



Dear Readers,

Most of you will agree that 2020 was a year that made us reassess our priorities and the lives we live. It showed us how luxuries had become our necessities and how it would not harm us to slow down a bit. What strikes me, however, is that amongst all the negativity and doom-mongering, humanity shone through. Kudos to the millions of doctors, nurses, volunteers and frontline workers who chose to put themselves and, sometimes, even their families at risk to serve others.

I am proud to say that the entire Support Elders team did not shy away from its duty. Many even went out of their defined roles to serve our members for that was the need of the hour. My colleagues ensured that our members did not have to worry about food and other necessities even if they were down with Covid-19. We were always just a phone call away.

Our digital initiatives also helped to bring some light into the lives of our members who have been confined within their homes since the beginning of the lockdown. The Support Elders family stood strong amidst the pandemic and the lockdown as well as Amphan, the super cyclone that ravaged the city.

It is time to look forward now. We will move ahead with what we have learnt from our experience of 2020 towards a better tomorrow.

Happy New Year!

Apratim Chattopadhyay

Support Elders opens in Durgapur

Now on a fast-expansion mode, with its well-entrenched technology and larger complement of member care associates, recruited from former armed forces personnel, Support Elders is rapidly exploring opportunities to serve elders residing in cities and towns beyond Kolkata. Our new Durgapur office will serve Durgapur, Bidhannagar, Benachity, Muchipara, IQ City, Kabiguru, Ambuja...

SERVING
THE STEEL CITY

All this has been possible because of the unflinching support from our members and their excellent testimonials that are have led to senior citizens seeking our services in different locations across the country. Support Elders is now serving Kolkata and a growing region in Greater Kolkata, Uttarpara, Konnagar, Dunlop, Rishra and important cities such as Durgapur and surrounding areas.

Durgapur coordinates:
A-21 Moulana Azad Sarani
Non Company City Center,
Durgapur 713216,
Bardhaman Paschim, W B

Friday NIGHT Specials

Let's go to Firpo's:

December 25, 2020:

It was Christmas Day and our members and friends got together for some good Yuletide nostalgia, recreating for us the lost world of Firpo's, amidst much delight and excited reminiscences after the event, with requests for more such programmes.



The stitch that ran:

December 11, 2020:

Ms Shamlu Dudeja's remarkable work with Kantha artisans of Bengal was woven into a beautiful documentary with vibrant images of intricate kantha stitching and its use in fashion wear for the 21st century, to great appreciation by our members.

Support
Elders
INTEGRATED CARE

DOWN MEMORY LANE

On a Fairchild Packet to Ladakh and back

A career in defence is action-packed. Flying for the Indian Air Force, as our member, Wng Cmdr A. C. Roychowdhury, did, life could be quite a thriller and the memories lifelong. Posted in Ladakh for six months in the early sixties, our member has many fascinating stories to share.

Our member, Wng Cmdr A. C. Roychowdhury, then serving in the Indian Air Force (IAF), was posted in Pathankot with his family, when he received orders to move to Ladakh for a six-month tenure. He would be flying the Fairchild Packet from Pathankot to Ladakh.

The Fairchild Packet was designed to carry a limited number of passengers. There was also the Antonov An-12, a four-engined turboprop transport aircraft designed in the Soviet Union.

The memories of those flights still give him goosebumps. Once, flying as a passenger from Pathankot to Ladakh, he had experienced how difficult it was for the pilot to manoeuvre the aircraft between the mountains. Any error would mean the wings crashing into the ranges and loss of lives. Sometimes the already precarious situation was made worse by the thick clouds covering the entire stretch. The moment the pilot thought that he had survived one challenge, another lot of deep clouds would envelope everything.

The memories of flying with one's heart in one's mouth have not been dimmed over time. The pilots would heave a sigh of relief only when the aircraft finally landed in Ladakh. Even the landing was fraught with dangers because there was hardly a runway. It was just a small asphalted stretch. There was zero margin for error even while landing; the danger of the aircraft crashing into the surrounding mountains was very real.

For the six months that he was stationed at Ladakh, he was in a wooden house and it was bitterly cold outside. The floor was made of wood too and the orderlies lit charcoal and wood fires inside the rooms to keep them heated. Green vegetables were a dream there and they depended on the dried tinned food, cooked by the chef. The office was a walking distance from the house. Some personnel developed breathing difficulties in the high altitude and had to stay indoors till they got acclimatised. Indeed,

breathlessness was part of the territory.

Fortunately, our member had no such problems and he could stay outdoors, playing volley ball in the evenings. That was enormously enjoyable after a strenuous day's work.

The only other entertainment was watching movies. Indeed, as Wng Cmdr Roychowdhury jokingly said, movies were the only occasion when they saw normal people, because there was no one around. There was no other source of livelihood. The only living beings, other than the defence personnel, were the yaks that came within sight at times. His most cherished memory was watching the movie "Saheb Bibi Ghulam" in the army movie hall. "I have watched several movies but watching this one at that high altitude and severe cold is still fresh in my mind". SE

(As told to Support Elders by our Member)



DOWN MEMORY LANE

All aboard Noah's Arc

With a husband in the foreign currency exchange business and in international trade as well, it was only natural for our member, Ms F. Silliman, to have unique travelling experiences throughout the world. There is, however, one story that she loves to share.

Our member, Ms F. Silliman, is a much-travelled lady, thanks to her husband's profession that involved international travel. There are fascinating stories but none more memorable than her journey on a cargo ship from Calcutta to the U.K. with her husband, mother and three children.

It was the company that made the journey so interesting. The cargo ship was carrying the customarily traded goods from Calcutta: tea and jute. She expected to have other passengers on board as well.

Before they started the journey though, the captain had some interesting tidings: "I have arranged for a floating zoo for your kids!"

Ms Silliman thought that he was joking with her but she soon realised that the ship only had three cabins: one for the captain and two for guests. When she went to the deck, an amazing sight awaited her. Hanging around on the deck were her co-passengers: some 11 elephant cubs, about four huge cages of birds of different species and few monkeys!

The children were absolutely excited to meet their co-passengers. Imagine! a ship full of animals for company; it was almost like Noah's Arc. They were being transported from Kolkata to a zoo in the U.K.

The kids got into the act of being friendly co-passengers. They spent the days on the deck, bathing them and playing with them, save for the time

that their grandmother sat with them for their studies.

The ship harboured in Chennai and Cochin en route to pick up food for all its passengers before travelling through the Suez Canal.

Her son, who was very fond of bananas and milk, managed to get one or two everyday from the bunch of bananas kept for the elephant cubs. The captain told him in jest: "Those bananas are for the elephants and if you eat them, I will offer you to the cubs as a meal."

After the ship crossed the Suez Canal and entered Sudan, there were new passengers on board.

A herd of cows joined the floating zoo, which was a matter of special delight for her son,

who thought that he could have any amount of milk that he wished to.

The ship sailed through Alexandria and reached the U.K. after five weeks but there was so much happening on board that it seemed like five days! Like all good things that come to an end, the ship reached the U.K and the camaraderie with the animal kingdom was over.

The trip was fun, of course, but an excellent lesson for the children.

Ms Silliman reminisced that it was like a school away from school with the children learning so much about the denizens of the animal kingdom. SE

(As told to Support Elders by our Member)



Picture Courtesy: Freepik

Big Ticket

January 22, 2021

Remembering Netaji on the eve of his birthday with a fascinating interview: Life and Times with Netaji's INA, with nonagenarian Bharati 'Asha' Sahay Choudhury, Lieutenant Colonel of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. She speaks to Support Elders on her family, her association with Netaji and her experiences in the INA.

Club Couture

In keeping with our commitment to engage with you over a broader canvas of events, we wish to announce the following communities or clubs so that you can pursue your interests with like-minded members and invite guests to the club meets as well.

- It will be your club/community and we will be facilitators only.
- You can decide how many times the club will meet and on what days of the week.
- Ideally, these could be morning clubs because there is something or the other by way of engagements every other evening but we are flexible on this.
- We welcome members from all across the country to make these vibrant hubs of experience sharing and fun.

We are ready to launch two clubs for which there have been more enthusiastic response.

Antakshari club: You get to pit your knowledge of songs against each other in a happy sing and win club, SE-SING2WIN

Adda club: Let conversation flow with jukti-tokko-goppo in our SE-ADDA. No room for the tongue-tied. Or is there... room for listeners only? You decide.

Other clubs in the offing are:

Cookery club, Quiz club, Book club, Photography club, Drama club, Movie club.

JANUARY

01.1.2021

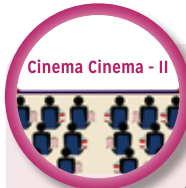


Hello 2021!

Welcoming 2021 with a members' medley and a nostalgic trip down memory lane

Image Courtesy: Pixabay

08.1.2021



Cinema Cinema - II

Saptarshi Roy Bardhan takes us on the second leg of the journey into the chequered history of Kolkata cinema halls

15.1.2021



Excavating Moghalmari

Cinema for a Cause takes us on an amazing discovery of the 6th Century AD ruins of Buddhist monasteries at Moghalmari

Image Courtesy: Cinema for a Cause

22.1.2021



Life and Times with Netaji's INA.

Nonagenarian Bharati 'Asha' Sahay Choudhury, Lieutenant Colonel of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment speaks to Support Elders

Image Courtesy: Sanjay Choudhry

29.1.2021



Cinema Cinema - III

Saptarshi Roy Bardhan takes us on the third and final leg of the journey into the chequered history of Kolkata cinema halls

Image Courtesy: Pixabay

FEBRUARY

05.2.2021



Gourmet Grandmoms

Finger-licking recipes from Support Elders members and more

Image Courtesy: Pixabay

12.2.2021



The Spirit of Innovation

Corporate leader and Support Elders member, Mr A. Mookherjea, talks to us about innovation.

Image Courtesy: Pixabay

19.2.2021



Chhatrapati Shivaji

A special programme on Chhatrapati Shivaji on his birth anniversary

Image Courtesy: wikipedia

26.2.2021



Talking Tabla

Percussionist, Surojato Roy, takes us into the world of talking *tablas*, explaining the language of the bols

Image Courtesy: Pixabay

* Events subject to last minute changes due to unforeseen circumstances

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