



## World Health Day: Promoting Global Well-Being

Observed every year on April 7, World Health Day highlights the importance of health and well-being across the globe. The day marks the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organization (WHO) and focuses on raising awareness about key public health issues. Governments, healthcare institutions and communities organise campaigns to promote preventive care, healthy lifestyles and better access to medical services. World Health Day also emphasises the need for stronger healthcare systems and equitable health opportunities for all. By encouraging healthier habits and greater awareness, the day serves as a reminder that good health is essential for sustainable development and overall quality of life.

### #BLESSINGS

## Blessed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama

An inspiring and unforgettable experience



**Dhnananjay Birla**  
I received his blessings during their annual reunion held from March 21 to March 24, 2026. The reunion brought together classmates after many years, making it a deeply emotional and joyful occasion. Participants reminisced about old memories and further strengthened their bonds. The highlight of the event was the meeting with His Holiness, whose blessings and inspiring words left everyone deeply moved. Expressing their heartfelt gratitude for this special opportunity, participants described it as an inspiring and unforgettable experience. The serene and spiritual environment of Dharamshala further enhanced the significance of the reunion. Members of the 1966 batch remain committed to strengthening their connections through such gatherings and preserving their shared legacy.

### #MANGO SEED OIL

## Skin, Health, and Energy Cleansing

Mango seed oil is a multifunctional natural product with anti-aging, moisturizing, and spiritual cleansing properties

Mango seed oil, derived from the seeds of the mango fruit, is a powerful natural remedy known for its beauty and wellness benefits. Packed with essential fatty acids, antioxidants, and vitamins, mango seed oil offers a wide range of uses. Here's how you can make use of this versatile oil.

#### How to Make Mango Seed Oil at Home

Creating mango seed oil is simple and cost-effective. Start by drying the mango seed for about 5-7 days until it hardens. Once dried, crush the seed into smaller pieces using a mortar and pestle or grinder. Mix the crushed seed with a base oil like sweet almond or coconut oil in a 1:4 ratio (1 part mango seed powder to 4 parts base oil). Let the mixture rest in a cool, dark place for 10 days to allow the oil to infuse. After straining out the solid particles, you'll have your own homemade mango seed oil.

#### Benefits of Mango Seed Oil

- Wrinkle Reduction:** Mango seed oil is rich in vitamin E and fatty acids, making it an excellent choice for fighting fine lines and wrinkles. It helps hydrate the skin and improve elasticity.
- Moisturizing:** The oil is a great moisturizer, penetrating deeply into the skin to relieve dryness. It



helps restore moisture balance.

- Space Cleansing:** Mango seed oil has a spiritual significance in many cultures, believed to clear negative energy from the environment.

- Weight Management and Blood Sugar Balance:** Traditionally, mango seed oil has been used in herbal medicine for supporting weight management and promoting balanced blood sugar levels. It is thought to have thermogenic properties. Mango seed oil is a multifunctional natural product with anti-aging, moisturizing, and spiritual cleansing properties. It's easy to make at home and can be incorporated into your daily routine for healthier skin and a purified living space.

# My Grandpa Had Been Here !!

## PART:2

So, I arranged for a driver to be waiting when I disembarked at the gingerbread-style Victorian station in Rangtong, 16 miles up the line, the terminus for the first stretch of track from Siliguri. From there, we'd bypass the landslides and arrive in the mountain town of Kurseong in time for me to connect with another heritage train that ran the final 19-mile leg to Darjeeling. My driver, Binod Gupta, held open my door as I piled in. "Hurry, please, sir," he said. "We're running late."



Anjali Sharma  
Senior Journalist & Wildlife Enthusiast

The tracks ran right alongside the road, crossing it back and forth as we climbed through tea plantations and banana groves, slowly gaining altitude. I'd anticipated a crush of railroad enthusiasts would fill the historic UNESCO World Heritage status in 1999, and tourists flock here from all over the world to experience an authentic, old-time train ride in a spectacular setting. But I was nearly the only passenger aboard. Landslides in recent years have cut off the middle section of the railway to Darjeeling. Because there is no longer direct service for the entire route, most travelers drive to Darjeeling to pick up a train there. They take a leisurely round-trip excursion along a 19-mile stretch of the track to Kurseong, powered by one of the railway's original steam engines. But for my purposes, I wanted to retrace exactly the route Baird and Batt would have followed. I devised a way to bite off the trip in three chunks: by train, then car, then train again.

And there was something else. A short black-and-white film shot by the couple had come into my possession a few years back. I'd had the film restored and was carrying a digital copy of it on a USB drive. The film opens with a locomotive trailing clouds of steam as it hauls a string of cars around a distinctive loop set amid alpine forests. I suspected that train was the Darjeeling Express. If I followed the old route, I reasoned, I might even be able to recognize the exact spot where the novice filmmakers had positioned their camera.

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Gupta was a former soldier and mountaineer with the build of a linebacker and the sad eyes of a bas-set hound. His driving skills were superb. He rarely shifted out of second gear, and as we snaked back and forth through a death-defying gauntlet of single-lane switchbacks and plunging drop-offs. A stunning panorama of lofty peaks and deep green valleys unfolded out the window as Gupta gunned the car up a washed-out path, children on their way home from school shouting and waving at us. "Everyone is more relaxed up here," he said. "People enjoy life more here than down on the plains."



The Darjeeling station is the last stop on the route of the narrow gauge railway, known informally as the Toy Train, that runs between New Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling in West Bengal.

My own cottage bore the simple name of Mary-La, which prompted little thought as I unpacked and caught sight of a notice left on the bed. "Please do not open your windows during your stay," it warned. "Monkeys will be sure to enter." The primates had exhibited unusual boldness in recent months, according to the advisory, staging raids on the hotel grounds from their sanctuary at the Mahakal Temple just up the hill. In truth, the only monkeys I saw during my stay in Darjeeling were at the shrine itself, loping along the compound walls, snatching handouts from worshippers.

### #JOURNEY



In 1931, Francis K. I. Baird set off with fellow adventurer Jill Cossley-Batt for the mountains beyond Darjeeling.

"We love the nature." The friends vacationed together whenever they could, said Singh, prompting vigorous nods from his associates. "We want to see all of India," he said. "Life is very small." It took me a moment, but I got his point. Life is very short.

We entered the city of Ghum, the train chugging along the main road, horn blaring nonstop. Brightly painted concrete buildings of three and four stories crowded the track, rising precariously just overhead. Kids took turns jumping on and off the slow-moving train. We passed beneath a narrow bridge and started climbing along a tight, looping stretch of track.

The Batasia Loop is one of three such engineering marvels on the railway between Siliguri and Darjeeling. This particular loop allowed our train to gain nearly a hundred feet in elevation as it circled tightly and crossed the same bridge we'd just gone under. The lay of the land was unmistakable. I could even make out the elevated bluff from which Baird and Batt had filmed the circling train so many years ago.

I passed through the gates of the Windamere Hotel as darkness was falling. And just like that, I felt as if I'd been transported 80 years back in time. Uniformed, white-gloved waiters tended to couples huddled at candlelit tables listening to the strains of a thirties jazz crooner. The hallways were covered with fading black-and-white photographs; black-tie dinner parties, women in embroidered silk blouses and heavy jewelry, braids of thick black hair coiled high atop their heads. There was a teak-paneled library named for journalist Lowell Thomas, a sitting room commemorating Austrian explorer Heinrich Harrer, author of *Seven Years in Tibet*, and a parlor bearing the name of Alexandra David-Neel,

etched into a plunging mountain slope, a short drive from the Ghum railway station. It's a modest structure: three whitewashed stories topped with a swagbacked roof and gold ornamental spire. A set of 11 brass prayer wheels flanked either side of the four-column entrance. It looked a lot like the monastery where my grandfather had filmed the lama dance. But I wasn't sure.

Chief lama Sonam Gyatso greeted me in the courtyard, wearing an orange fleece jacket over his maroon robes. He was a charming man in his early 40s, tall and handsome, an epicanthic fold to his eyes and the high cheekbones that hinted at origins on the Tibetan plateau. Indeed, he'd left the Amdo region of Sichuan in China in 1995. For the past several years, he's been responsible for running the monastery, the oldest in the Darjeeling region, belonging to the Gelugpa Yellow Hat sect of Tibetan Buddhism.

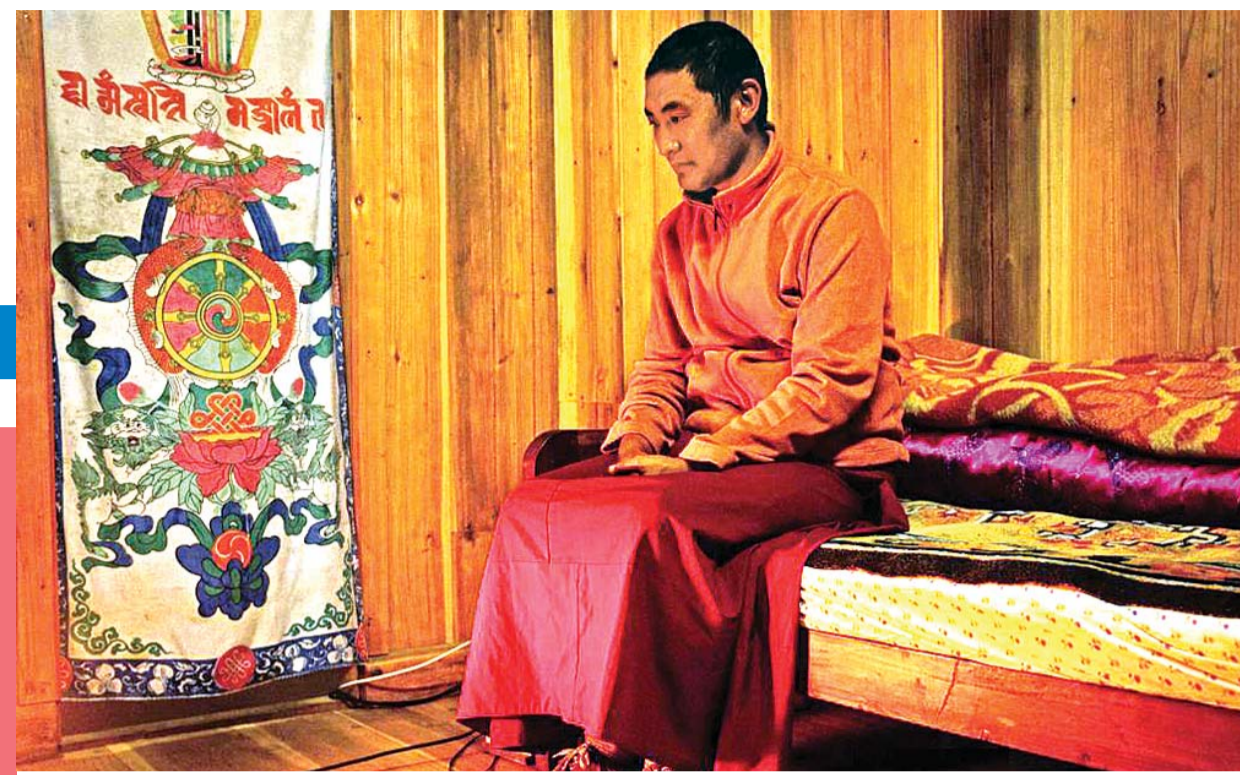
He invited me to a cup of tea in his spartan living quarters. Once more, I played the film clip of the lama dance. A pair of monks are seen blowing horns as a fantastical procession of dancers emerges from the doorway. They're dressed in elaborate costumes and outsize masks representing horned creatures with bulging eyes, long snouts, menacing smiles. They hop and spin around the monastery courtyard, culminating with four leaping dancers in skeleton outfits and masks of smiling skulls.

"This was filmed here," lama Gyatso said without hesitation. "Look at this." He thumbed through photos on his smartphone and produced a black-and-white image of robed monks in front of the monastery's entrance. It would have been taken around the same time as the film clip, he said. "You see, the columns are exactly the same."

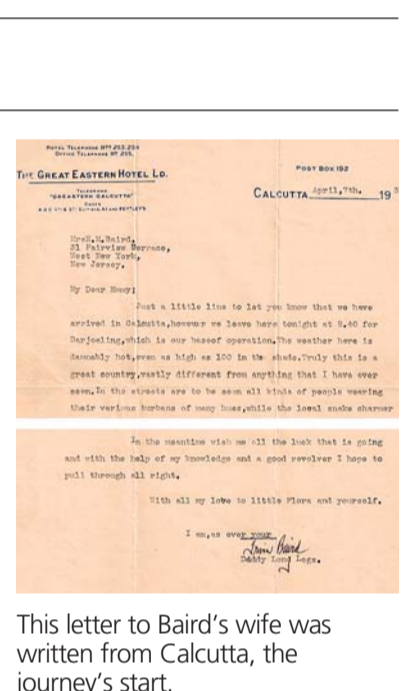
What was more, Gyatso said, the

Baird and Batt obviously did not stay at the Windamere; it wasn't yet a hotel. But they must have known the Laden La family, and it's likely they knew Mary There was another detail I picked up from Maya and Noreen: the Laden Las maintained close ties with the monastery in Ghum called Yiga Choeling. That might explain how Baird and Batt gained access to film the lama dance that day. Some pieces of the puzzle were beginning to fit together.

The monastery is perched on a ridge at the end of a narrow road



Sonam Gyatso is the chief lama of Yiga Choeling Monastery, where the author's grandfather had filmed a dance celebrating the Tibetan New Year more than eight decades earlier.



This letter to Baird's wife was written from Calcutta, the journey's start.

dance, nor had I made much sense of a scene showing multitudes in homespun mountain clothing, gorging on flatbread and dumplings.

Over tea and scones, I ran the film clip for Maya and Noreen. The lama dance began. "That's the Ghum monastery!" said Noreen, leaning in for a closer look. I'd passed through Ghum on the train, but I hadn't gone back there to explore. I made a note to do so. Then came the footage of the feasting crowds. It was a Tibetan New Year celebration, Maya and Noreen agreed. The camera panned across a group of elegantly turned-out ladies sitting before a low table stacked with china and bowls of fruit. One face stood out: that of a lovely young woman, who flashed a smile at the camera as she raised a teacup to her lips. "Look!" Maya gasped. "It's Mary Tenduf! La!" She steered me to a portrait of the same woman in the hallway. The daughter of Sonam Wangyel Laden La, special emissary to the 14th Dalai Lama and onetime police chief in Lhasa, Mary Tenduf La married into another prominent family with roots in Sikkim and Tibet just months before my grandfather's arrival.

Mary Tenduf La came to be known as the grande dame of Darjeeling society. Her friends called her Mary-La. The name of my cozy room overlooking the city.

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same skeleton costumes were in a storage room in the back of the monastery. He called an assistant to find them.

Whatever doubts I may still have harbored about having found the right monastery vanished once I held the home-stitched garments in my hands. To my surprise, the outfits in real life were red and white, not black and white. Yet, the design of each hand-sewn piece of rough cotton was exactly the same as in the film. I felt a chill run down my spine.

I considered the strange chain of events, spanning three generations and 85 years, that had led me here. I'd flown across 11 time zones, journeyed by rail across the sweltering plains of Bengal and up through the lush tea estates of Darjeeling and into the mountains beyond, searching for Baird and some understanding of his legacy. I'd wondered if my grandfather wasn't a fabulist, on top of everything else. I asked Gyatso if he thought my grandfather's claim of discovering a "lost tribe" in the borderlands farther north had any merit. "It's possible," he said, nodding solemnly. Back then, he continued, there were any number of self-sustaining communities that had little contact with the outside world. "You would have had to walk a long way through the mountains."

The lama led me out to my car. The morning fog was lifting, and I could see all the way down the mountain to the valley floor far below. It was a landscape that seemed to demand humility and reverence from all its beholders. Is that what my grandfather had seen here, too? I hoped so. "I am very happy that you have come back after two generations," Gyatso said, throwing his arm around me. "See you again."

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The author's journey began in Kolkata (Calcutta), where the biggest festival is the week long celebration of the ten-armed goddess Durga called Durga puja. The festival draws admire the enormous bamboo-framed pavilions.

### #DISHA FOUNDATION

## Compassion, Forgiveness, and Kindness through a tale of a ghost and a kind-hearted girl

Inspired by Oscar Wilde's *The Canterville Ghost*, 'Canterville - The Haunted and Hilarious' is a grand suspense thriller that beautifully blends humour, mystery...



The stage came alive with confidence, emotion, and social expression as children delivered a remarkable performance, while the audience responded with enthusiasm, filling the atmosphere with warmth and joy. Such was the captivating scene at the theatrical presentation 'Canterville - The Haunted and Hilarious,' performed by special children and youth. The event, organised by Disha Foundation, Nirman Nagar, was held grandly on Sunday at the Birja Auditorium.

The programme was graced by Chief Guest, Industrialist R.C. Gupta, Guest of Honour Parag Jain, Director of Partech, along with other distinguished dignitaries. Trustees Basant Khetan and Mala Khatan, along with Director Dr. Bharti Khunteta, extended a warm welcome and honoured the guests. On this occasion, Chairperson Mala Khetan and Dr. Bharti Khunteta shared their vision for the future, expressing their aim to develop the organisation into an advanced assessment and rehabilitation centre, while also aspiring to take this



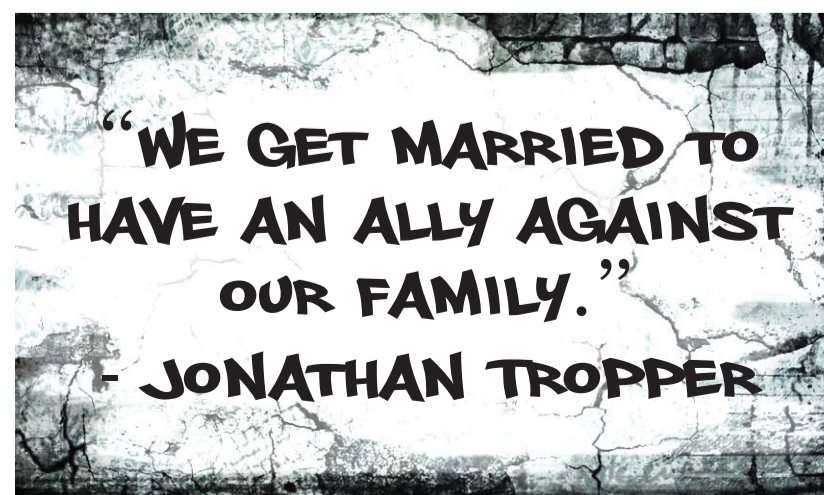
theatrical production to a national platform. A major highlight of the event was the children's enthusiasm, which drew an audience of over a thousand attendees. After six months of dedicated training and rehearsals, the children proved that 'given the right opportunity, every child can shine through their talent.' The play was directed by Siraj Ahmed Bhati and his team from Rainbow Society based on the concept of 'Theatre-as-Therapy.' The success of the event was made possible through the unwavering dedication of teachers, therapists, counselors, set designers, and the entire team.

Inspired by Oscar Wilde's *The Canterville Ghost*, 'Canterville - The Haunted and Hilarious' is a grand suspense thriller that beautifully blends humour, mystery, and emotional depth. Through the story of a ghost and a kind-hearted girl, it conveys a powerful message of compassion, forgiveness, and the healing strength of kindness. For the parents in attendance, the evening was deeply emotional and a moment of immense pride. Many described it as a transformative experience in their children's lives.



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

### THE WALL



### BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

### ZITS

