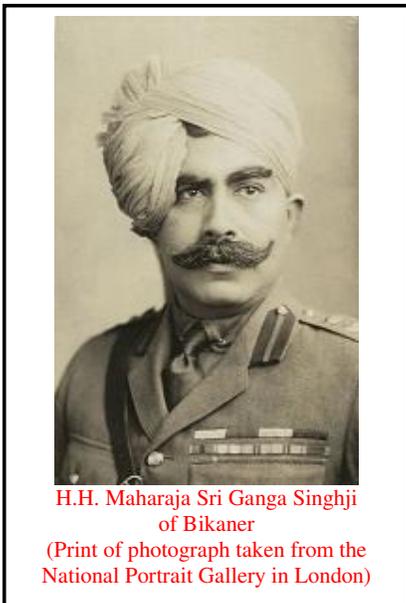




E-NEWSLETTER BY CENTRAL OFFICE OF BIKANER TRUSTS– DECEMBER 2009

MAHARAJA GANGA SINGHJI TRUST



H.H. Maharaja Sri Ganga Singhji
of Bikaner
(Print of photograph taken from the
National Portrait Gallery in London)

Maharaja Ganga Singhji Trust was created by Late Maharaja Dr. Karni Singhji of Bikaner in 1972 for public charitable and philanthropic purposes, to promote the development of the former Bikaner State with a view to promote cultural, educational, medical, and sports facilities.

During the course of year 2009 the major projects undertaken were: -

“The Lallgarh Palace Home of the Maharajas of Bikaner” - Book by Princess Rajyashree Kumari of Bikaner.”

This Coffee Table book evokes the romance of the rugged desert kingdom of Bikaner and its royal family of Bikaner. In the midst of the large and mysterious sands of the Thar Desert rises the imposing beauty of the Lallgarh Palace, Bikaner. Stories whispered by the wind as it frolicked and

raged over the long caravans that crawled across this mighty desert, have been caught and penned by the author.

The book is an enchanting tale by Princess Rajyashree Kumari of her family as they lived and played over five generations in the backdrop of the imposing beauty of Lallgarh Palace. In this intriguing story of a princess, Rajyashree recounts her life growing up in the Lallgarh Palace.

Now converted into a luxury Heritage Hotel, her story holds you spellbound as you relive the days when the grand courtyards and imposing lawns rang with the pomp and pageantry of royal durbars. The magnificence of the gilded age of the Maharajas, the sheer luxury and laughter of its resplendent visitors, men from the pages of history, Lord Curzon, its first visitor, King George V, Lord Mountbatten all comes alive as she recounts their visits bringing it to the present day.

The book was launched by Tikka Shatrujeet Singhji of Kapurthala at a glittering function before a distinguished gathering of guests at the Oberoi Hotel, New Delhi on 20.12.08.

The book, replete with photographs and illustrations, has been published by Dev Publishers, New Delhi and supported by the Maharaja Ganga Singh Trust. It is priced at Rs.1,950/=



Tikka Shatrujeet Singhji of Kapurthala (middle) at the book launch function with the author Princess Rajyashree Kumari and the publisher Mr. Pankaj Jain of Dev Books

The V&A Exhibition “Maharaja: the Splendour of India’s Royal Court” at London

The Victoria & Albert Museum in London is currently holding an exhibition titled “Maharaja : The Splendour of India’s Royal Courts” from 10th October 2009 to 17th January 2010. The exhibition covers the period from the 18th Century when the great era of the Maharajas began to the end of British rule in 1947.

A team from Victoria & Albert Museum visited Bikaner several times during the year to collect material on Maharaja Ganga Singhji for display in this exhibition. They selected certain items from Maharaja Ganga Singhji’s period, his full dress military uniform and the photo of the Tuladan ceremony (Weighing in Gold) during the Golden Jubilee Celebration in 1937 and some photographs of the Maharaja are loaned by the National Portrait Gallery, London.



Princess Rajyashree Kumari pictured next to full army dress uniform of Maharaja Ganga Singhji of Bikaner on display at V&A Exhibition at London

The Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum invited Princess Rajyashree Kumariji of Bikaner, the Chairperson of the trust and she attended the opening ceremony function on 10th Oct. 2009. Mr. Mark Jones, Director V&A said, “There has never been an exhibition like this before, showing the spectacular treasures of the courts of the Maharajas. Many of the objects are on loan from royal collections in India with items from Bikaner, Jodhpur, Udaipur Gwalior Kapurthala and Baroda.”

In an article on Maharaja Ganga Singhji of Bikaner Mr. Amin Jaffer, Former Senior Curator in the Asian Department at V&A said “An accomplished soldier, Ganga Singh was the first Indian to be made a General in the British Army and he represented his country in the Imperial War Cabinet and War Council and was the one of the signatories of the Treaty of Versailles.”

Ms. Anna Jackson Curator of the exhibition at V&A said, “ Over the course of the last few years Ganga Singhji of Bikaner has become one of my favourite Maharaja as I have been so struck by his personality and his remarkable ability to straddle so successfully both the traditional and modern worlds”



Princess Rajyashree Kumariji with the photographs of Maharaja Ganga Singhji displayed at V&A Exhibition at London

Ms. Deepika Ahlawat, Research Curator V&A said, - “ If I am biased in favour of anybody in India it is Maharaja Ganga Singhji of Bikaner. He was such a great personality that I admire him from the core of my heart.”

Since material related to the great personality, Maharaja Ganga Singhji, creator of modern Bikaner was displayed in a world level Museum, the Sadul Museum in Bikaner will be holding an exhibition of related subject matter during 2010.

Donations by the Trust

Rs. 15 lac has been sanctioned by the trust for aid and donation during the year in various fields such as Medical relief, Sports, Education, scholarships for deserving students and other developmental works etc.

Help to research scholars and others

A large number of research scholars from India and abroad came for research on various subjects at the Archival Section of the trust and Anup Sanskrit Library and were very appreciative of the help provided to them by Maharaja Ganga Singhji Trust. Comments by some scholars: -

8th December 2008

I express my sincere thanks for excellent support in enabling our research activities. We had a very fruitful time at the Anup Sanskrit Library.

Sreenivasa Guttal,
Senior Software Engineer, Intel Technology India Pvt. Ltd.

15th May 2009

I am very grateful for the cooperation of the Maharaja Ganga Singhji Trust for the useful information for my research work.

Julie Hughes
Department of History, University of Texas at Austin

THE LALLGARH PALACE - A HERITAGE HOTEL

The Lallgarh Palace has 50 well-appointed rooms for the guests offering gracious hospitality and a truly royal experience in the best tradition of Rajasthan.



During 2009 many VIPs have stayed at the Hotel and commented:

14th August 2008

"A most comfortable stay. Many thanks and much appreciation for everything.

Shri Gajendra Singh, Hon'ble Minister of Energy

18th July 2009

Thank you for a very comfortable and pleasant stay. The services and hospitality was excellent.

Gulshan Grover, Film Actor

Hotel Activities

Many FAM teams of travel agencies visited the Hotel Lallgarh Palace during the year and they have much appreciated the hotel up gradation/renovations works and the services provided by the hotel.

In keeping with being environmentally friendly a large number of trees were planted in and around the Lallgarh Palace complex during the year.

SRI SADUL MUSEUM

Sri Sadul Museum has been open since 1976 and was located on the upper floor of Sadul Niwas wing of Lallgarh Palace. Some years ago the trustees made a decision to shift the museum to a purpose made new building where all the artefacts could be displayed more appropriately. The artefacts were shifted to the new building and museum was opened to the public from 1st October 2008. Since then the Museum has been functioning from this new building and a large numbers of visitors are coming to see the museum daily and is appreciated by the visitors.



At the beginning of 2010 the Museum will hold an exhibition of selected photographs taken by Mr. Sudhir Kasliwal (of the world famous Gem Palace in Jaipur) during his recent visit to China and the Far East.

BOOKS & COFFEE SHOP IN MUSEUM ANNEXE

To increase the facilities at Sri Sadul Museum the Annexe of the Museum building was repaired and renovated with modern facilities and a modern coffee shop "Ranbanka Café" and a bookshop have been added. A number of historical books published by the trust are available in the bookshop for sale at a discounted price.

MAHARAJA DR. KARNI SINGHJI MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

Princess Rajyashree Kumari of Bikaner created this trust in 1999 in memory of her late father. This trust mainly concentrates in providing vital life saving medical equipment and medicines to the Paediatrics hospital at Bikaner and also to the Veterinary Hospital, Bikaner for animal welfare.

DONATIONS MADE BY THE FOUNDATION DURING THE YEAR

To PETA India (People for the Ethical Treatment of animals) an organization that works for the welfare of animals. The donation was made for a specific cause – proper care and humane treatment of animals being transported for slaughter, particularly chickens, which, while being transported are, kept in shocking conditions.

Donation of Medical equipment to the Paediatrics department of P.B.M Hospital, Bikaner for neonatal care.

Donation of Sonic scalar machine for dental treatment of animals at the Veterinary Hospital, Bikaner.

The foundation records its gratitude to Mrs. Alape Kaur and Mrs. Nada Chaldicott for their generous donations during the year.

RAJYASHREE KUMARI OF BIKANER RELIGIOUS & CHARITABLE TRUST

This trust was created in 1972 by Princess Rajyashree Kumari of Bikaner mainly to grant scholarships to the outstanding School/ College girl students of Bikaner area.

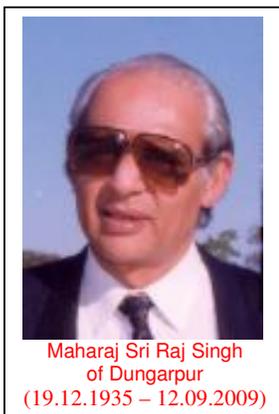
Donations made by the Trust

During the current year 15 girl students from various schools, who had achieved 75% or above marks in their annual exams were awarded scholarships for higher studies.

ANUPAMA KUMARI PUBLIC CHARITABLE TRUST

Late Maharaja Dr. Karni Singhji of Bikaner created this Trust in 1986. The main objects of the trust are to provide aid to handicapped persons, welfare of animals, birds and other wild life.

Donations made by the Trust



Creation of Chicken Shelter in memory of Maharaj Raj Singh of Dungarpur

The shelter was created in October 2009. The Chairperson dedicated the shelter in the memory of her late maternal uncle, Maharaj Raj Singhji of Dungarpur, an international renowned personality in the cricket world.

The Bikaner Trusts record with great sadness the demise of Shri S.K. Singhji, Hon'ble Governor of Rajasthan. He visited Bikaner several times and stayed at Hotel Lallgarh Palace. He also took keen personal interest in naming of Bikaner University after Maharaja Ganga Singhji of Bikaner

The Maharaja Ganga Singhji Trust, the Chairperson, trustees and staff of the trust would like to thank all our friends and supporters and send them the season's greetings and good wishes for 2010.
