

#CURTAIN RAISER

Green Door Arts Week

Maah Space, which is a movement arts and performance space in Jaipur, is organizing a week long showcase of contemporary and folk performance works by independent artists in and around Jaipur. To be held from February 3 to February 10, the week is aimed at bringing forth creativity and innovation in performing arts by independent artists.



Tusharika Singh
Freelancer
writer and
city blogger



Tanish Khandwal

The COVID-19 pandemic has dealt a devastating blow to live performers, causing a shift towards online platforms and a decline in live performance art events. However, Maah Space, which is a movement arts and performance space in Jaipur, is stepping up to provide a beacon of hope for independent artists and performers. They are organizing a week-long showcase of contemporary and folk performance works which offers a unique platform for independent artists to experiment, showcase thought-provoking work, and engage with audiences in an intimate setting.

For The Artists & The Audience



Kamakshi Saxena

Known as the 'Green Door Arts Week', the event is aimed at bringing forth creativity and innovation in performing arts by independent artists looking to go beyond the norm and experiment with the form they practice, be it theater, music or dance. Telling more about the event, the organizers, Shreya Kishanpuri Agarwal and Kamakshi Saxena share: "Not only will this event help support and promote live performances, it will also give the Jaipur audience a chance to witness these interesting performances and artists up, close and personal. We hope to make it an annual recurring event bringing together an eclectic mix of artists."

An Eclectic Mix of Performances

The arts week will kick start on 3 February with 'Fragile: a contemporary dance evening' by dance practitioner, Kamakshi Saxena. Over the course of the week-long event, there will be unique performances such as a rendition of Hindustani Classical Music in a Morning Raga by Hulus Purohit, Film Screening of 'Janam Amolak' by Abhishek Kumarwat

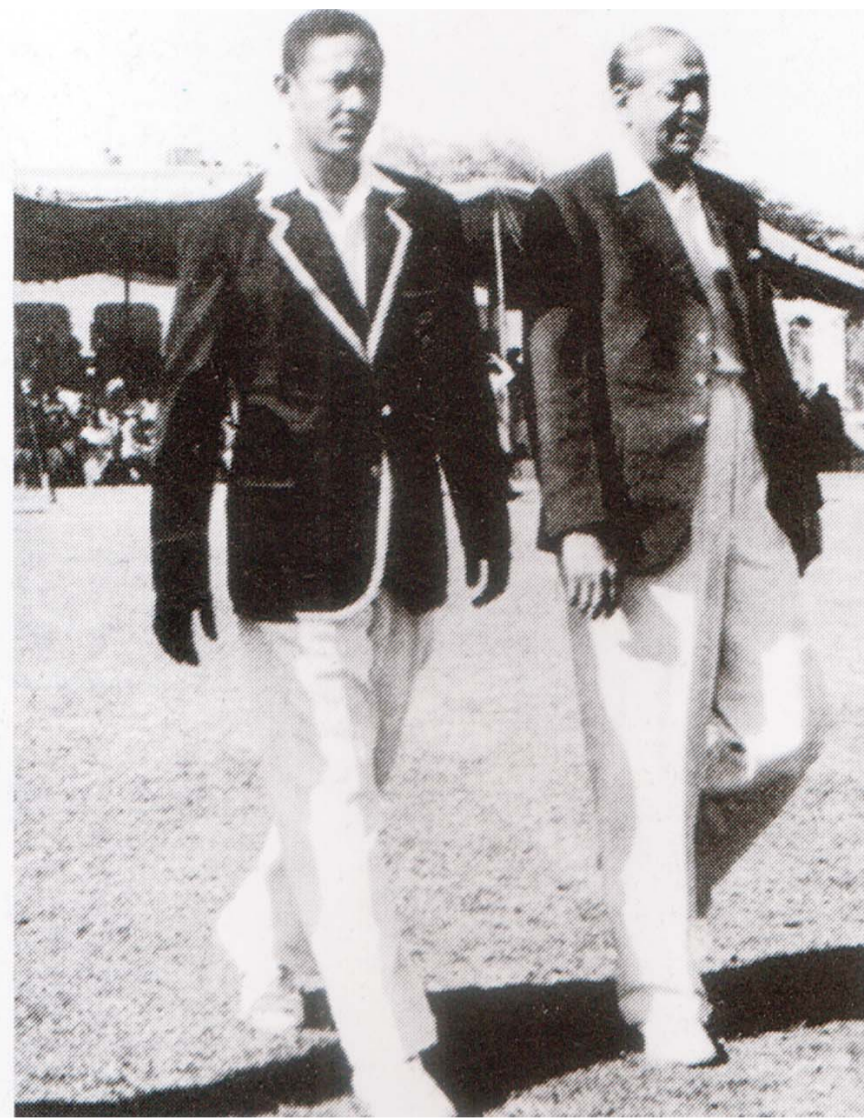
5th February, 7 pm - Voices of Folk, Folk dance/theatre by Chaina & Rakesh
6th February, 7 pm - Radhey Kathak by Manaswini Sharma
7th February, 7 pm - Soundscapes, Experimental music by Tanish Khandwal
8th February, 7 pm - Impromptu with the wind, Improvisation dance by Michel Casanovas

9th and 10th February, 5 pm - 9pm - What's for dinner? Aaj Khane Main Kya hai? Installation by Maah X Pink City Feminist

Manaswini Sharma

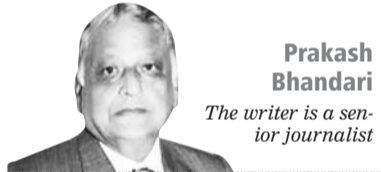


Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (L) tossing the coin along with Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and Maharawal Lakshman Singh at a cricket match between Lok Sabha and Raja Sabha teams played at the National Stadium, New Delhi, 1953.



Frank Worrell (R), captain of Silver Jubilee overseas team and Maharawal Lakshman Singh, captain of Rajasthan Raj-Pramukh's XI, walking out for the toss at Ganpatinagar Polo Ground, Jaipur 1953.

The love for cricket a family passion (...3)



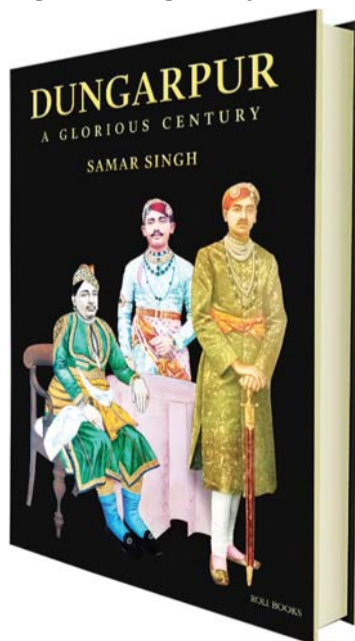
Prakash Bhandari
The writer is a senior journalist

Samar Singh, the scion of the Dungarpur royals in his book 'Dungarpur: A glorious century', has written the history of the Dungarpur rulers and he used the cricketing term century as part of the title of the book.

A good part of the book is devoted to Maharawal Lakshman Singh, who was the last ruler before Indra Gandhi stripped the princes of their privy purse and took away all the privileges enjoyed by them. Samar Singh has dealt with all the details about the administrative set up of Dungarpur and how well-administered the state was. Lakshman Singh persona has also been described by eminent administrator like KM Panikar. The book in details describes the cricket part of the life of a royal, who later excelled as a politician also. Here is the cricket story of the Maharawal in his own words:

My Reminiscences

Late Maharawal Shri Lakshman Singh of Dungarpur (1908 - 1989)
I started playing Cricket in 1919 when I was eleven years old. That year I went to school at the Mayo College in Ajmer. My Assistant Guardian Thakur Nathu Singh of Gumanpura, who later joined the Indian Army and rose to become a Lt. General, persistently prompted me to play the game and it is thus that I took to Cricket. Like me,



DUNGARPUR A GLORIOUS CENTURY SAMAR SINGH

#DUNGARPUR

left arm medium pace bowler and at times on matting wickets, he was almost unplayable. He had great command over length and could cleverly move the ball both ways. It was in 1924 that I was included in the College Cricket 'A' Team as a left hand batsman and soon established my position by heading the batting averages for the subsequent three years.

Then, I was appointed Captain of the team for the next two years till I left the Mayo College in 1927. In 1926, the first MCC team led by Arthur Gilligan (who had captained England against Australia a year before) visited Ajmer and played two matches on the Mayo College Cricket Ground. This was largely due to the persistent efforts of Wahiduddin Begg, a local cricketer who was also my personal friend. I was selected to play both matches.

In the trial match preceding the first match with the MCC team (MCC vs Rajputana and BB & CI Combined XI), I made 63 runs playing against fast bowlers of the caliber of L. Ramji and Chanda Rana, whose right arm (combination) - left arm (Chanda Rana) combination was deadly indeed. My innings paved the way for my inclusion in the Indian team to play against the MCC. I was only eighteen-years-old then and was mightily pleased to be the youngest member in our side.

In the two matches that followed at Ajmer, our team was no match for the MCC. But, I got excellent exposure and had the good fortune of playing with excellent players like Vithal, Captain of the formidable Hindu XI, and the redoubtable CK Nayudu, who I consider as the

Victor Trumper of India and whom Douglas Jardine called the right-handed Frank Woolley.

Here, it is necessary to mention that in those days cricket was played on cote matting wickets. 'Turf' wickets were unknown then in most parts of the country except for a few places in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta and, of course, at the Acheson College in Lahore.

On cote matting, fast bowlers like Ranji, Tate or Geary (last two in the visiting MCC team) could make a good length ball stand chest high, which made batting really difficult.

Besides, matting wickets were notorious for high bumpers as well as ground-level shooters, locally called 'surra'. All this added to the woes of the batsman. In other words, making runs on a cote matting wicket in those days required great effort, concentration and skill.

After leaving the Mayo College in 1927, I visited England for the first time. I was looking forward to playing Cricket there and Arthur Gilligan had assured me all facilities for my coaching at the Hove, the Sussex County Cricket Ground in Brighton. However, my guardian Col. Benn, who accompanied me to England, and Sir Leonard Reynolds, the AGG in Rajputana, tactfully dissuaded me from taking Cricket too seriously. They kept telling me that Cricket was at best a game and it should not be allowed to come in the way of my real responsibility as the ruler of a princely state. They added that a promising young prince like me could play a more active and useful role in the field of administration than on the cricket field. Thus, during my stay in England for six months in 1927, I could visit Brighton for three weeks only and merely managed to get

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L. Ramji

One of my fond memories is the Cricket Tournament organized at Alwar on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of Maharaja Jai Singh in 1927. The Maharaja very kindly invited me to play for his team in the final match of the tournament against the Aligarh University XI, which had some good players like Abdul Salaam and Mohammed Saad. I made 72 runs, hitting four sixes, and in partnership with the Maharaja, we put on over fifty runs and won the match. The great Ranji, Jam Saheb of Nawanagar, who was a close friend of Maharaja Jai Singh of Alwar, was present on the occasion and he made some flattering remarks about my innings, which I cherish to this day. Maharaja Jai Singh presented to me the Alwar colours. The State team in those days used to wear Safas and so did we at the Mayo College. Our College colours were Panchranga Safa and Blazer designed on the pattern of the Harlequins on the express wishes of Viceroy Lord Curzon. It is a pity that the Mayo College has now done away with the Panchranga. Colour is a special characteristic of Rajasthan; the people here, men and women, whether rich or poor, simply adore colour. Rightly or wrongly, I regard respect for good traditions as a necessary ingredient for character building at a tender age. The Panchranga being unusual and colourful made us feel proud of it.

The years 1925 to 1939 were the palmy days of the Indian Princes. During this period, Cricket in India was really the Cricket of the Princely era. At that time, there was an unwritten convention that, as far as possible, a cricketing



Maharawal Laxman Singh in turban was 18-year-old when he played against Artghur Gilligan's team in 1926 at Mayo College, Ajmer.



Armoured Snail

iny snails sitting on the ocean floor might seem defenseless against a large, determined predator such as a crab. But evolution has provided one species of sea snail with a unique iron-plated armoured shell that resists such attacks. Discovered in 2003, the snail lives in a relatively harsh environment on the floor of the Indian Ocean near hydrothermal vents that spew hot water. The snail has evolved a tri-layered shell structure consisting of an outer layer embedded with iron sulfide granules.



Natwar Singh the Maharaja of Porbandar.

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prince should lead the Indian Cricket Team. Thus, the Maharaja of Porbandar and the Maharaj Kumar of Vijaynagar (popularly known as Vizzy) had the good fortune of leading the Indian teams that visited England in the 30s.

In this context, I may be pardoned for making a personal reference about my own record in the cricketing arena in the period 1925-1933. As already mentioned, I topped the batting averages in school for three consecutive years with figures of 49 in 1925, 54 in 1926 and 63 in 1927 and twice made a thousand runs in a season. I captained the Mayo College 'A' Team in 1926 and 1927. Playing against the Alwar State XI, I made a hundred in each innings (133* and 107*) of the match and remained not out both times.

In other matches, I had scores of 215, 151, 104 and 101. In a memorable match against the Carriage and Wagon XI, which included good bowlers like Syed Ansari, Murad and Halim, I made 91 runs in a total of 127. Soon thereafter, the Durgapur Cricket XI led by me won the All-India Cricket Tournament at Ajmer and I got 127 runs playing against the Mehana



Maharaj Kumar of Vijaynagar (popularly known as Vizzy).

XI, which included formidable bowlers like Amar Singh and Oghad Shanker. Again, playing for the MK Alirajpur's team in 1929, we won the All-India Tournament at Ajmer and my contribution with the bat was notable. In this whole background, with all humility I would say that during this period if any prince was to lead the Indian Cricket Team overseas, my claim surely deserved serious consideration. The fact that I was overlooked in favour of non-performers certainly disappointed me.

In 1931 the Rajputana Cricket Association was formed with its headquarters at Ajmer. Two years later in 1933 the MCC team led by DR Jardine visited Ajmer. The Mayo College Central Ground was the venue of the match in which I had the honour of captaining the Rajputana XI. Somehow, Jardine did not play the match and hence CP Walters captained the MCC. Apart from being a fine player, he was a thorough gentleman and we got along very well. The MCC

The last big match that I played was at Jaipur against the Silver Jubilee Overseas Team which visited India in 1953-54. This was like the previous two Commonwealth Teams but was named differently to mark the silver jubilee of the Indian Cricket Board. I was selected to lead the Raj Pramukh's XI against the foreign team. We got the opponents out for a moderate total, but then I had to leave the match owing to the demise of a close relative.

defeated Rajputana by an innings. Our innings folded up for a paltry 32, with Clark running through the side by taking 5 wickets for only 10 runs. From our side, Ranji and Azim Khan bowled well, which helped in keeping the MCC total down to 213 runs. On this occasion, Jardine and Walters stayed at the residence of Col. Betham, Commissioner, Ajmer, where I was also staying. In the evening, we all sat down at dinner, during the course of which Jardine did not utter a single word! This gave an inkling of his stern character and the ruthless manner in which he took recourse to bodyline bowling against the Australians. All said and done, Jardine was a very shrewd tactician and a great skipper. Also, I can never forget his superb innings of 127 on a sticky wicket at the Lords on a hot and humid day in 1927, when he was captaining the Gentlemen against the Players.

In the winter of 1935 an Australian Cricket Team led by Jack Ryder visited India and played several first class matches at different locations. The match with the Rajputana XI captained by me was interesting though with low scores and we lost by 7 wickets. The match gave me an idea of what a fine all-rounder Jack Ryder must have been in his heydays. Thereafter, I was selected to lead the Cricket Club of India against the Australian XI and the game was played on a perfect turf wicket at the Ferozshah Kotla Ground in Delhi. However, in the



Arthur Gilligan.

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So far, I have mentioned the names of my contemporaries who played Cricket in Rajputana in the 20s and early 30s. But, there were some others at that time who did not get the opportunity of appearing against visiting teams though they were good enough to do so. Among these, I would especially mention the names of Maharaj Virbhadra Singh (my younger brother), Bhim Sen, Ahmed and



Maharawal Lakshman Singh and MK Mahipal Singh (seated on chairs). Standing (L to R): MK Jai Singh, Maharaj Virbhadra Singh and MK Raj Singh, RK Samar Singh (seated below), 1947.

middle of the match news was received about the passing away of the King of England and so the match was abandoned. Viceroy Willingdon and Lady Willingdon had both come to watch the match; just before tea I was sent for and the Viceroy said: "The King is dead, the match is off. Please go back to your State and observe mourning according to custom."

Though I continued to play serious cricket occasionally till 1953, my best years were from 1925 to 1932. During this period, I was able to play 10 to 12 matches every season from October to March, including the Colvin Shield and the All-India Cricket Tournament matches. In these years I made twelve centuries, including a score of 215. In 1926-27 season, I scored four centuries. After 1932, most of my time was consumed in ruling my state and work connected with the Chamber of Princes. Besides, I took to hunting during periods of leisure.

Though Cricket was my favourite game and I remained captain of the Rajputana Cricket Team continuously till the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, my duties as a ruling prince compelled me to almost give up the game after 1939. Thereafter, I played very few matches. Of course, till 1947 I used to attend the Mayo College Prize Giving almost every year and enjoyed playing for the Old Boys against the College XI.

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Nanu from Durgapur, Rahim Bux and Banarsi Dass of Bisset Institute in Ajmer, Loveday of Abu Road, Ratilal and Erasha of Jalawar.

Looking back, I am reminded of the fact that I was a member of the Committee that conceived the idea of the Cricket Club of India (CCI) and witnessed the construction and completion of the Brabourne Stadium named after Lord Brabourne, Governor of Bombay, who was the Chairman of the afore-said committee. Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala was, of course, the prime mover and mainstay of the initiative. I attended the inauguration of the CCI in 1939, when Vijay Merchant played a classical innings of 140 runs. Now, four decades later, I am the oldest living Patron of CCI. Being a Life Member of the MCC, my name was proposed in 1928 by Maharaja Ranjit Singhji (Ranji), Jam Saheb of Nawanagar, and seconded by Sir Dorab Tata. My name remained on the waiting list for some years and then I was elected member of the celebrated club that is the headquarters of the Cricket World.

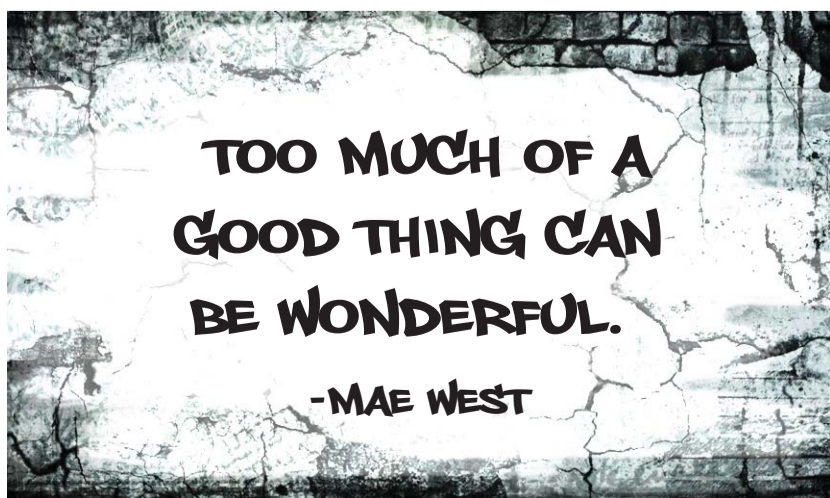
My home place, Dungarpur in south Rajasthan, is located among hills and undulating ground. Fifty years ago, we did not have a decent play-ground. The play-ground amidst pretty surroundings that the town boasts of today is the outcome of planning initiated way back in 1933 and the considerable effort, labour and cost involved in executing the project. I am happy that it provides much needed recreation to the local sportsmen, students and people, young and old alike.

In conclusion, I would like to say that Cricket has come to stay in India. Our people love sports, but more than any other game they are crazy about Cricket. Though time consuming, this game needs sustained effort on the part of the players and provides enjoyment to the spectators who gather in large numbers to see the game for several hours over one or more days. Though English in origin, Cricket has virtually become our National Game. May it bring glory to the country and may the sport-loving people of Rajasthan derive ever increasing joy playing or watching the game in its finest form.

Concluded

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THE WALL



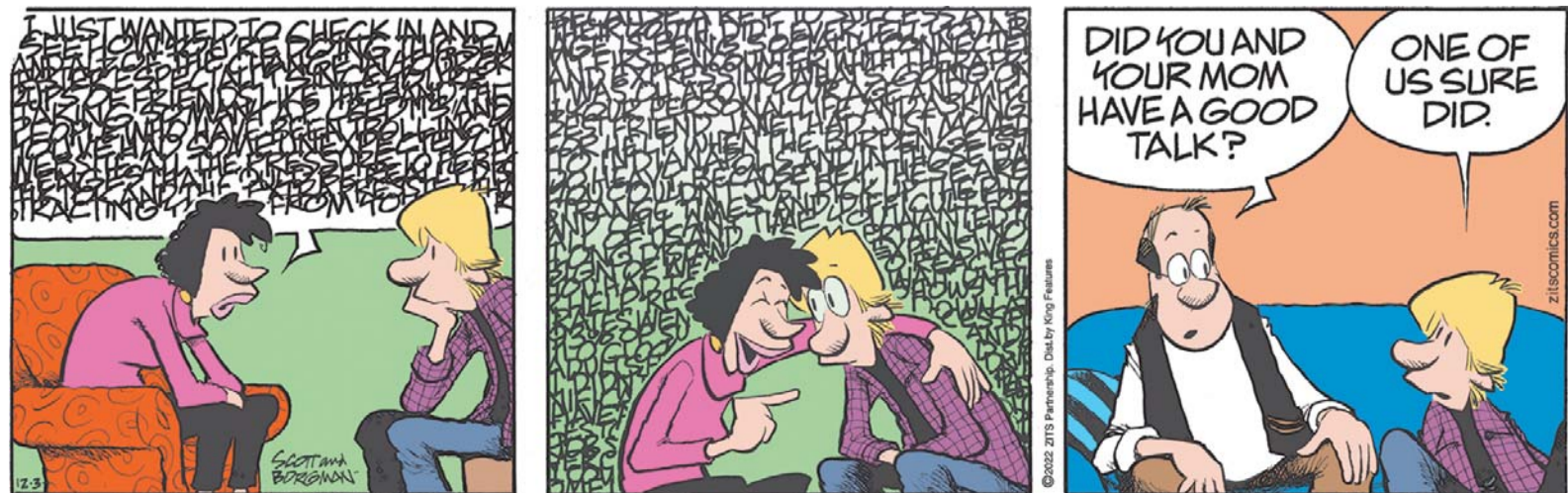
-MAE WEST

BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman