



Celebrating International Animation Day

International Animation Day, celebrated every October 28, honours the art and craft of animation that brings imagination to life. Established by the International Animated Film Association (ASIFA), the day highlights the creativity, innovation, and cultural impact of animated films and media across the globe. From hand-drawn sketches to cutting-edge CGI, animation captivates audiences of all ages, transcending language and borders. Schools, studios, and enthusiasts host workshops, screenings, and exhibitions to inspire budding animators and showcase iconic works. This celebration not only recognizes the pioneers of animation but also encourages the next generation to explore storytelling through movement, colour, and imagination.

#KEEN EYE

“What kind of intelligence are you gathering?”

When Indira Gandhi corrected J.P. Dutt's Saree Report, with Sharp Wit and Authority



In a memorable public day, as she traveled in an open jeep through North Bengal, then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi spotted a young woman in the crowd wearing a distinctive saree. Curious, she turned to J. P. Dutt, the head of her intelligence,

and asked, “What kind of saree is that?” Dutt, uncertain, offered a cautious answer, “Maybe a silk saree?” Indira Gandhi swiftly corrected him with a tinge of dry humor: “That's not a silk saree. It's a handloom weave from Coimbatore, Mr. Dutt. What kind of intelligence are you gathering?”

Unpacking the Exchange

His anecdote reveals several layers of her character and priorities.

A keen eye for detail: Indira Gandhi wasn't just a political leader; she appreciated fashion and could distinguish between sarees from mere snapshots. Her ability to identify a handloom weave from Coimbatore speaks both to her cultural sophistication and familiarity with regional textiles.

A connoisseur of handloom traditions: Her corre-

tion, asserting that the saree was an authentic handloom piece, reflects her pride in India's rich weaving heritage, especially handloom artistry, which she often championed.

Assertiveness and sharp wit: The follow-up question, “What kind of intelligence are you gathering?” served as both a clever reprimand and a reminder to her advisors that their duty went beyond mere observation. It was a subtle but powerful lesson in the importance of depth and accuracy.

Indira Gandhi on Attacking Pakistan



Is there any situation in which you might attack Pakistan?

Indira Gandhi- Well, I hope not. India has always tried to be on the side of peace and negotiations. But, of course, we cannot endanger our security in any way.

Why This Story Resonates

In a way, this brief interaction encapsulates much of what made Indira Gandhi a compelling figure: authoritative yet witty, deeply rooted in Indian culture yet commanding on the world stage. The saree, for her, wasn't merely attire, it was a symbol of India's artisanal legacy and a

tool of soft power. She once used her sartorial choices strategically, like wearing a striking saree during a diplomatic dinner to subtly unsettle then-US President. Such moments highlight that she viewed her appearance as an extension of her presence and influence.



Harriet White Fisher.

• Kshema Jatuhkarna

In 1904, Margarita Grace Phipps and her husband John ‘Jay’ Schaffer Phipps were spending their unusual honeymoon in India, driving through the country, camping in the wilderness, when they encountered a tiger.

The scene is described in an article in *The New York Times* on March 20, 1904. As the couple waited in their luxury sedan and the ‘native helpers’ set up camp, “there came out of the bushes some distance ahead, the cry of a wild animal, which to them was a strange sound... Before they had time to ask any of the natives, these came running of their own accord to warn them that one of the big cats of the jungle could not be far away.”

Jay directed every man to load his rifle but then “gallantly ordered that the first shot at the tiger should belong to his wife since she was very anxious to achieve the honor of having slain one of the most feared of animals.”

“In another moment, the animal stepped out in the open,” read the article. “He was a superb figure, though still young and not full grown. Mrs. Phipps raised her rifle just as the tiger turned his head towards her.

She aimed but a second and then fired. So true had been her sight that the bullet found the fatal spot.”

The newlyweds were scions of two of the wealthiest families in the West. Jay's father was a partner of steel baron Andrew Carnegie, while Margarita's family ran a company with various interests in South America, including guano trade and ‘the world's richest silver mine.’

The Phipps couple had decided to drive through India at a time when motorcars were still luxury items and their mass production had only just commenced. It was not common back then to see a car on Indian roads, let alone in the jungles.

For nearly three months, the couple moved around the nation in three automobiles, riding in the luxury sedan themselves, while reserving the other two cars for servants and supplies.

All the while, Margarita wrote letters home describing the hospitality of the maharajas and the ‘strangeness’ of the ‘natives,’ who, she said, would often gawk rather than assist. The quality of Indian roads also found a mention in her letters.

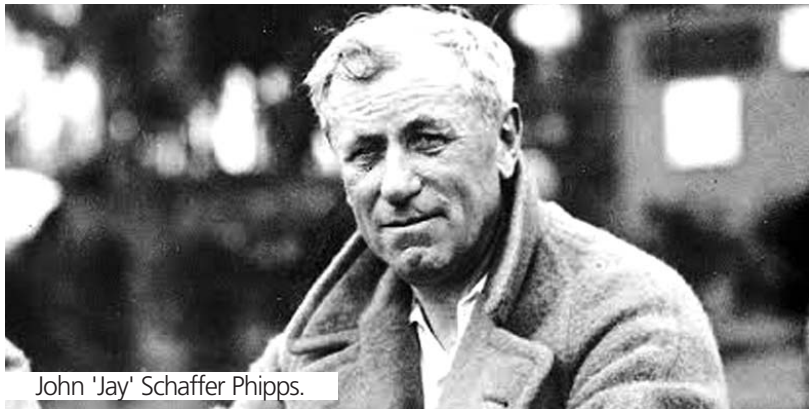
“Delhi - from there to Umballa, the road was excellent. The highway was swarming with travelers, on foot and riding on camels, while every now and then, we encountered drovers bringing bullocks to



An illustration of Margarita Grace Phipps shooting a tiger in India from her motorcar.

When Cars Were Rare, Two US Women Explored India In One

#HISTORY



John 'Jay' Schaffer Phipps.

the market. In the fields, there was plenty of cattle, and they all, camels and men, and women and cattle, stared open-mouthed as we passed by.”

During their India trip, Margarita and Jay's encounters with wildlife, they saw crocodiles, monkeys and exotic birds aside from a tiger, were viewed as encounters of the modern West with the mysterious East. To them, and some in the press, the couple's adventure presented an allegory: it showed how the East could be tamed with technological advancements such as a motorcar and a rifle (wielded occasionally by a woman).

The hide of the tiger they killed remains displayed at the Phipps' Long Island mansion. The house, now a heritage property, has featured in several classic films, such as *North by Northwest* and *The Manchurian Candidate*.

World Tour

Six years after the Phipps' visit, Harriet White Fisher drove a 40 HP Locomobile around the world, including in India. Born in 1861, Fisher was a businesswoman who owned and ran an anvil and vise factory in Trenton, New Jersey.

She left the United States in July 1909 and travelled in her car for 13 months over 10,000 miles, covering Europe, India, Ceylon, China and Japan. A year later, she wrote about

her travels in *A Woman's World Tour in a Motor* and had this to say about the East.

“When one from the Western world visits the strange scenes of the Far East, there is very much more to be noted than mere guide-book details. There is indeed much more to be felt. The mind, as well as the eye, is entranced. The mystic quality of India, that wonderful magic of atmosphere and antiquity, is impressive.”

To make her journey relatively comfortable, Fisher's Locomobile was equipped with a bigger fuel tank that allowed her to travel longer distances between refills. Giving her company through the miles were her manager, a cook-cum-secretary an Italian maid and a Bostonian bull terrier named Honk-Honk. In India, she added a servant to her team called Antonio.

Fisher's book has several chapters devoted to India. In them, she describes the roads she crossed, the rivers her car forded, and the royalty and commoners she met. She found the hotels and inns in India invariably dirty and crowded but had no complaints about the generous hospitality of the maharajas of Gwalior, Benares and Baroda.

When she landed in Bombay, she was struck by its cosmopolitanism. “Travelers will be struck with the picturesqueness of the scene on landing in Bombay. The quaint

In the last stretch of her India visit, Fisher visited the burning ghats of Benares, passed miles of poppy fields in Bengal, and met the 13th Dalai Lama, who had fled Tibet and arrived in Darjeeling looking dishevelled but still dignified. The souvenirs she gathered in India were displayed in her New Jersey home. To her, she said, they were reminders of her journey through a ‘fairlyland.’

From Indore, she travelled to Mandu. While in Guna near Gwalior, she sighted the Halley's Comet, which has an orbital period of around 76 years. A number of sights and experiences impressed her in India. The variety of birds in the country, the mynas, the green parrots, and the swarms of peacocks that made noises like human beings, was striking, she said. The Taj Mahal presented a wonderful sight by moonlight. The roads of Gwalior were “magnificent, the natives working on them all day long. Even a little pebble, the size of one of our hickory nuts, is not allowed to remain...” The maharaja of Gwalior was a fine host, she said, and in his palace could be found several American inventions, including an electric railway set, with silver cars carrying wines, cigars, sweets and cakes.

Fisher received a majestic welcome in Allahabad after crossing Kanpur and Lucknow, where the British were still scarred by the memory of the 1857 Rebellion. “None of the natives are permitted to carry arms of any kind, each man and woman is permitted to carry (only) a long staff of bamboo to protect themselves against snakes and wild animals.”

Invited by Motilal Nehru, she also stayed at the magnificent Nehru house in Civil Lines. The mansion, made of white marble, stood in the midst of a big park with miniature lakes on either side. When Fisher arrived, she was welcomed by 76 servants standing in a line, with two elephants on either side. Since elephants routinely scared off horses used by the police and the army, they were not always allowed out. But Motilal Nehru secured special permission from the city authorities to ensure Fisher could ride an elephant to Ganga.

Royal Welcome

From Bombay, whose streets she found narrow and crowded, she drove to Poona, which, she mistakenly claimed, was the first time any car had ascended Bhor Ghat. As she moved up north, the journey was not always pleasurable. The dak bungalows and inns in the interiors were often poorly maintained. At Mhow, she wrote, the dak bungalow was infested with ‘crimson ramblers’ or bed bugs.

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Black Tiger Fruit: A Myth in the Making

The Black Tiger Fruit is a rare enigma. Said to grow in select parts of Southeast Asia, it's named for its dark, striped skin and deep purple or black interior. Though sightings and local lore suggest it exists, very little is officially documented, making it more of a forager's secret or perhaps even a legend in the making. The fruit allegedly appears for only a few days

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#RARE

Did You Hear Of The Black Diamond Apple?



Fruits That Appear Once a Year and Vanish in Days: Nature's Most Elusive Delicacies

In a world dominated by year-round imports and supermarket convenience, some fruits remain stubbornly tied to nature's clock, ripening just once a year, for a fleeting moment, before vanishing. These are not everyday fruits. They are ephemeral wonders,

prized for their rarity, flavor, and deep cultural significance. Among them are the Charichuela, Yellow Dragon Fruit, Black Diamond Apple, Black Tiger Fruit, and the increasingly mythic Sinindhu Mango, each one a reminder that some of nature's best gifts come with a short window and a long wait.

Charichuela: The Amazon's Forgotten Jewel

Hidden deep in the rainforests of South and Central America, the Charichuela (Garcinia madruno) is a fruit with a creamy white interior and a flavor that dances between tangy and sweet, often compared to mangosteen with a citrusy twist. It's not grown in commercial orchards, and its harvest season is so short that it's consumed almost exclusively by local



communities. Foraging for it is part of the tradition, and once it's gone, it's gone, until the forest offers it again the next year.

Yellow Dragon Fruit: The Sweetest of the Cactus Clan

Among all dragon fruit varieties, the Yellow Dragon (Hylocereus megalanthus) stands out not just for its golden skin but for its exceptional sweetness. Native to northern South America, it blooms only at night and fruit once annually, with a narrow harvest window. Its short shelf life and delicate nature make it difficult to transport, which is why many have never tasted



this gem. Those who have describe it as honey-like and refreshing, a reward for patience and timing.

Black Diamond Apple: The Twilight Treasure of Tibet

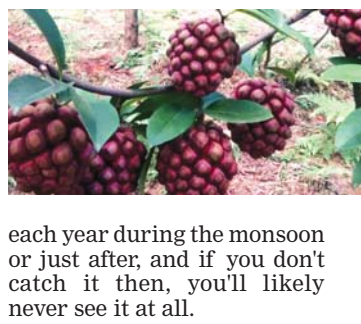
Few fruits evoke as much intrigue as the Black Diamond Apple, cultivated at altitudes above 3,000 meters in Tibet's Nyangchi region. Its deep, almost purple-black skin is a result of intense UV exposure, and the apple itself is crisp, sweet, and remarkably dense. It takes years for the trees to bear fruit, and even then, the apples are harvested just once a year, often in small quantities. Prized more for



their appearance and rarity than mass consumption, Black Diamond Apples are sold as luxury items, a fruit you might only see, never taste.

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each year during the monsoon or just after, and if you don't catch it then, you'll likely never see it at all.

Sinindhu Mango: The Mango You'll Miss If You Blink



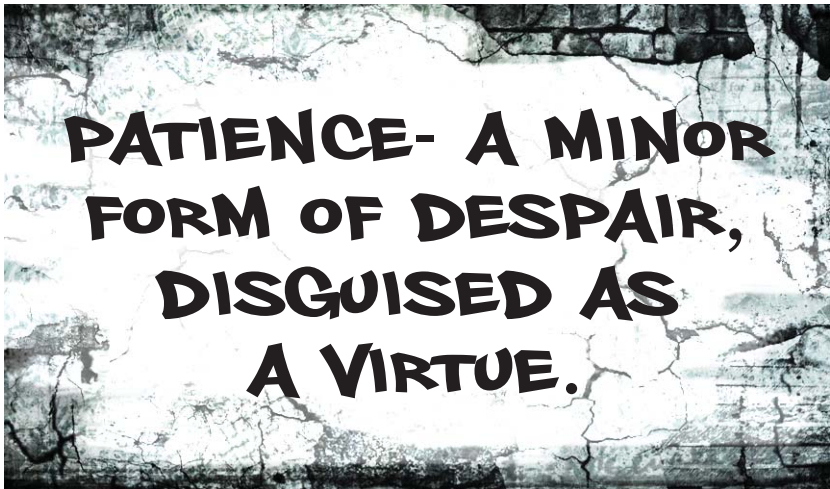
India's love for mangoes is a centuries-old affair, with each region fiercely loyal to its local variety. But the Sinindhu Mango, native to Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, is a different story altogether. It's not just rare, it's almost elusive. Sinindhu mangoes ripen for a brief spell in early summer and are typically found in local markets for only a few days. Their taste is described as intoxicatingly floral, sweet without being cloying, and buttery in texture. Cultivated in very small quantities and almost never exported, the Sinindhu is a seasonal whisper, a mango that comes and goes like a dream.

A Taste of Time Itself

What binds these fruits together isn't just their rarity, but their relationship with time. They cannot be rushed. They cannot be mass-produced. You have to wait for them, watch for them, and seize the moment when they arrive. In return, they offer not just flavor, but memory of a season, a place, a feeling.

In a world obsessed with convenience, these fruits ask us to slow down, to return to a rhythm older than commerce: that of nature, patience, and presence. To taste a Charichuela or Sinindhu mango is to taste not just fruit, but a moment that won't come again, at least not until next year.

THE WALL

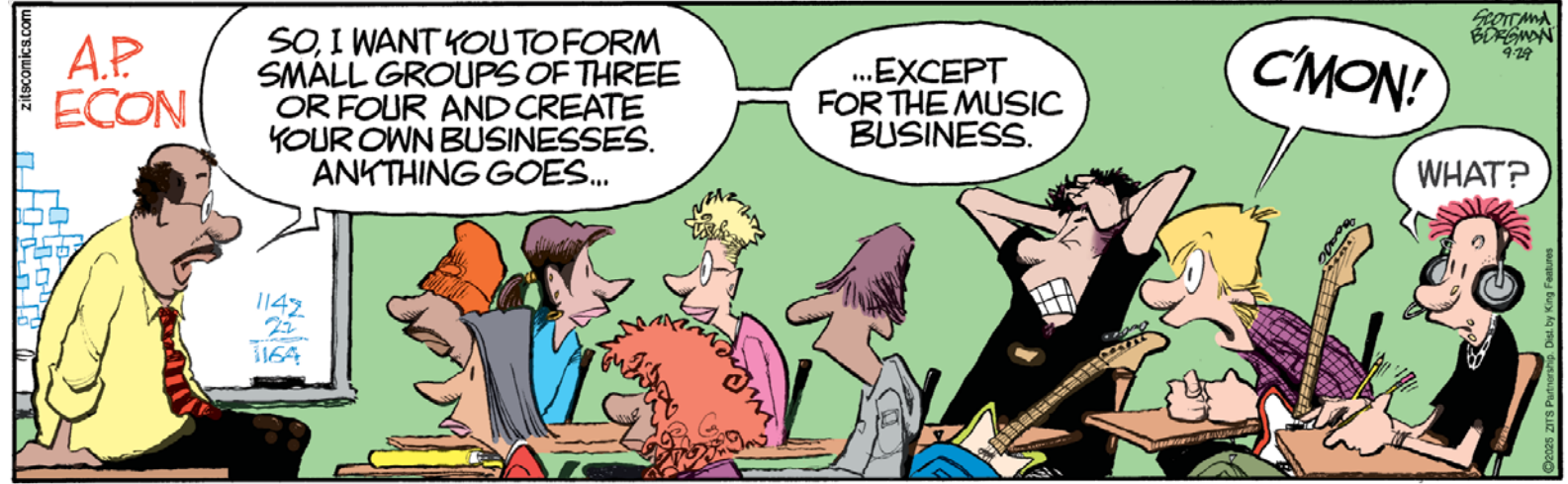


BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman