

It was an amazing evening for two reasons. Firstly, it was a very happy event with lots of dance teams doing either traditional or modern dances in their own way. Some had practiced only for a short time but just had a lot of fun - and some had obviously practised for hours and hours - but all the children were very happy to take part and gave a lot of pleasure to the audience.

The second reason why this was an amazing evening was that the standard of most of the dancing was very high indeed. When I said to a representative of one exceptional school, "Your girls must have practised so hard," she said, "Just for 2 weeks in their lunch hours," and I did not believe her! What we can be so proud of, is that our own two teams looked wonderful and danced wonderfully and we are very proud of them indeed.

All the teams doing the traditional dances looked stunning. I have to say, Bengali girls know how to look stunning! Their make-up, their jewelry (the jewelry boxes of all their female relatives must have been empty of gold ornaments!) and the design and colour of their clothes made them look breathtakingly beautiful even before they began to dance. Each dance was to different music, a different style and different mood. When they danced, each girl danced in her own special way and they moved wonderfully. The audience clapped and cheered and murmured their thanks and congratulations all through the evening and their cameras flashed. I hope such an event may become a regular one.

When this event was first suggested, at the very first meeting of English-medium schools that I attended, the International School, who hosted it, wanted it to be a competition and nearly all the Principals there shouted, "NO!" A competition would have spoiled the atmosphere. There would be tears from the losers! No, it was lovely as it was. The big news is - that you and your parents will have the chance to see our girls dancing on Saturday morning at our cultural event in the Upper Assembly Room beginning just after 8.30am - so please tell your parents to be there. Your

grannies and uncles can come too, if they can get up the stairs. If people are not there, they will miss a real treat. Yesterday, all pupils were given invitations to give to their parents to inform them of the Saturday meeting. How many of you remembered to give it to them? If you were absent yesterday, get your invitation from the office or Form teachers give out some extra copies. Be there on Saturday! Don't miss the dancing!

Now we have some presents to give to the girls in the two teams - tea-shirts to commemorate the extravaganza - and let us congratulate them all as we give them. And please can we first give a very grateful and admiring clap, to their trainer, Miss Nehreen Khan who has put so much of her very creative time and work into this event.



PREPARING TO HOST A MEETING

Assembly 66 – May 7th 2003

A friend of mine wants a puppy, a baby dog, for his little boy, who is 5 years old. Little Joshua is studying in our Reception class by distance learning because his father is the Indian Headmaster at the Mission High School in Haluaghat where I taught for 3 years. I wonder if any of you could help me find the right puppy for Joshua. It would have to be a puppy that has had all its right vaccinations – the injections against diseases - and has a good character suitable for the pet of a small child. And it must not be too big, because they live in a flat, and not too small because my other doggy friends there may think he was breakfast if he was too small – and eat him! He must be able to defend himself. He should not be a fancy bideshi dog because this dog will not be a fashion statement or a prestige object but a real pet. St Andrew's is a lovely old Mission campus with hostels and

playing-fields and gardens so it is doggy paradise. One day, I hope, Haluaghat will have some hotels so you can discover this little-known part of beautiful Bangladesh. Look at a map and follow the road due north of Dhaka, through Mymensingh, nearly to the border.

This Saturday is our Parents-Teachers Meeting. I hope all of you have told your parents about it -and especially told them they must be here in time for the cultural event in our Upper Assembly Room so that they can see our two wonderful teams of dancers. Mrs Islam and I have persuaded our Superintendent to allow the Senior School not to come in uniform but in best clothes, because we said we needed you to help with hosting our visitors. When we go to visit another school or other places, the people there welcome us and see we have a good time. To do this they need the social skill called 'hosting' – they are good hosts and hostesses. If your family do a lot of entertaining maybe they are training you how to welcome guests, serve them food, and see that they are happy and having a good time. It is a very important skill for boys as well as girls. It is really nice being welcomed to a home where the men and boys are gracious as well as the women and girls. Your school also should help you to develop this skill. Many of our parents may not know where to go to the cultural event, may not know where they can get some water or a cup of tea, where the toilets are or where the particular Form Teacher is that they want to see. Simply to smile at visitors can make them feel welcome. Some of them may want to see me in my office and, although I was promised a little notice on the landing saying 'To the Principal's Office', I have not got it yet so I am well hidden to visitors. We need your help, Senior School, and Mrs Islam is in charge of you.

Recently, you had your examinations. Saturday is a bit of an examination for our school. People who visit us, when we are open, are looking closely at us, they are checking whether our pupils know how to behave and whether the place is happy but

disciplined. Many people make an excuse to visit us on such occasions to look at the school and decide whether or not they would like THEIR child to be admitted as a pupil here. Remember the day there was a school excursion and someone saw how well a group of you were behaving, asked the name and address of the school and admitted their child here the next day. We have all got to be on our best behaviour but, I have to say, on such days, we usually have a very good time as well. I love meeting parents. I am extremely impressed by most of the people who send their children to this school. God bless you.



MY SECOND WORLD WAR CHILDHOOD *Assembly 67 – May 8th 2003*

Today is May 8th and there is a special reason why this was a very exciting day to have my birthday on in 1945. I wonder if any of you know why? My 7th birthday was.....on VE Day! Victory in Europe Day – the defeat of Germany and Italy and their allies after the Second World War. There was a little boy who was my enemy and his birthday was on May 7th and we waited to see whose birthday the war would end on – and it ended on mine! I was very pleased! The Allies had to wait until August for VJ Day – that was Victory over Japan Day which meant peace in Asia – and that was after the dropping of the terrible Atom Bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

I was brought up by parents who believed that children should not know how terrible the world was until they were old enough to cope – to be able to think about their world without being frightened or upset. They did not let me know how terrible the war was and, indeed what was going on. When I went to school later, I found that some of the children of