.



विद्याविनियोगादिकाशः



IIMA Archives

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