



## **Old Associates of Kinnaird (OAKS) Society**

**KINNAIRD COLLEGE FOR WOMEN  
L A H O R E**

February, 2009

Dear Oaks,

It is spring again and the time once more for OAKS to get together at Kinnaird College to meet old friends, exchange news and renew friendships. While the city of Lahore is awash with the colours of spring flowers and the fresh green of the trees and bushes, the political and economic situation in the country is dark and grave enough to dampen our spirits and reduce our enjoyment of the season.

To meet the challenges of our present predicament, we need to focus on finding solutions to our problems through a well-educated, enlightened and patriotic public. The role of educational institutions such as Kinnaird College, where a significant segment of our population does not only acquire quality education but also gains sound values and principles and develops a desire to make a difference, is to be appreciated and commended. It is because of what KC taught us and the way it shaped us that we return to it year after year on OAKS Day. It gives us the opportunity to renew our pledge to be useful members of our society. KCites are not drones, sluggards or parasites – they are achievers!

2008 was a year of a big change at KC. Kinnaird bid farewell to its dynamic and long-standing Principal, Dr. Mira Phailbus and welcomed Dr. Bernadette Dean in her place. Dr. Dean comes from Aga Khan University with experience and a rich academic background. She has a vision for KC based on three keywords: quality, relevance and transformation. She intends to provide KC students quality education through intellectually stimulating academic programmes that encourage students to become seekers of knowledge, critical enquirers and creative thinkers. These programmes would be made relevant to the needs of the modern world by being continually developed according to the requirements and changes taking place on local, national and global levels. The resultant educational experience and the personal development of each student would help her to understand the social, political and economic problems and issues around her and she would be stimulated by her education and training to address the problems to transform society. Dr. Dean, under the direction and assistance of the Board of Governors has already started implementing the vision, mission and ten year strategic development programme and its results are becoming visible on daily basis. Members of the OAKS General Body had an opportunity to meet Dr. Dean at their



meeting at KC in January. The gathering afforded Dr. Dean the opportunity to ask the OAKS for their vision for KC! We wish Dr. Dean many happy, fulfilling years at Kinnaird and best of luck with all her endeavours.

Dr. Bernadette Dean and Dr. Mira Phailbus at the handing over ceremony.

Dr. Mira Phailbus has been away on a well-earned vacation to be with her family in New Zealand. We expect her back in time to greet all of you at the OAKS meeting. She continues to be the Patron of the OAKS and will be actively involved with all our programmes.

A very moving ceremony had been arranged at Hladia Hall by Dr. Mira Phailbus to hand over her charge as Principal to Dr. Dean. She passed the 'light' of Kinnaird in form of lit 'diyas' to thank all those of her colleagues, friends and custodians staff who had been invaluable to her during her three decades at KC. Mrs. Souriya Anwar was given a special mention for her great contribution to the college during her tenure as OAKS President.



Mrs. Anwar receiving a "Diya" from a student.

In 2008, as always, Kinnaird students continued to do brilliantly everywhere – setting new records, breaking new grounds and meeting new challenges with confidence and commitment that is the hallmark of all KCites. Three of our girls represented Pakistan in the Maharajah Ranjit Singh Hockey Tournaments in Amritsar, India. The team won a silver medal.

The present OAKS Committee had plans for a number of events for its first year in office but due to the prevalent security and economic situation of our country, some had to be cancelled, others postponed. We are hoping for a more eventful 2009 starting with our first OAKS Day on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup>, March. The OAKS committee has arranged a "1/2 Price Treasure Chest Sale" on the 7<sup>th</sup> under which items, some brand new and others seldom used (contributed by OAKS) will be on sale from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Come with ready cash as unique articles will be available at this sale. All OAKS will be required to be in Hladia Hall

by 4:30 p.m. at which time our specially prepared entertainment programme will begin. For the first time, family members and associates of OAKS have also been roped in to provide a variety of unique items of good quality entertainment.

For later in the year, the OAKS Committee plans to stage a play under its banner. We hope to present one such play every year during our tenure. All OAKS who are interested or experienced in Performing Arts should get in touch with Ismat Riaz email:ismatriaz@gmail.com and Samar Gardezi email:samargardezi@hotmail.com of the OAKS Committee. If we can build a bank of dramatic / Performing Arts talent, it would make it much simpler to stage a play or arrange a cultural event with no wastage of time on preliminary planning and talent hunt.

Other social / cultural events planned for the Fall 2009 include a music concert, (perhaps Haddiqa Kayani's for which we need a sponsor), a Mazahiya Mushaira or an evening at Kinnaird with Mr. Zia Mohyuddin – like his traditional one on New Year's Eve. A Meena Bazaar with stalls selling products of OAKS women entrepreneurs is also being considered. All these are still in the planning stage and help in terms of input, involvement, finances from OAKS would be welcome. Please get in touch with Tanya Shah (cell no:0300 8402103) or Samar Gardezi (cell no: 0333 4254647) if you have any suggestions.

Now some news of other Oaks Chapters, California Oaks Chapter had a potluck luncheon for 2008 reunion at Ayesha Khan's house which was well attended. The reunion in New York was arranged by Neelam Muizzuddin: girls from age group 76 to 21 were present for the event. Farwa Zafar, President Islamabad Chapter, arranged a range of programmes including a fundraising Qawali by Farid Ayaz and Hamnawa.

OAKS are continuing to provide eight scholarships to deserving and needy students of Kinnaird, in Humanities and Science Programmes at Intermediate, Graduate and Post Graduate levels. The OAKS Gift shop is busy five days a week and Ms. Tahira Qadri, Samar Gardezi and Tanya Shah continue to look after its business. Products of NGOs like Care, PSRD, Xtra Corp have been added to the variety of goods available at the gift shop. We would be happy to include articles made by old students; many present students are already displaying their products in the shop.

Higher electricity, telephone, gas bills, educational fees, health aids, cost of clothing, food – everything points to the drastic rise in the cost of living. We grumble and groan but find ways and means to pay for our needs. The annual subscription is also a victim of inflation: it is being raised to Rs. 300/-. It will be collected by members of the OAKS committee near Hladia Hall fountain at 2:30 when you come for the sale and refreshments.

Let us pray 7<sup>th</sup> March is a breezy, bright and beautiful day with no darkness to cloud our happy reunion.

Looking forward to seeing you

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Neena Cheema". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'N'.

Neena Cheema

President