

## FRIENDS OF SERAMPORE

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Serampore College (and University), India  
Founded by Carey, Marshman and Ward, 1818  
[www.seramporecollege.org](http://www.seramporecollege.org)

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Dear Friends,

It is high time for a newsletter.....again.....I think I start each newsletter this way.....  
but I will cease from apologising and offering excuses.

I will send out information when I have it and I hope that you will send me any information to  
share, when you have it.

I am sad to report that I do not have any direct news from Serampore College, and I don't  
have any personal contacts there either. Maybe some of you have visited in the last few years  
and could send some up-to-date information? If you look up the College on the internet, you  
will see that they have been closed, like everyone else, because of the pandemic. I appreciate  
this will have made them busier than ever and will have had an impact on their resources.

I keep in touch with Gulnar Dastur (nee Manekshana). We both went to Chandernagore's St  
Joseph's RC School together. Her father oversaw the Jute Mills along the road from the  
college. He was a physicist, as was my father, and our families became very good friends.  
Occasionally Gulnar, who now lives in Calcutta, will mention something, or send me a cutting and  
back in June, she sent me the following, which I thought might be of interest -

*When super cyclone Amphan swept through south Bengal last week, it not only flattened  
thousands of houses, but also severely damaged some of its centuries-old heritage structures.  
Palaces, mosques, temples, or offices depicting Islam's footprint on the Bengal frontier to  
architectural traditions of European colonialism, gardens from the time of 19th century  
resurgence in Bengal's cultural landscape to the recently renovated British-era buildings all  
bore the brunt.*

*Shubha Majumder, superintending archaeologist of the Kolkata Circle of Archaeological Survey  
of India (ASI), said a report on the damage had been sent to the headquarters of ASI.*

*For Antara Mukherjee, a teacher and heritage enthusiast, the experience is "traumatic".*

*Many of the old buildings, gardens, mosques, or colleges in Hooghly district were damaged, said  
Ms. Mukherjee, who has managed to map the damage with a team from the Indian National  
Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), within a week of the cyclone.*

*Serampore College founded 200 years back by William Carey, a cultural anthropologist who  
played a significant role in the spread of western education, is one of the damaged buildings.*

*The mahogany windows of the stately main building dropped from the first floor and broke  
into pieces. "The garden in front of a heritage building in the college is ruined," Ms. Mukherjee  
said.*

*Shiv Sahay Singh Suvojit Bagchi KOLKATA, MAY 31, 2020 22:28 IST*

She also sent me a link for a fascinating short film. I encourage you to watch it. There is a glimpse of Serampore College, but it's an interesting film about the history of Serampore under the Danes. This is the link -

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17hl6rmZUSM&ab\\_channel=Nationalmuseet](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17hl6rmZUSM&ab_channel=Nationalmuseet)

Or you can look for it on the YouTube channel - it's called -

Serampore & Denmark - A Living History by the Ganges

My only other personal link with Serampore College is through a former lecturer, Rev Mithra. He and his family were very helpful to Steve and me when we visited in 2000 and 2014 and we got to know his lovely family, wife Irene and 3 girls Divya, Deepa and Disha.

Disha arrived in Newcastle in September 2019, to do a 1-year Masters Degree. In March this year, she managed to get up to Orkney and then spent 6 months with us, in lockdown. That must have been a huge culture shock for her - from Bangalore, to Newcastle and to Orkney! We enjoyed her company and she says she was pleased to be in Orkney rather than Newcastle for lockdown. We hope so. She has returned to Newcastle and has been awarded her Masters Degree.