



SKA news

January - March 2014

MCI (P) 011/11/2013

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Naranjan Singh Bhramapura

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IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

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67th MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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Vice-President
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Vice-President
Gurrinder Singh Johal
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Assistant General Treasurer
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Sarjit Singh Sona
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Chairman Young Khalsa
Santokh Singh
Committee Members
Sarjit Singh
Gurdev Singh
Gurvinder Sidhu
Bal Shery Kaur Sidhu

President's Message

Update on Building Renovation

There has been a slight change in the closure date of the SKA building from July 2014 to September 2014 for the proposed renovation works. It will be from 1st September 2014 to 31st July 2015. The change in closure date is to provide more time for planning and building approval submissions to the authorities, tender-related activities that include tender document preparation, tender period, tender clarification and tender evaluation.

Survey and soil investigation works have been completed. Submission of the renovation plans and consultation with the URA is in progress, and the SKA Building Committee expects response from URA by the end of March 2014.

Punjabi TV Channel

The ethnic package group, including the Punjabi TV Channel, has been put "on hold" by Sony TV. Hence, it has been decided to keep this matter in abeyance for the time being.

Vesakhi Mela 2014

This year's Vesakhi Mela will be held at the SKA grounds on Sunday, 27th April 2014. The theme of the Mela is "One Dream, One Hope, One Community". Based on the theme, the activities for the day will be planned and organised to enhance community cohesion through culture and sports, and to reinforce SKA's efforts to integrate people of different ages and ethnicities. A lively programme is also being developed by the Organising Committee. The Guest-of-Honour for the event is Mr S. Iswaran, Minister, Prime Minister's Office & Second Minister for Home Affairs and Trade & Industry.

Health talk on prevention of heart disease

As part of our effort to create awareness on heart disease amongst the community, I am pleased to announce that Dr Rohit Kurana, a cardiologist at Gleneagles Hospital will deliver a talk entitled "Heart Disease in Indians: the Art of Risk assessment - Awareness, Reduction and Treatment". The half-an-hour talk which will be followed by a question and answer session will be held on Saturday, 3rd May 2014 from 4.00 – 5.00p.m. Tea will be served after the talk. All members and their friends/family members are encouraged to attend to become aware of cardiac risk and prevention of heart disease. Kindly call the SKA Office by 1st May 2014 to register your attendance.

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LOHRI 2014

Lohri is usually celebrated by families whose children have been recently married or they have been blessed with grandchildren. It also signifies the end of the winter season in Punjab, India. At SKA, Lohri was celebrated on Saturday, 4th January 2014.

The Ladies' Wing Committee warmly welcomed more than six hundred ladies of multi-tier generations who came

together for the occasion. The event was full of joy and merriment. Ladies sang folk songs, played games and also performed the traditional dance of Gidda. Ladies, who had contributed towards the Lohri, engaged in the activities with their daughters-in-law and grandchildren.

A performance by the young ladies from the Raunak Trinjna Di group,

and a mono-acting performance by Sukhdeep Kaur contributed to the vibrant programme of the day. Jessie, our SKA Management Committee member, kept everyone enthralled with her wit and humour.

A bonfire was lit around 5 p.m. for the ladies to sing and dance around it while sesame seeds were thrown into it. Sumptuous tea was served at the beginning of the celebration, and dinner at the close of the event. The event was telecast by the Mediacorp's Indian Beat on Wednesday, 8th January 2014.

KHALSA KINDERGARTEN

Khalsa Kindergarten welcomed children from Sessions One and Two on 2nd January 2014 and 3rd January 2014 respectively. There was a lot of excitement and anxiety. Nursery children were accompanied by parents on the first day. However, it did not take them long to settle down. Separation anxiety was overcome by the love and care of their teachers. Various games and activities were organised in classes to make learning fun and exciting.

Conversational Mandarin classes for the Nursery, K1 and K2 started on 8th January 2014. Children learn common vocabulary, greetings, rhymes and songs during the Mandarin class. K1 and K2 children also



attended swimming classes on 14th January 2014 at the Jalan Besar Sports Council Pool. They were accompanied by their class teachers and parent-volunteers, who provided assistance.

The enrolment for Term 1 in 2014 is 290 children, which is higher than the 270 children enrolled in Term 1 in 2013.

Dialogue Session with University Youth

The year kicked off with a meeting between the SKA Management Committee members and about twenty-five student representatives from our three public universities.

It was a fruitful meeting with the committee members of the respective Sikh Societies from NUS, NTU and SMU turning up for an informal tea session on Friday, 31st January 2014 at SKA premises.

The youth were very forthcoming in suggesting activities to involve their peers with the SKA. One definite

activity to be held later this year is the Sikh University Games. SKA agreed to organise a sports carnival for games such as Futsal soccer, cricket sixes and netball. In addition, an inter-varsity Bhangra competition is also in the pipeline.

The University students have also requested SKA to organise the "Top of the Job" talk in one of their university campuses, promising support for the event. They felt that the SKA venue was a bit out of the way for them to attend such talks.



Based on the students' request, the SKA agreed to host an annual tea reception for the handover among the incoming/outgoing universities committees to ensure a continued partnership between the universities and the SKA.

Look out for further developments in the Young Khalsa Wing of the SKA!

HOCKEY



The SKA Hockey Committee aims to provide a platform for Sikhs in Singapore to learn and grow as players and individuals while fostering strong bonds within the community. The core vision of our newly formed committee is to ensure the progression of Khalsa hockey locally and internationally with continued learning through sharing, training, competing and building a strong and healthy team by continued promotion of the sport through outreach programmes.

It provides numerous avenues for our players to develop and grow as individuals by participating in tournaments sanctioned by the

Singapore Hockey Federation as well as other organisations.

We have participated in the 2014 National Junior League U-19 Division Two category. Presently, our players are representing Khalsa in the National Hockey Division Two League and the Annual Hockey Liga. We train on Tuesday and Thursday in the evening at the Singapore Khalsa Association. The activities are meant to gear our players for the upcoming Gurdwara Cup 2014, which would be held in Johor Bahru.

The committee will be starting satellite clinics in the future to provide exposure towards the game.



Those who are keen in joining our hockey team or are willing to assist us in any way can contact our convener, Mr.Gurvinder Singh Sidhu @ 94564405 or our Head Coach, Mr.Paramjit Singh @ 98231570. We look forward to your journey with us.

SRC Soccer Quadrangular 2014

Singapore Khalsa Association NFL team was invited by the Singapore Recreation Club to participate in a quadrangular tournament in February 2014. The games were held on each Saturday for the month of February, with 3/4th placing and finals held on 8th March 2014.

After picking up draws against SRC and NFA and with a victory against Balestier, the finals was eventually between Khalsa and SRC. After a tense final, SRC emerged as overall champions beating Khalsa by 2 goals to 1.

Even though the Khalsa team missed out on becoming overall champions, the quadrangular was a great opportunity to test the team's credentials to compete in the NFL Division 1, 2014 and provide a starting platform for the team to improve in this year's league.



Our Pioneer Series (Part 1)

Pioneering Stalwart: LTC (Retd)

Jaswant Singh Gill

LTC (Retd) Jaswant Singh Gill, son of Mr Chanan Singh was a founding member of the Singapore Khalsa Association which he spear-headed from 1966 to 1981. Since then he has been a trustee of the association, which was set up by a small group of Sikh youths who gathered together to play football, hockey and cricket. This series will highlight some of their experiences and contributions to the SKA.

Although the series should rightfully start with the key founder of the SKA, the Late Justice Choor Singh, the initial issue will be dedicated to LTC (Retd) Jaswant Singh Gill as he is the last surviving founding member.

Journey to Singapore

Jaswant Singh Gill was born in Moga, Punjab in 1923. It was quite an important place, with a railway station and transport network. He began studying at the Khalsa School, Moga which was established by the British and financed by the Maharaja of Patiala. It was one of the few schools that taught English.

He came to Singapore in 1929 with his uncle. As it was the tradition in those days, his father had helped his uncle, Thaman Singh, to be educated and settled in Singapore, and consequently this was a form of repaying that favour. His uncle was then working as a clerk in the Singapore Police Force.

He recounts the arduous journey by train with his parents to Calcutta and then to

Rangoon on the deck of a plain cargo ship as there were hardly any passenger ships plying the route. They had to bring along their own rations and cookware to survive on board. He recalls "...if it rained, it's too bad...". They stayed there for a few days before coming to Penang. When a ship was available they came to St George's Island, Singapore, where they were quarantined for about two weeks. On being given a medical clearance, they were put on a "tongkang" headed for Singapore harbour, from where some Sikh friends took them to the Silat Road Sikh Temple.

Early School Days

At the temple they stayed in a rented room. In those days the temple was the Police Gurudwara and was a sort of transit area for Sikhs coming to work from Punjab as policemen in British Borneo, Hong Kong and even Shanghai. His family stayed there for some years, and as the Radin Mas School was close by, he spent his early primary school days there. He did well in English and had a double promotion from Standard One to Standard Three.

The family then moved on to 24 Race Course Road – so named because of the horse-racing course at what is now an open field in Farrer Park. Besides his parents, and uncle, there was also the family of Gulzar Singh – each family living in a single room of the house to make it more affordable to rent. The families shared the ground floor and kitchen. Jaswant spent the rest of his primary school days attending the nearby McNair



School at Towner Road, adjacent to the present Central Sikh Temple.

Just before his Standard Five School Leaving Examination, he recalls his elders returning to India to visit their families, and he putting up in cow-sheds and helping out Mall Singh, the father of Col (Retd) Gurcharan Singh at MacPherson Road where they had a thriving cattle trading business. When the families returned, Mr Jaswant's family moved to Rangoon Road, which was beside the then Rangoon Road Primary School.

The principals of schools those days were always Europeans, and his principal even used to teach English. His English improved, and he did well in the examination to qualify for a place in Raffles Institution at about the same time when Mr Lee Kuan Yew studied there, he believes, although the two never met.

The tougher secondary school environment at Raffles Institution, where students were no longer spoon-fed impacted his studies, especially mathematics and science. He attributes his eventual ability to clear the Senior Cambridge Examination to his mentor, Mr K. M. R. Menon, an Indian BA and LLB graduate. It was rare to have a degree those days, however Mr Menon distinguished himself by having two degrees.

Look out for the next article on Mr Jaswant on how he secured a job and his early links with SKA.

UP-COMING EVENTS

APRIL	6	Vesakhi Pool
	25	Vesakhi Golf
	27	Vesakhi Mela
MAY	3	Health talk on Prevention of Heart Disease
	16	Vesakhi Mela Thank you Dinner
JUNE	4 - 7	63rd Gurdwara Cup
	27	Gurdwara Cup Appreciation Dinner