

AIR-INDIA

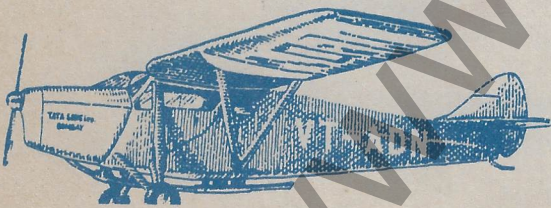
Magic Carpet

VOL. 20 NO. 10

OCTOBER 1976



THE AIR-INDIA PHENOMENA



FLYING in the 'thirties was an adventure for the elite – and the courageous. One such intrepid flier was J. R. D. Tata, who took off in a Puss Moth forty-four years ago this month, on an inaugural flight from Karachi to Bombay. The aircraft, powered by a Gypsy-3 engine, carried 120 lbs. of postal packets. The distance from Karachi to Ahmedabad took four hours and 15 minutes with another two hours 35 minutes to Bombay. Another contemporary and a daring man, Nevill Vintcent, took over from 'Jeh', as he is affectionately referred to, and continued the leg down to Madras, stopping enroute at Bellary, to complete the journey of some 1,300 miles.

In October that year, J. R. D. was a gangling, young man of 29 years. Today at 73, Jehangir Ratanji Dadabhoi Tata, acknowledged Father of Civil Aviation in India, continues to be Chairman of Air-India.

In 1933, Mr Tata acquired a Fox Moth and in the later years a Leopard Moth. It was about this time that he had an amusing flying experience. One day, while flying a Leopard Moth, he went up to 16,000 feet, and, after a while, felt air-sick. He descended, but felt uneasy, so decided to land and rest for a while until he felt better. He landed on a small field and lay down under the wing, and fell asleep. When he woke up, he found himself hemmed in by shepherds sitting round the aeroplane staring at him. One of them walked up to him and very gravely gave him some water and a banana, which apparently was their panacea. J. R. D., equally gravely, ate it, salaamed his thanks, got into the aircraft and gingerly flew off. It may remind some of Gulliver and the Lilliputians.

Till 1947, Tata Airlines ruled the Indian skies. On March 8, 1948, Air-India International

was born, with a weekly service from Bombay to London via Cairo and Geneva three months later. Since then, it has been roses, roses all the way. In 1953, Air-India was nationalised and Indian Air Transport underwent a metamorphosis. The scale of operations and the route system expanded rapidly. Before long Air-India bought Boeing 707s, and in the seventies, the Boeing 747s. From a total of four stations served in 1948, Air-India now serves 35 online and 102 offline offices all over the world. From a fleet of just three Constellations, Air-India is the proud owner of a fleet of nine Boeing 707s and five Boeing 747s.

Today Air-India has a massive engineering complex and a hotel to boot and, as a recent Air-India hoarding declared, "I streak around the world ... covering strategic places." Air-India operates to five continents.

Forty-four years later we pay tribute to the small coterie of dedicated men who, despite odds, set up an airline of which we are the proud inheritors. It was one small step for these pioneers; it was a leap forward for the Indian nation. -N.N.

RANDOM JOTTINGS

By Designing Mind

MANY many years ago, when I was a gay young bachelor, footloose and fancy free, I used to walk sundry young ladies down to Nariman Point ostensibly to watch ships that pass in the night. Out there, far removed from humanity and with lapping waves as our only companions, we held hands and looked up at the stars.

Today, Nariman Point is a concrete jungle which has sprung up on what was formerly mostly water. And I would no more dream of holding hands with a girl out there than I would of taking Sukhi for a moonlight stroll down Juhu Beach (besides, what would my wife say?)

Standing at the most strategic spot of Nariman Point, with 16,83,444 cubic feet of earth-and-rock excavation to its credit, is the Air-India building --- a landmark in Bombay's constantly changing landscape, a towering structure of concrete and steel 24 storeys and 346 feet above the ground with two basements below sea-level. The illuminated Centaur sign atop the building is mounted within a 24-foot diameter steel ring and is the tallest revolving sign in the country, being just under 50 feet high.

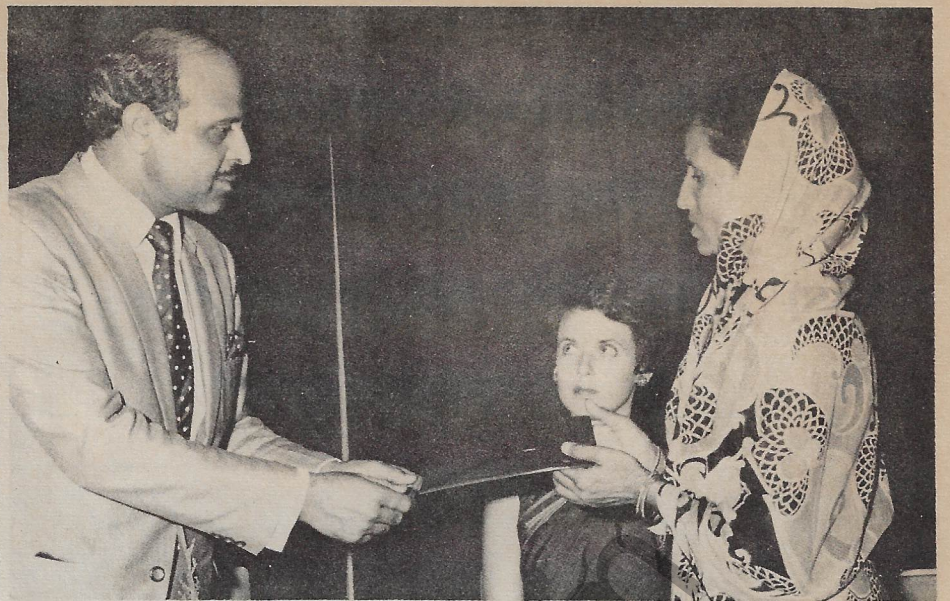
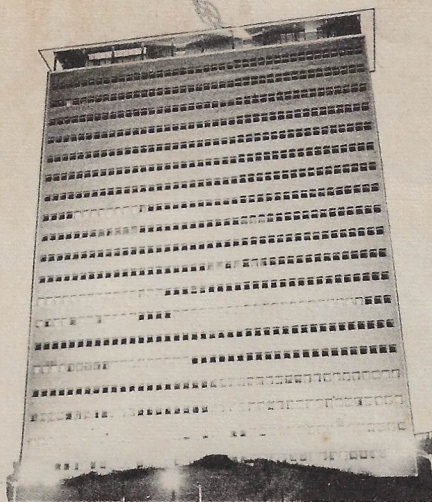
There are six auto-tronic elevators in two separate banks. They have been so designed as to cause maximum confusion to unwary visitors, some of whom land up in the basement when they are headed for the First National City Bank, and others who shoot up to the 21st floor when all that they want is an Air-India timetable from the Booking Office and the chance of travelling on Bombay's first escalator. Rumour has it that our Security people are still looking for an elderly gentleman with a white beard who entered the building on August 1, 1976 and has still not yet emerged. Perhaps he has fallen into one of the two underground tanks (capacity 1.80 lakh gallons) and has been pumped up to the overhead tank on the 23rd floor. Or maybe he has been inexplicably and inextricably entangled himself with the (first time ever) single-pipe system for soil and waste water plumbing.

There is one interesting aspect which I have not examined personally. While provision has been made for water, lighting, air-conditioning, fire-fighting, car-parking, earthquake-resistance, cafeteria, restaurant, auditorium and so on, the ubiquitous dubbawalla who is so much part of Bombay's life has not been forgotten. A special room has been provided for his customers on the third floor with a separate lift in the rear of the building to bring up the tiffin boxes so that there is "no mixing of the dubbawalla traffic with the regular traffic."

The 8-foot wide promenade that skirts the entire top floor provides an unbeatable view. On a clear day, you can see the Arabian Sea to the west, the Bay of Bengal to the east and, with a little imagination, Mount Everest to the north-east.

A word about the building's telephones. Very few people know that when Bombay was bequeathed by the Portuguese to the British in the 17th century on the marriage of Catherine of Braganca and Charles the Second, the telephone system formed part of the dowry -- and has remained unchanged ever since. And, with the formation of a new A.I. Communications Dept, we have a new refinement which banishes the battery of telephones from an executive's desk and replaces it with a single instrument complete with buttons, knobs, flashing lights, crossed connections and confusion confounded. For three days when a telephonic devil got my direct line plugged into the A-I switchboard, I got so many calls --- for Madan Lal ("Sorry, but he's gone to hospital, he's just become the father of twins"), for Meher Moos ("She's been sent off to Siberia"), for Joe Andrade ("He says he doesn't want to talk to you"), from A-I Poona ("No, this is Air-India Hyderabad") --- that I decided to claim a telephone-operating allowance. I wanted to discuss the matter with Aspi Jussawalla, but I couldn't get him on the phone.

However, notwithstanding, nevertheless, the Air-India HQ building is a marvel of planning, design and good timing. It was put up when both land and construction were comparatively cheap and today more than pays for itself. And I may not be able to walk down Nariman Point and gaze into a girl's eyes but, if my timing is correct, I can stand, from Floor G to Floor 20, with a bevy of beautiful damsels like a strangled sardine --- cheek to cheek from head to toe.



Mr Misra presents the cheque to Mrs Kale. Mrs Misra in centre.

A Touching Gesture

IN an unusual gesture of compassion, Traffic Staff at Bombay Airport raised nearly Rs 5,000/- through voluntary contributions, for the widow of Mr M. B. Kale, 35-year-old loader who died suddenly in August this year.

The cheque was presented to Mrs Kale by Mr R. P. Misra, Manager, Santa Cruz, during a variety entertainment programme organised by the Traffic Staff at the Navinbhai Thakkar Hall in Vile Parle last month.

Two well-known personalities in Bombay's entertainment world and both Air-India staff - Ramdas Kamat from Traffic and Balakram Worlikar from Transport - took the lead in organising the four-hour programme.

Music of all types from film songs to orchestral compositions and from light-classical vocal to solo instrumental dominated the programme, with folk dances and Bharat Natyam added for variety. Comic relief was provided by some excellent mimicry.

Ramdas Kamat made a tremendous impact with one of his light classical stage songs. His second song was equally good. It has been recorded and the disc should be available shortly.

Balakram Worlikar, as usual, was at his best with his folk dance troupe. His Punjabi Bhangra dance drew loud applause.

Among the other performers, Pareshe Pewekar was impressive with his very beautiful voice and young Tanya Chawla and the two Rao sisters captivated the audience with their Bharat Natyam.

Mr Misra congratulated his staff for putting up 'such a fine show' and

expressed his appreciation of their gesture in raising a fund for Mrs Kale. He said that it was a pleasant surprise to find such rich talent amongst Traffic staff and hoped there would be more such get-togethers in future.

Earlier Mr Kamat welcomed the guests and said that but for Mr Misra's encouragement the programme would not have taken place.

Paying a tribute to the memory of Mr Kale, one of his colleagues, Mr Pawar suggested that Traffic staff should think of having a permanent fund to help staff. They should contribute a small sum every month towards the fund.

Mrs Purnima Hemadi proposed a vote of thanks.

- K. S. Mhatre

PROGRESSIVE USE OF HINDI IN AIR-INDIA

The Official Languages Act 1963 and the rules made thereunder are applicable to Air-India. As such a Hindi Unit has been set up in the Personnel Department with a Hindi Liaison Officer-in-Charge. An Official Languages Implementation Committee has also been constituted, and departmental representatives nominated. The Committee will co-ordinate the work regarding use of Hindi in the Corporation and review the progress made, from time to time. Regional Committees have also been set up at Delhi, Calcutta and Madras.

Ramdas Kamat renders one of his light classical compositions, accompanied by the table and tanpura.



TREKKING FOR FUN

THE Sixth National Himalayan Trekking Programme under the aegis of Youth Hostels Association and under the stewardship of Comdr Jogindar Singh was organised differently this year. Adequate publicity through the media generated unprecedented interest all over the country in the trekking movement. A record number of participants, over 500, including some foreigners joined this trekking holiday to the Kishtwar area of Jammu and Kashmir State.

The participants joined in groups of 20-30 every day and it took them 15 days to cover the circular trek of over 200 km. A chain of trekking groups was formed around the trail. All the participants went back as ardent trekking enthusiasts.

In the photograph President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed is seen congratulating Comdr Jogindar Singh on the grand success of the 6th National Himalayan Trekking Programme. Mrs Aziza Imani, M. P. looks on.





BOND STREET BABBLE

TREVOR TURNER eavesdrops



Cooks at work

RECENTLY London staged a series of four Workshops for the staff members of Thomas Cook Ltd. This was organised by Phyllis Bocarro of London Sales, who looks after all the Cooks Offices in London. The Workshops were arranged with the collaboration of Asha Malhotra, the Director of the Tourist Office in London, together with her Deputy M.N. Ganguli. Approximately eighteen people attended each Workshop, which included a talk from U.K. Passenger Sales Manager, Pat Conway, an audio-visual presentation about India and Air-India.

Climbing for pleasure

Chris Bonington, the first climber to reach the summit of Annapurna in Nepal in 1960 and leader of the 1975 Everest team, flew off once more with us to make an attempt on two peaks in the Kishitwar Himalayas, 'purely for pleasure' as he put it. Although the peaks are only around 20,000 feet in altitude, Bonington was assisted by only one other climber, Ronnie Richards, and an Indian Liaison Officer. To welcome Chris on board at London was our hostess Sulakshana Samarath.

NEW YORK NEWS

M. Chudasama



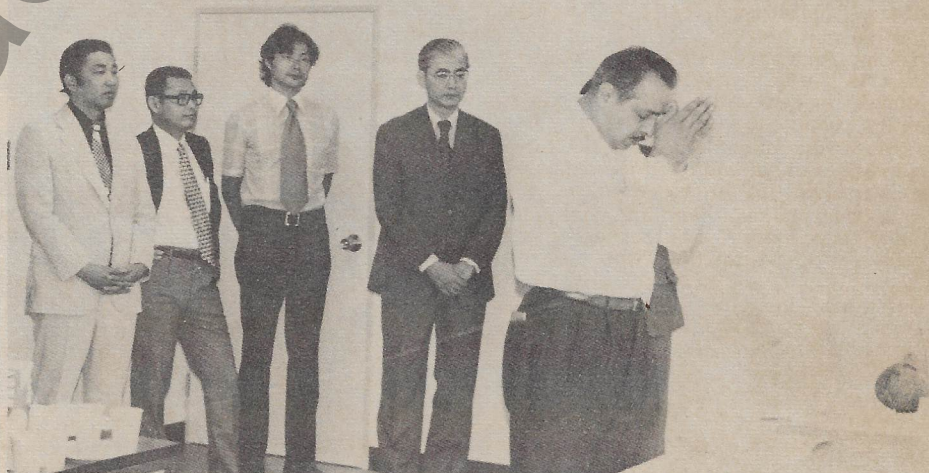
RAM KOHLI, who has ably represented the Travel Corporation of India for the past several years in New York, and was the pioneer representative of India's tour operators both in North America and Europe, was given a farewell party hosted by Anil Kadam, our Assistant Reservations Manager and attended by Mr Peter Mahta, RD-USA & Canada.

see him go up in smoke!

Ace Lenswoman

Our longtime Public Relations secretary, Mrs Lauraine Schallop, we discovered through the courtesy of the New York Post, New York's only afternoon newspaper, is a brilliant photographer. Their jury of well-known photographers selected the colour slide (above), taken on her last visit to India, as one of the winners from a staggering thirty-five thousand entries.

New Office....New Link



Above, Air-India recently opened a new offline office at Kobe, Japan. A puja ceremony was performed by the Assistant Manager, Mr N.R. Khambolja, at a function which was well attended by staff from the Osaka office as well. Below, an Indian delegation led by Mr N.K. Mukarji, Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of CA&T, signed an agreement in Lagos to operate air services between the two countries. Mr R. Venkataraman, Director of Planning & International Relations, second from right, was a member of the Delegation.



Summer Show

DURING one of the hottest periods of the U.K. summer heatwave, we exhibited at the Royal Show, which was attended by approximately 191,684 visitors this year. Our stand was manned by Jack Haslam from Birmingham covering Air Cargo, Mike Quinton from London for Passenger

Sales and Ivanka Kuliskova from Traffic. A number of enquiries were received from members of the public who visited the stand and we also ran a competition for the visitors to the show plus the representatives from many of the other hundreds of exhibitors.



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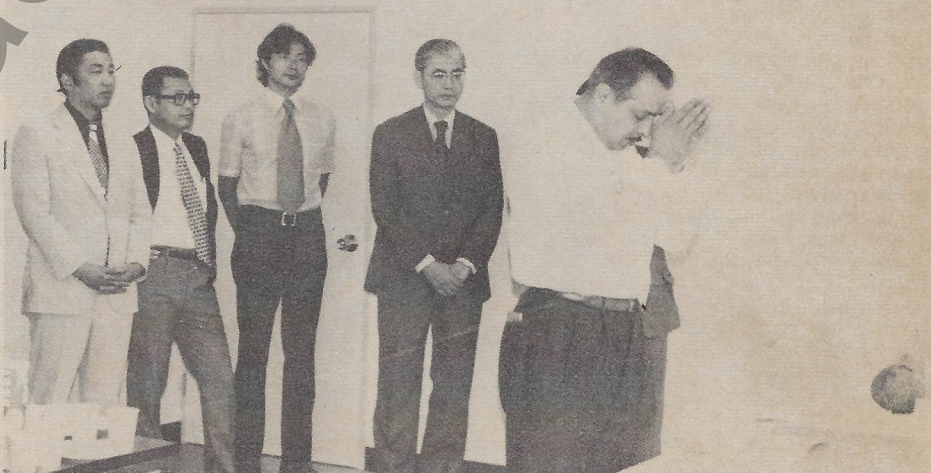
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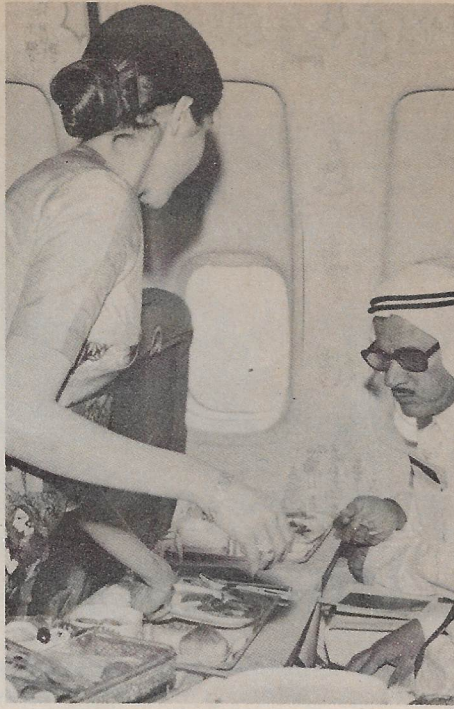
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A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN AIR-INDIA HOSTESS

PASSENGERS on Air-India have often told us as to how efficient, well-groomed and courteous our hostesses are. They sampled our delectable cuisine and experienced our personalised service, and were happy. But what they are not aware of is what happens behind-the-scenes; the rigour and the work that comes into fore in pleasing every passenger on the Air-India aircraft. This photo-feature is a factual, no-hype story giving an accurate sequence of a day in the very life of a hostess. We decided to trail 23-year-old Rashna right from home (one). Rashna's day begins early - at 6 a.m. when she can be at Bombay Airport, ninety minutes before the departure of flight AI-825, a Boeing 747 to Dubai. An Air-India car picks her up at the appointed time and brings her to the airport which is about 15 miles from her home. With fellow hostess Krishna Kumari, Rashna tags her bag at the Traffic Counter and goes in for the flight (two). Both Rashna and Krishna visit the first floor of the Terminal Building where they sign the Briefing Book (three) at the Cabin Crew Scheduling Unit and receive their flight documents and special instructions, if any. Further down the corridor, Rashna reports to the Commander at the Movement Control Office and goes through Customs formalities before she boards the aircraft, 45 minutes before departure of the flight. Rashna then conducts a pre-flight check; looks into the appearance of the cabins, places all bonded items in the toilets, ensures that everything is tidy and takes up position at the entrance to welcome passengers. Meanwhile Krishna, deputised after an unaccompanied minor (four), takes charge of the minor and boards the aircraft before the other passengers are allowed aboard (five). Rashna is assisted in welcoming passengers by her colleagues who seat them by looking at the number on their boarding cards. When the doors are closed and the engines begin to whirr, she is at the PA system (six) formally briefing the passengers and briefing them on emergency procedures and safety in the air, demonstrated by pursers. While Rashna has to perform a multitude of services on board, the Commander, Capt K. B. Lal, is served a cup of coffee (seven) while other colleagues look after the needs of the passengers. It is the lunch service (eight) that keeps her engaged for a long period. She checks out the culinary tastes of different passengers and serves them accordingly. From Sheikhs to commoners, they all come under her benign care. But the children get special attention. They are given books and a variety of toys to play with and the generous fare keeps them occupied. Before long the Commander announces that the aircraft is about to land. While passengers hurriedly collect their hand baggage, the pilot makes good landing at Dubai Airport (nine). Rashna aids a disabled passenger down the step-ladder and on to a wheel-chair (ten). She repeats the same procedures and a similar routine on her flight back and after landing at Bombay Airport signs the Debriefing Book, thanks the crew members and bids them goodbye. As one hostess's day's work ends, another's begins. The day over, Rashna is well and truly down to earth again, preparing a special meal for the family (eleven) and dreaming, until her next flight.

N. Nalavala



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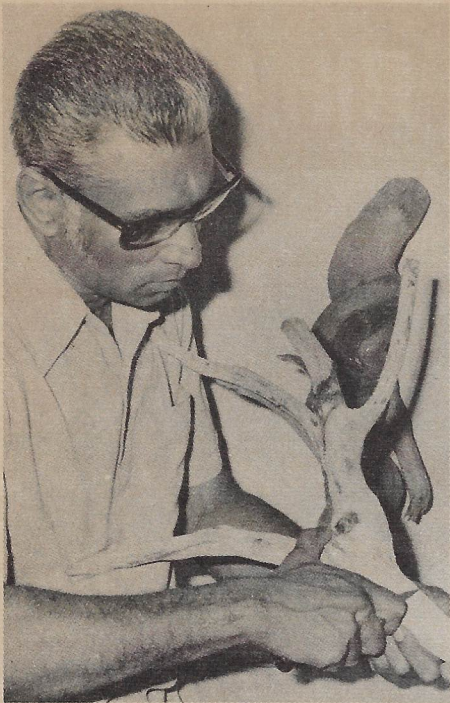
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Phantasy in Nature

PETER D'SOUZA of the Cost Rationalisation Committee has a strange hobby. He describes it here.

SOME call it 'Arborics', presumably since it relates to trees, others call it 'Driftwood Craft', but I term it simply as 'Phantasy in Nature'.

One might wonder as to how one develops an interest in such an art. I recall that I was twelve when close to my home at Kirkee (Poona) I noticed an old drumstick tree lying on its side. As I walked past I saw a splinter lying close by that looked very much like a small canoe. I picked it up and with my scouts penknife began whittling it till it took the shape of a beautiful canoe.

In 1954 I came to Bombay, met a few friends who were keen shikaris, whom I accompanied at times. During one of my hunting trips in the hills of Bassein, while we were resting under the shade of a tree I noticed a hawk sitting on the edge of an uprooted teak tree about two hundred yards ahead of me. I thought I would have a

shot at it. As I was about to raise my gun, I noticed that it did not move. I got up and walked towards it. It was no live hawk, but a root that nature had shaped into a hawk. I just stood staring admirably at it, contemplating as to how to cut it off without ruining its natural beauty. I noticed a fine crack at the base near what appeared to be the legs. With my hunting knife I slowly pried it apart and the whole piece came off as one. The photograph appears above.

From then on I always succeeded in picking pieces of various shapes and forms. Generally the formation is so perfect that very little reworking is required. The tools for this type of work are very simple. A sharp knife with a 2-inch blade, a wood file (rasp), a stiff bristled wire brush and sand paper. A set of gauging chisels is a help in cleaning or scooping out ridges and grooves. I use an electric drill machine to which different tools

can be attached to smoothen the rough edges.

The first step is to clean the piece with a stiff wire brush to remove the muck and grit and the outer decaying wood lodged in the cracks and crevices. Gradually the bare wood is exposed and the colour of the original wood comes to the fore. At times it is necessary to use the rasp for removing the outer layers of soft wood. More often than not soft woods are attacked by "boring beetles", a variety of termites which eat into the wood leaving tiny holes on the surface. A preservative made by mixing Termex (Tata Fusion Product) in equal parts with raw linseed oil and turpentine rids the wood of the termites. To prevent the fluid from draining off a strip of stocking net is wrapped around the piece so that the preservative gradually gets absorbed into the wood.

Once you have an idea of what the

final shape is going to be, with the help of the rasp file or knife you can remove the unwanted portion till you get the desired shape. You may then smoothen it with the help of sand paper wrapped around the wood.

The final finish is given with raw linseed oil, sand paper and wax wood polish. In case of soft wood, instead of wax polish, two coats of Apcolite clear synthetic lacquer can be applied. This will give a shiny surface to the wood.

If the figure does not stand by itself, make a simple stand from a flat piece of teak or from a stiff wire and screw the piece on to it.

At present I have about thirty pieces. It may be of interest to readers of the Magic Carpet that in Russia an exhibition was organised by the Leningrad Museum where such pieces were exhibited. Any of our staff interested in this hobby is welcome to contact me.



GAMES PEOPLE PLAY



GALLANT PLAY

AIR-INDIA'S Hockey XI participated in the Joint AI/IA Hockey Tournament held recently at Hyderabad. The other teams contesting in the tournament were IA teams from Calcutta, Madras and Delhi.

Though Air-India did not end as the winner, the team led by Ted Patterson put up a gallant performance in all their encounters. The opposing teams included six international hockey players, backed up by the professionals Inam ul-Rehman and Gafoor Khan. AI thus got a golden

opportunity of playing the game with experts and were able to gain considerable experience. During the different games Patterson gave a brilliant performance stopping several shots which would otherwise have been goals. He was ably supported by deep defenders Terry D'mello and A. Monteiro and forwards Newman Vaz and L. Simoes.

The tournament was won by IA-Delhi, IA-Madras being declared runners-up on the basis of goal average.



Interline Talent Sets the pace

'INTERLINE TALENT', a new musical group formed by members of Air-India's Traffic staff along with a few interliners, made a grand debut at the Air-India Auditorium recently under the auspices of the Air-India Traffic Association.

The curtain rose with a devotional song rendered by Ms Pramodini Kshatriya, whose father Mr R. Gadkari, is on the staff of Indian Airlines. Ms Ujwala Bhise from Bombay District Reservation presented a lively number with 'Mera Babu Chel Chabila', a la Runa Laila.

Deo Jadhav (photographed above) from our Booking Office counter teamed up with G.A. Swamy of Indian Airlines for a number of songs, and a racy duet between Swamy and Ms Dorothy Das brought thunderous applause from the audience. The

singers were accompanied on the harmonium by Dinanath Pevekar, one of our Assistant Flight Pursers.

In response to audience request, all the artistes rendered the famous marathi Koli song 'Mee Dholkara'.

The compere for the evening was M.G. Shah of Indian Airlines and the programme was organised by R.S. Sharma from our Reservations.

Earlier, welcoming the guests, R. Nambiar, Secretary of the Association, presently on the staff of Space Control, appealed to the Management of both the Corporations to encourage the talent of the members of the Association. He said that the AITA had given a programme of light Indian music some time back and he was hopeful that the group would perform at different interline functions, both in India and abroad. - R. Nambiar

Words for all ages

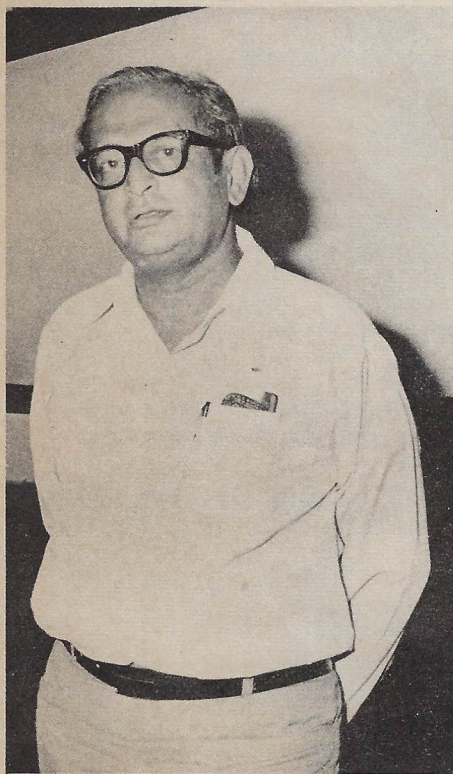
— Review of Ae. S. I. Activities —

MR V.N. HEREKAR, former Dy Director of Engineering and presently Controller of Stores & Purchases, recently gave a talk on 'Microwave Landing Systems' to members of the Aeronautical Society of India.

Mr Herekar said that the MLS would pose a number of problems. International airlines would have to operate a mixed type of fleet in the interim period when both MLS and ILS type of installations were being made operative at international airports; alternatively, they would have to maintain both types of equipment on board. Moreover, Mr Herekar emphasised that the airlines would have to undergo a costly programme for retrofit and replacement of MLS configuration. "The MLS type system may require a different breed of airborne display of equipment in the cockpit", he added.

safety such as accident prevention and accident survival. He also showed films on evacuation on land and a short on survival at sea. At this function, too, Mr Om Sawhny introduced the guests to the audience.

To score a hat trick the Society organised an elocution competition at the Air-India Modern School at Santa Cruz. The competition was between the students of three aviation schools, Air-India Modern School, Indian Airlines Ideal School and Civil Aviation School. In all 25 students participated in the competition. The subjects related to aviation. The students of the junior school were given several topics four days in advance while the students of the senior group were briefed an hour before the competition. Air-India presented cups and giveaways to the winners. The prize-winners in the



Mr V. N. Herekar



Group Capt Jayasingh

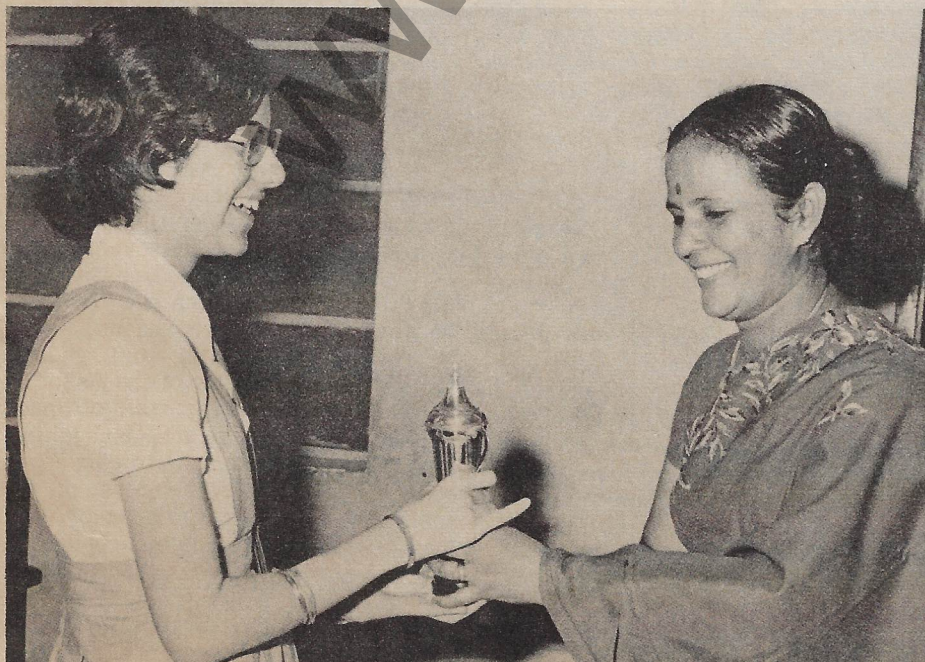
The meeting was attended by members of the Air-India staff and the Indian Institute of Technology, Powai. Mr Om Sawhny, Air-India's Director of Engineering, introduced Mr Herekar to the audience.

The Society a few days later organised another presentation on Flight Safety Techniques by Group Capt Jayasingh, Asst Supdt Operations Training Division. His talk covered several aspects of flight

junior group were Vrinda Menon, Zubin Patel and Rajni Unnikrishnan, while the senior group winners were Aban Khambatta, Vidya Rao and Arup Zutshi. Mr Om Sawhny who was present on the occasion gave a short talk.

All the three functions, which were organised by Mr B. K. Majmudar, Sr Technical Officer and Hon Secretary of the Bombay Branch of the Aeronautical Society of India, were a great success.

A prize winner smiles happily



FROM THE MAILBAG

Ad on the Pad

IF a chap grapples with his boss's grammar, spells tongue-twisters accurately, pronounces jaw-breakers precisely, insists on dotting his 'i's and dashing his 't's, is punctilious with punctuations and punctuality, knows the difference between surtax and syntax, the synonym for amanuensis and the antonym for synthesis, he must be a Secretary/P.A. of Air-India.

Weakness for vocabulary and terminology is his strong point. He is at-home in catering jargon like "Supreme of Turkey Chicken Fricassee" as he is familiar with Management Training parlance like "Transactional Analysis". He can decipher codes like DAP, SASPO, FRAV, SGLB, LOSIG, NOTAM, MAAS, HOTAC with as much facility as a film fan recognises his favourites.

Though he is neither a Ravan nor a circus artiste, he can use both his hands with maximum dexterity. He will take notes, attend a phone-call, type out a message, welcome a visitor, gesticulate to a peon, open the mail and seal an envelope, shuffle the files, almost simultaneously. He is as capable of sending a gentle reminder as a sensitive stinker, as his boss desires.

The heap of files awaiting his attention, may almost hide him from view, yet he is capable of laughing. Even in an awkward and embarrassing predicament, he remains his usual smart and sprightly self, like a cork popping up to the surface of water, whether in an ocean or in a bucket.

He takes delight in being such an uncompromising perfectionist for the

sake of someone very special on board - YOU, dear passenger!

From: S. K. Rao, General Services, Bombay.

Promoter

IT was reported that India exported about 4,000 tons of mangoes valued at Rs 10.6 million during the 11 months of April 1975 to February 1976.

I am sure Air-India has contributed enormously to the popularity of the fruit by introducing mangoes as a giveaway during the season at various stations on our network. Therefore, Air-India is not only the national flag carrier, but also an export promoter. Keep up the good work.

Maybe next season it would be a good idea to enclose Air-India serviettes giving a sketch of a mango tree, a small write-up on the mango, medical advantages of the fruit and some of the methods to serve it.

From: L. R. Pandya, Santa Cruz.

Editor's Note: And what about how to eat it?

READERS

are requested to send their letters to Editor, Magic Carpet, Air-India Building, 218, Backbay Reclamation, Bombay 400 021. Please make your letters brief and to the point. Anonymous letters will not be published.

Editor

AIR-INDIA QUIZ

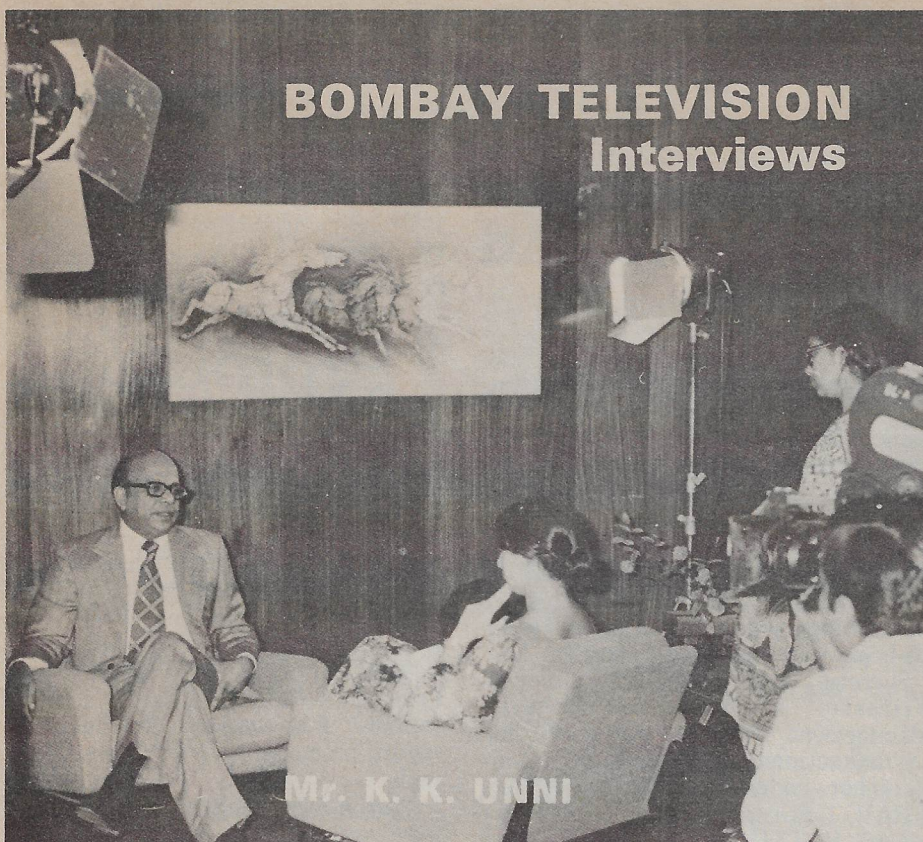


1. Who is the man in the white shirt?
2. Who is the couple he is talking to?
3. What is the man in the white shirt famous for and how was he associated with Air-India?

Answers to September Quiz

1. "Malabar Princess".
2. The photograph was taken at London Airport on June 9, 1948.
3. Captain D. K. Jattar.





BOMBAY TELEVISION Interviews

To culminate India's Year of Fulfilment, Air-India's Managing Director, Mr K. K. Unni, was interviewed by Bombay Television. We present here his views on Air-India's profitability and outlook for the current year.

Q. Mr Unni, can you please say a few words about Air-India's performance in the last year?

A. Air-India did well during the financial year which ended on 31st March, 1976 and made a net profit of Rs 6 crores and 35 lakhs. This is the highest profit that India's flag carrier has ever made and, therefore, I would say that the year was a note-worthy one for Air-India.

This performance of Air-India has to be judged against the background of the air transport industry as a whole which is a fiercely competitive industry.

"Air-India was able to achieve very good profits in a year which was difficult for the airline industry."

Air-India has to compete with much bigger airlines with far greater resources at their command. The operating costs have been rising very steeply as a result of unprecedented increases in fuel prices and persistent inflationary trends all over the world. The economic recession had an adverse effect on the growth in passenger traffic on some of the major air routes of the world. The result was that the industry as a whole incurred heavy financial losses and many major airlines were deeply in the red. However, Air-India was able to achieve very good profits in a year which was difficult for the airline industry.

Q. Well, that is certainly heartening to hear. What would you say, briefly, were the reasons for this excellent performance?

A. Many factors have contributed to our performance. Air-India has an exceptionally wide-spread route

network covering all the five continents and this calls for a judicious deployment of our fleet consisting of five 747 aircraft and nine 707 aircraft. We achieved optimum deployment of our fleet on profitable routes. Air-India's marketing and sales campaign improved our load factors and our share of the market, we exercised strictest control over expenditure, we made sustained efforts to give the best possible service to our customers all these efforts produced positive results and are gathering momentum.

Q. What is the outlook for the current year?

A. The outlook for the current year is bright and Air-India is well poised for yet another year of success. Air-India added the fifth 747 aircraft to its fleet and this has gone into full operation from 1st April, 1976. We have replaced our two 707 services in a week to Australia with two 747 flights. Air-India added two new stations, namely, Baghdad and Seychelles, to its network. The fuel prices have stabilised and the growth in passenger and cargo traffic is gratifying. I would like to emphasise the good team work in Air-India both in India and abroad. We have received the fullest co-operation of all the members of the staff, both the flying crew as well as the ground staff, and Air-India is confident that it can meet the challenges ahead successfully and ensure the profitable growth of the Corporation.

"Air-India has an exceptionally wide-spread route network...we achieved optimum deployment of fleet on profitable routes."

Naosherwan Nalavala

CHAIRBORNE

A SYDNEY BREAKFAST



PAT NIMMO, wife of actor and TV personality Derek Nimmo, flew with us from London to Sydney together with their son, Piers, to join Father who has been appearing in Sydney in his record-breaking play "Why not Stay for Breakfast?" which has been a runaway success in London. In June this year, we caught Derek making faces at himself in the Maharajah Lounge at London and featured it in the Magic Carpet.

SYMPOSIUM

The Air-India aircraft carrying the Indian delegation to the World Hindi Convention at Port Louis, Mauritius, recently became the venue for an impromptu Kavi Sammelan (Poets Symposium). As the airliner left Bombay, the Union Health Minister, Dr Karan Singh, who was heading the delegation, mooted the idea of holding the Sammelan on board the aircraft. The suggestion received enthusiastic support and about a dozen poets participated in this free-for-all. Dr Karan Singh recited a Sanskrit verse and was followed with poetic renderings by Dr Shivmangal Singh 'Suman', Balkavi 'Bairagi', Dr Hari Vanshrai 'Bachan', Dev Kumar, Mashir Ahmed 'Mayukh' and Dr Rama Singh.

INDIAN SETTING



The Air-India office in Manila, in collaboration with Manila Hilton, held an Interline Luncheon for over 200 airline representatives. Delectable Indian dishes were served followed by a Quiz for Interliners. Both the Air-India staff girls and the women staff of the Hilton wore saris to emphasise the India evening. Vivacious Ms D. Infante from the Hilton Public Relations Department is photographed here in a sari welcoming the guests.

IN DEFENCE

V. M. Patankar of Revenue Accounts was deputed by Air-India for the Civil Defence Warden Course held recently. When he completed the course, he was given a certificate with grade "high average". This was a full-time course and was conducted at the Maneckji Technical Centre in Bombay where representatives from different companies participated, with Patankar as the only representative from Air-India. From time to time the Home Guards and Civil Defence Staff College draw individuals from different walks of life and train them in the art of combat, fire fighting and self-defence.

INDIA FOR YOU

About 300 young people from Australia, France, Germany, Poland, Hong Kong, Spain, Japan, Taiwan, Tanzania, USA and UK participated in 'Experience India 1976', a programme to give the youth of these countries a better insight into India's culture, customs, religions and modern development. There were 180 participants from Japan (part of them photographed here) for whom special arrangements were made for interpreters. The group flew on Air-India and were accompanied by our Sales Representative, Y. Ono. For three weeks, the young



people travelled round the country in groups, but for five days they were in Delhi meeting students, attending seminars, and discussions on religion, history, art, architecture, yoga, films and witnessing special dance and music recitals. Kudos go to Air-India for making the programme truly worth experiencing.

ON SHOW



The achievements of Air-India were on display in the form of posters, show cards, photographs and models along with worded panels at an Exhibition held in Bombay recently to mark a "Year of Fulfilment". The Exhibition was inaugurated by Dr Rafiq Zakaria, Minister for Revenue, Government of Maharashtra, and was later visited by the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Mr S. B. Chavan, who had a special word of praise for the Air-India booth. During the year Air-India made every effort to successfully propagate the Prime Minister's Twenty-Point Economic Programme. A brochure was printed on the achievements of the year that was and distributed to the staff throughout the system. The July 1976 issue of the Magic Carpet carried the Prime Minister's views on the public sector and a message from the MD on Air-India's profitability. This was followed up by Bombay Television making a full length feature on Air-India which will include an interview with the MD (see column on left). All India Radio broadcast a 20-minute interview with Mr K. K. Unni. This year Air-India is making special efforts to make the Family Planning programme a success and has given a number of incentives and practical guidance to staff to limit their families. More about this in our next issue.